

# Language minority children's perspectives on being bilingual

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*On 'bilanguagers' and their sensitivity  
towards complexity*

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*To Emily*

*To my parents*



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## Contents

<b>Contents.....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background, aims, and research question.....	1
1.2 Review approach and choice of method .....	3
1.3 Presentation of the thesis.....	6
1.4 Clarification of concepts .....	8
<b>2 Bilingualism and language use.....</b>	<b>13</b>
2.1 Overall frameworks .....	13
2.1.1 The language shift framework.....	13
2.1.2 Language use as language learning .....	15
2.1.3 Language use as distributed vocabulary and complementary communication.....	16
2.1.4 Language use as multicompetence, polylingual practice, and identity negotiation .	18
2.2 Language use in language minority families.....	21
2.2.1 Unity and diversity in language use among family members .....	21
2.2.2 Reciprocity and quality in parent–child communication .....	24
2.2.3 Parental concerns about children’s language learning.....	28
2.3 Language use in peer communication.....	32
2.3.1 Frequency of L1 use and access to same L1-speakers and co-ethnics .....	32
2.3.2 Creating “second lives” vis-à-vis a monolingual norm in the classroom .....	34
2.3.3 Negotiation of language and identity vis-à-vis peers.....	37
2.4 How children perceive their language choice.....	39
2.5 Language use in Turkish and Pakistani families in Norway.....	41
2.6 Summary.....	45
<b>3 Bilingualism and language attitudes.....</b>	<b>51</b>
3.1 Overall frameworks .....	51
3.1.1 Language attitudes as the willingness to make an effort to speak a language.....	51
3.1.2 Language attitudes and need for communication.....	53
3.2 How children display attitudes towards their languages .....	54
3.2.1 Positive and negative language attitudes .....	54
3.2.2 Children’s explanations for their language attitudes.....	56
3.3 Summary.....	60
<b>4 Bilingualism and ethnic identity .....</b>	<b>63</b>
4.1 Overall frameworks .....	63

4.1.1	Social identity theory framework .....	63
4.1.2	Contextual development of ethnic identity .....	65
4.2	How children make meaning of and explore ethnic identity in middle childhood .....	67
4.2.1	Conceptualizing and ascribing content to one's own ethnic identity.....	67
4.2.2	Priority and salience of ethnic identity in relation to other identities.....	71
4.3	Summary.....	74
<b>5</b>	<b>Summary of review and empirical research questions .....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Methods .....</b>	<b>87</b>
6.1	Studying children's perspectives through semi-structured interviews.....	87
6.2	The sample.....	90
6.2.1	Selecting and recruiting the students .....	91
6.2.2	Socio-demographic characteristics of the sample.....	91
6.3	Data collection: conducting the interviews .....	95
6.3.1	The interview protocol.....	95
6.3.2	The interview procedure.....	98
6.3.3	Transcription procedures .....	99
6.4	Self-ratings on fixed-choice questions.....	99
6.4.1	Self-ratings of degree of L1 use (RQs 1a and 2a).....	100
6.4.2	Self-ratings of the importance of being able to speak the languages well (RQ 3a). 102	
6.5	Construction of elaborative themes from children's talk.....	102
6.5.1	The overall approach to selection of episodes.....	103
6.5.2	Elaborative themes regarding parent-child communication (RQ 1b) .....	105
6.5.3	Elaborative themes regarding language use in peer contexts (RQ 2b).....	106
6.5.4	Elaborative themes regarding language as a skill and as a marker of belonging (RQ 3b) 106	
6.6	Considerations regarding the quality of the study.....	107
6.6.1	Dependability and confirmability .....	108
6.6.2	Credibility and trustworthiness of interpretations.....	110
6.6.3	Transferability and applicability .....	114
6.7	Ethical considerations.....	115
<b>7</b>	<b>Children's perceptions of language use within the family .....</b>	<b>117</b>
7.1	Children's ratings of of L1 use within the family.....	117
7.2	Children's talk about language use in parent-child communication .....	121
7.2.1	Awareness of parental language skills.....	122



7.2.2	Awareness of bilingual communication around school-related tasks .....	128
7.2.3	Awareness of negotiations of language learning .....	131
7.3	Summary and discussion.....	137
<b>8</b>	<b>Children’s perceptions of language use in peer communication.....</b>	<b>143</b>
8.1	Children’s ratings of L1 use with same L1-speaking peers .....	143
8.2	Children’s talk about language use with and among peers .....	145
8.2.1	Awareness of a monolingual school norm .....	146
8.2.2	Awareness of the importance of peers in language learning.....	149
8.2.3	Awareness of the role of language alternation in communication and learning....	153
8.2.4	Awareness of the intriguing role of L1 as a secret language.....	158
8.2.5	Awareness of classroom belonging and gender belonging.....	161
8.3	Summary and discussion.....	169
<b>9</b>	<b>Children’s perceptions of the importance of their languages .....</b>	<b>175</b>
9.1	Children’s ratings of the importance of being able to speak well.....	175
9.2	Children’s talk about language as a skill and as a marker of belonging .....	177
9.2.1	Awareness of the need for good Norwegian skills to succeed—in Norway .....	177
9.2.2	Awareness of the need for Turkish/Urdu skills in education and employment.....	182
9.2.3	Awareness of a close connection between language and ethnic heritage group ...	184
9.2.4	Awareness of a distance from heritage country and from peers living there.....	191
9.2.5	Awareness of being “bilanguagers” .....	196
9.3	Summary and discussion.....	200
<b>10</b>	<b>Being language minority bilingual—exerting sensitivity towards complexity.....</b>	<b>205</b>
10.1	On “bilanguagers” and language learner identity.....	206
10.2	On one’s own bilingualism as inclusive and exclusive in monolingual and multilingual contexts .....	209
10.3	On exploring multiple markers of belonging when constructing one’s own realities....	212
10.4	Methodological limitations and concluding remarks .....	215
10.4.1	Concluding remarks .....	217



## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Background, aims, and research question

This study has been guided by the aim of illuminating language minority children's perspectives on being bilingual. A focus on how language minority children perceive and talk about their experiences of being bilingual can broaden our understanding of the processes involved in language minority children's bilingual realities and thereby inform the future work of both practitioners and researchers within the field.

Being bilingual as a child who is native-born to immigrant parents or who immigrate early in life means that one's bilingual proficiency, bilingual behavior, and bilingual identity develop from the very beginning or from the early stages of one's life. To these children, being bilingual is not a question of whether or not but rather of how one relates to the two (or more) languages involved. That is, the children are bilingual by necessity (Backus, 2013). At the same time, studies across immigrant generations reveal an international tendency towards the bilingualism of language minority children to be in transition and that these children do not necessarily maintain a high level of proficiency in their heritage language as they grow older. Rather, the heritage language is gradually lost by children born to immigrants and subsequent generations (Montrul, 2013). This language shift phenomenon has led some to describe language minority bilingualism to be a temporary phenomenon (e.g., Pease-Alvarez, 1993).

However, children who are exposed to two languages from an early age vary widely in the bilingual proficiency they achieve and in their language use patterns, suggesting a heterogeneity and complexity involved in being a second-generation language minority bilingual that is not easily accounted for in a generational model (Garcia, 2006; Hurtado & Vega, 2004; Villa & Rivera-Mills, 2009). For many of the children, there are seemingly good reasons to pursue a continued development of their heritage language: They may have parents who actively use, even depend on, the heritage language, and who may encourage their children to use the heritage language; the heritage language is a salient component in facilitating connections to and identification with the ethnic heritage background and speakers of the heritage language (Phinney & Ong, 2007); there are many socio-linguistic domains in which the language is used (Hurtado & Vega, 2004); and being able to alternate between languages can be a powerful social tool in multilingual and multiethnic peer contexts (e.g., Jørgensen, 2008; Wei, 2011). Against this background, the heritage language

may be given a revitalized position (Dirim & Hieronymus, 2003). The different possible stances taken towards the heritage language and continued bilingualism—in light of the intersection between the necessary, temporary, and revitalized status of its conditions—makes it particularly interesting to study language minority children’s perspectives on being bilingual when in middle childhood.

This thesis investigates language minority children’s perspectives in a sample of preadolescents of Turkish and Pakistani heritage in Norway. The Turkish and Pakistani immigrant populations in Europe share a common history of work immigration and family reunification. There is an increasing number of children born in Norway who grow up in a language minority bilingual context with Turkish or Urdu/Punjabi as the heritage language and Turkey or Pakistan as the country of the family’s origin (Løwe, 2008). In both groups, the heritage language has been found to have a strong position both within the family context (Karlsen & Lykkenborg, 2012; Rydland, Grøver Aukrust, & Fulland, 2013) and within the peer context (Aarsæther, 2004; Rydland et al., 2013; Türker, 2000; Østberg, 1998). Contact with other speakers of the same first language (hereafter called same L1-speakers) is easily facilitated due to the relatively high number and concentration of co-ethnics living in Norway (Blom & Henriksen, 2009). Thus, both the heritage language and the societal language can be expected to have a certain status among children growing up with a bilingualism of an either Turkish-Norwegian or Urdu/Punjabi-Norwegian character.

Regarding the statuses of languages, language minority bilingualism is characterized by the two languages at stake being assigned different statuses: the roles of a minority/heritage/family language and a majority/societal language, respectively. In educational contexts in Norway and Scandinavia, the majority languages of the countries have the sole status of language of instruction (Cromdal & Evaldsson, 2004; Rydland & Kucherenko, 2013; Svendsen, 2004). The current public education legacy corresponds with a model of early exit or transition, where bilingual education or L1 support is offered as a support for learning the Norwegian language and only until the children master the Norwegian language adequately (Ministry of Education, 2010). Furthermore, a broad evaluation of the educational programs for language minority students in Norway revealed that the organization of the educational services provided by preschools and schools varies both randomly and systematically between school districts and municipalities (Ministry of Education, 2010). Thus, it can be expected that language minority children in Norway develop their bilingualism within a framework where the heritage language is not provided

with the same official educational support as Norwegian and that the children's bilingual repertoires are taken into account by their educators to various degrees. Consequently, the continued development of the heritage language and continued bilingualism may first and foremost be described as a familial, individual, and more informal concern than the development of Norwegian.

Against this background, the present study addresses the following overall research question: *How do language minority children in the Norwegian context perceive being bilingual?* More specifically, this thesis looks into the children's perspectives on being bilingual in relation to three aspects (the empirical research questions are further specified in Chapter 5):

- how children perceive language use within the family, particularly in parent-child communication,
- how children perceive language use with and among same L1-speaking peers, and
- how children perceive the importance of their language skills and the roles of language as a skill and as a marker of belonging.

Language minority bilingualism is an important linguistic and social component of the lives of an extensive number of children in Norway. By addressing these topics, the present study contributes to a deeper understanding of children's meaning making of bilingualism in middle childhood.

## **1.2 Review approach and choice of method**

The present investigation of how language minority children in the Norwegian context perceive being bilingual focuses on bilingualism as language use, as language attitudes, and as related to social and ethnic identity. These aspects partly constitute separate dimensions of bilingualism, but they are also highly intertwined, which will become apparent during the presentation. The research reviewed is anchored within various traditions of investigating bilingualism, including the fields of second language research, heritage language maintenance research, socio-linguistic research, and research on social and ethnic identity (see, for instance, August & Shanahan, 2006; Bhatia & Ritchie, 2013, or Dixon et al., 2012, for overviews of research fields addressing bilingualism). These approaches have brought distinct perspectives to the field of bilingualism studies. Integrating the research from

various research traditions contributes to an understanding of language minority bilingualism as a complex phenomenon.

The review and the presentation of previous literature is three-fold. Firstly, I have included prevalent conceptualizations of language use, language attitudes, and social and ethnic identity in order to frame important theoretical and empirical notions of the investigated phenomena (see sections 2.1, 3.1, and 4.1). Secondly, the review gives a thorough presentation of what previous research has revealed about preadolescents' perspectives on language use, language attitudes, and sense of belonging to one's ethnic heritage group (see sections 2.4, 3.2, and 4.2). Thirdly, according to Romaine (1995), bilinguals should be studied within different domains of language use and within the different relationships the bilingual is typically involved in. This study addresses bilingualism in middle childhood (also referred to as preadolescence), the period commonly considered to begin around ages 5 or 6 and conclude at approximately ages 10 to 12 (e.g., Ruble et al., 2004). In middle childhood, family, friends, and school constitute the most important relations and contexts for experiences and development. It is when children speak with family members, when they play with friends, and participate in joint activities, for instance, at school that bilingualism appears as being or not being significant. Thus, the review also contains a presentation of the central issues found to characterize language use in language minority families and peer contexts (see sections 2.2, 2.3, and 2.5).

The empirical work of the present study adds to the understanding of a specific subgroup of bilingualism and bilinguals: language minority bilingualism and second language learners in L2-majority contexts who are native-born to immigrants or who immigrated at an early age (see Section 1.4 for further clarification on the bilingualism concept and the use of the terms L1 [first language] and L2 [second language]). In this vein, the selection of studies to be reviewed was based on the relevance for this specific group of bilinguals. Furthermore, it can be noted that a large body of the literature stems from research conducted on language minority samples in the US context. However, I have included Scandinavian- and Norwegian-based studies and studies particularly addressing populations of Turkish or Pakistani heritage in Europe when available. The Turkish-speaking population has received much research attention in different Western European countries, while South Asian languages, including Urdu and Punjabi, have received attention particularly in Britain, resembling the extensive research on Spanish-speaking populations in the US (Bacus, 2013). However, the research topic and/or age of the samples

studied rather than language background were the criteria for searching for relevant literature.

The present study is part of a larger research project investigating second language reading comprehension among language minority children in Norwegian fifth-grade multilingual classrooms headed by Professor Vibeke Grøver (e.g., Rydland, Grøver Aukrust, & Fulland, 2012; Rydland et al., 2013; Rydland, Grøver, & Lawrence, 2014a). The present study is based on individual interviews with a subsample of 56 children from 12 of the classrooms in the larger project. In the presentation, I will refer to already published studies that include either some or all of the children in the present sample. While some of the Turkish-speaking children in the sample have been subjects for several studies, including longitudinal studies following the children from preschool to grade 1 and up to grade 5 (e.g., Grøver Aukrust & Rydland, 2009; Rydland et al. 2014a) and case studies (Kucherenko, 2012; Rydland & Kucherenko, 2013), the Urdu-speaking children have, with one exception (Rydland et al., 2012), not. The interview data as analyzed and presented in the current study have not previously been published.

The aim of addressing children's perspectives on being bilingual was two-fold. Firstly, I wanted to apply previously studied categories of language use and language attitudes from the international literature to the Norwegian context. Secondly, I wanted to elaborate on and add nuances to how children make meaning of being bilingual. Thus, the present study relied on children's participation in individual in-depth, semi-structured interviews that combined the tradition of researching children's perspectives through a standard set of fixed-choice questions (e.g., Feinauer, 2006; Jean, 2011; Pfeifer, Ruble, Alvarez, Bachman, Cameron, & Fuligni, 2007) with a more open-ended, individually tailored approach directed by the voice of the child in the individual interview conversation (Hedegaard, Aronsson, Højholt, & Ulvik, 2012; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015; Ulvik, 2014). The study design is confirmatory and seeks to identify and further explicate conceptualizations brought up by children in previous research, while also being exploratory by allowing for the children to come forward with their own descriptions and meanings related to certain aspects of being bilingual (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Further clarifications of the methodological approach and the applied terminology regarding the children's perceptions are presented in Chapter 6.

### 1.3 Presentation of the thesis

The thesis has three review chapters (chapters 2–4), one chapter which summarizes the review and presents four empirical research questions (Chapter 5), a methodology chapter (Chapter 6), three chapters presenting and discussing the results for each empirical research question (chapters 7–9), and one final chapter with a summarizing discussion, comments on methodological limitations of the study, and concluding remarks (Chapter 10).

In Chapter 2, I focus on bilingualism and language use. I present four overall frameworks of language use in bi- or multilingual contexts: the language shift framework; language use as language learning; language use as distributed vocabulary and complementary communication; and language use as multicompetence, polylingual practice, and identity negotiation (2.1). I then look further into specific issues regarding language use in language minority families: unity and diversity in language use among family members, reciprocity and quality in parent–child communication, and parental concerns about their children’s language learning (2.2). Furthermore, I look at language use in peer contexts by addressing the frequency of L1 use and access to same L1-speakers and co-ethnics, how language is used in creating “second lives” vis-à-vis a monolingual norm in the classroom, and how language minority children have been found to use their languages to negotiate their identity vis-à-vis peers (2.3). I then highlight previous findings regarding children’s perspectives on their own language choice (2.4) before I present a brief overview of how language use has been studied among the populations of Turkish and Pakistani families in Norway (2.5).

In Chapter 3, I focus on bilingualism and language attitudes. I start by presenting two overall frameworks for understanding language attitudes in the bilingual context: language attitudes as the willingness to make an effort to speak a language and language attitudes in relation to the need for communication (3.1). I then look at what previous research has found regarding bilingual children’s attitudes towards their two languages. I focus particularly on the positive versus negative attitudes ascribed to the languages by the children and on how the children explain their language attitudes (3.2).

In Chapter 4, the focus is on bilingualism and social and ethnic identity. I present the overall frameworks of social identity and the contextual development of ethnic identity (4.1). I further look specifically into the research on how children have been found to make meaning of and explore their own ethnic identity in middle childhood, highlighting the



significant role of language, family and peer groups as markers of belonging in middle childhood (4.2).

Chapter 5 is a summary of the review and a presentation of how the present study of how language minority children in the Norwegian context perceive being bilingual is approached through three more specific empirical research questions: *How do the children perceive language use in communication within their families?* (RQ 1), *How do the children perceive language use in communication with and among same L1-speaking peers?* (RQ 2), and *How do the children perceive the importance of their two languages?* (RQ 3). As specified in Chapter 5, each of the three empirical research questions has one sub-question regarding the children's self-ratings on pre-defined categories (RQ 1a, 2a, and 3a) and one sub-question regarding the children's own talk about the inquired topic (RQ 1b, 2b, and 3b): RQ 1a addresses *to what degree the children perceive themselves using their L1 in communication with parents and siblings, to what degree they perceive their parents including their L1 when talking to them, and to what degree the children's self-ratings reflect reciprocity and unity in language use in parent-child communication*, while RQ 1b addresses *what perceptions the children bring forward when engaged in talk about language use in parent-child communication*. RQ 2a addresses *to what degree the children perceive themselves using their L1 in communication with same L1-speaking peers at school and during leisure time*, while RQ 2b addresses *what perceptions the children bring forward when engaged in talk about language use with and among peers*. Finally, RQ 3a addresses *to what degree the children find it important to be able to speak well in their two languages*, while RQ 3b addresses *what perceptions of the roles of language as a skill and language as a marker of belonging the children bring forward when engaged in talk about language attitudes and sense of belonging to their ethnic heritage group* (see Section 6.1 for a further clarification of the application of the term 'talk' in the present study).

Chapter 6 is a presentation of the methodological approach. In this chapter, I describe the research design of studying children's perceptions through semi-structured interviews (6.1), the sample (6.2), and the data collection procedure (6.3). I then present the self-rating categories of language use and of the importance of possessing language skills (6.4) before I describe the qualitative analytical approach to extracting and constructing themes from the children's talk (6.5). Finally, I reflect upon considerations regarding the quality of the study (6.6) and upon ethical considerations of relevance (6.7).

The results for each of the three research questions and related sub-questions are presented in chapters 7, 8, and 9. In Chapter 7, I present the children's perceptions of language use within the family (RQ 1a and 1b); in Chapter 8, I present the children's perceptions of language use with and among same L1-speaking peers (RQ 2a and 2b); and in Chapter 9, I present the children's perceptions of the importance of their languages (RQ 3a and 3b). Each chapter first presents children's self-ratings on pre-defined categories addressing the first part of the research question (7.1, 8.1, and 9.1) before presenting the themes derived from the children's talk related to the given topic addressing the second part of the research question (7.2, 8.2, and 9.2). At the end of each chapter, I summarize and discuss the findings in relation to relevant frameworks and previous research (7.3, 8.3, and 9.3).

Finally, in Chapter 10, I highlight and discuss how the findings respond to the overall research question *How do language minority children in the Norwegian context perceive being bilingual?* along three overall dimensions derived from the analyses: on "bilanguagers" and language learner identity (10.1), on one's own bilingualism as inclusive and exclusive in monolingual and multilingual contexts (10.2), and on exploring multiple markers of belonging when constructing one's own realities (10.3). Finally, I point to some important methodological limitations inherent in the present study and make concluding remarks (10.4).

#### **1.4 Clarification of concepts**

In a recent handbook of bilingualism and multilingualism (Bhatia & Ritchie, 2013), Edwards (2013) raises a question regarding definition: Where do we draw the lines between monolingualism, bilingualism, and multilingualism? Asked in another way: When does a person become bilingual or multilingual? In the same handbook, Montrul (2013) provides an overview of central dimensions relevant for defining different categories of bilingualism: the age of acquisition (i.e., early versus late bilingualism), whether the two languages develop at the same time or one after the other (i.e., simultaneous versus sequential bilingualism), the degree of language use (i.e., primary versus secondary language), and the level of proficiency in each language (i.e., dominance or balance) (see Montrul, 2013, for more thorough descriptions of the presented terms).

Edwards (2013) and Montrul (2013) further emphasize the variability in statuses of bilingual or multilingual persons along these dimensions. In this respect, Edwards claims,

“it is the grayer areas between the extremes that are at once more common and more interesting” (Edwards, 2013, p. 5). He here refers to the heterogeneous and more indefinable nature of lived bilingualism or multilingualism. Montrul (2013) states that “there are many factors that come into play in the resulting degree of command of the two languages by an individual at a given time, and in the relationship between the two languages, both at the neuropsycholinguistic and sociopolitical levels” (Montrul, 2013, p. 168). She here refers to the time dependent, dynamic nature of a bilingual or multilingual status and to how a broad range of individual and social factors affect these dynamics. She also emphasizes that the bilingualism of individuals who have been exposed to an immigrant or a minority language since childhood and who are also proficient in the majority language spoken in the wider speech community is particularly affected by the complex interaction of these factors.

In the present study, language minority bilingualism is the phenomenon under investigation. The bilingualism investigated can initially be conceptualized as a “gray area between the extremes.” In terms of the points brought up by Edwards (2013) and Montrul (2013), I acknowledge the large variation in language use, language proficiency, and language exposure among language minority children and how an individual’s languages change their functions and dominance across one’s lifespan. Before proceeding, however, I will briefly clarify four terminological choices I have made for the purpose of this thesis: a) Why bilingualism instead of multilingualism? b) What terms do I use to describe the languages involved? c) Why language minority bilingualism? and d) What terms do I use when referring to the children’s immigrant and ethnic background?

Firstly, regarding why bilingualism instead of multilingualism, the focus of the present thesis is preadolescents’ perceptions of their own bilingualism. More specifically, the focus is on children’s perceptions of language use, language attitudes, and identity in relation to their two main languages: Norwegian and Turkish or Urdu. I am aware of the possibility and reality of the children relating to more than these languages, and thus more preferably could be referred to as multilinguals (see Hanssen, 2007, for a reflection upon the use of the term multilingual in the Norwegian context). They are all learning English at school, and especially among the Urdu-speakers in the sample, Punjabi and English vocabularies are expected to be included in the children’s communication. Against, this background, I start out with the understanding of bilinguals and bilingualism from Grosjean (2008), which focuses on the bilingual but does not exclude the possibility of more than two

languages being involved: “Bilingualism is the regular use of two or more languages [...], and bilinguals are those people who use two or more languages [...] in their everyday lives” (Grosjean, 2008, p. 10). Furthermore, the aim of the study is to highlight how the children perceive the two main languages spoken by them and the dynamics between these two languages rather than to focus on the total of linguistic features the child possesses. Bilingualism, more than multilingualism, captures the dichotomy that much research relies on, where one language is seen in relation to another.

Secondly, in regard to the terms used to describe the languages involved, the terminology revolving around the two languages involved in bilingualism is diverse. Above, I referred to central dimensions along which one could define bilingualism and assign the statuses of the two languages involved (Montrul, 2013). The children in the present study are early bilinguals, since their bilingualism appears before puberty (Montrul, 2013). Furthermore, they have all (but one) been exposed to both Norwegian and Turkish/Urdu before the age of five, but there is variation among them in how simultaneous or sequential the language learning and exposure has been. In the present study, the terms first language (L1) and second language (L2) do not primarily refer to time of exposure of the two languages. Rather, I have chosen to use the terms in correspondence with their connotations to being the native language of their parents (L1) versus the public language of the society in which they live (L2). In addition, other terms such as “heritage language,” “minority language,” “native language,” or “mother tongue” will be used instead of first language /L1, while “societal language,” “school language,” or “majority language” will be used instead of second language/L2.

Thirdly, as to why “language minority bilingualism,” by consistently referring to the phenomenon investigated as language minority bilingualism, I deliberately emphasize that it is bilingualism within a specific sociocultural context that is illuminated. In accordance with prevalent terminology in Norway, I use the term “language minority” (“minoritetspråklig”) descriptively for persons in Norway who do not have Norwegian as their L1/mother tongue (Hanssen, 2007; Ministry of Education, 2010). Furthermore, Montrul (2013) refers to how the distinction between a majority and minority language indicates a power relationship. Such a power relationship has already been referred to in the introduction of this thesis; the minority and the majority languages are given different priority in children’s formal education. Dixon et al. (2012) use the term “second-language learners in a L2-majority context” to capture children who learn an L2 in a context surrounded by the L2 within the

broader society, as opposed to foreign language learners. The language minority status, with the asymmetric roles ascribed to the two languages at stake and the extended prevalence of the majority language outside of their homes, constitutes an important aspect of the school- and family contexts in which the sampled children's experiences as bilinguals have taken place (see also Bacus, 2013, for an overview of the specific features of language minority/immigrant bilingualism).

Finally, a comment must also be made about the terminology used when referring to the children's immigrant and ethnic background. In accordance with contemporary terminology in Norway, I use the term "immigrants" when referring to people who are born by parents from another country and who have immigrated themselves, and the term "Norwegian-born to immigrant parents" ("norskfødte med innvanderforeldre") when referring to children born in Norway by two immigrant parents (Dzamarija, 2008). In the review, I will sometimes refer to the groups as first- and second-generation immigrants in accordance with previous terminology. Furthermore, I use the term "ethnic heritage group" to refer to the children's ethnic background. I use nationality labels such as "Norwegian" (*ethnic Norwegian*), "Turkish" (*ethnic Turkish*), and "Pakistani" (*ethnic Pakistani*) to inform about ethnic heritage background (Hanssen, 2007). The children with various ethnic backgrounds may all be Norwegians. I also use the descriptive terms "Turkish-speaking/speaker" and "Urdu-speaking/speaker" to refer to the children who have Turkish or Urdu as their minority language and Norwegian as their majority language. I use "native Norwegian-speaking/speaker" to refer to children who have Norwegian as their only L1. Regardless of these labels, the children may vary in the languages they actually speak or prefer. For convenience, I use Pakistani/Turkish or Turkish/Urdu, in alphabetical order, for common references to the background of children with *either* Pakistani *or* Turkish origin and for common references to the two languages when convenient.



## **2 Bilingualism and language use**

In this chapter, I focus on bilingualism as language use. I first present four overall frameworks of language use in bi- or multilingual contexts (2.1). I then look further into specific issues regarding language use in language minority families (2.2) and language use in peer contexts (2.3). I then highlight children's perspectives on their own language choice (2.4) before I present a brief overview of how language use previously has been described in studies among the population of Turkish and Pakistani immigrants in Norway (2.5). The review is summarized in Section 2.6.

### **2.1 Overall frameworks**

I start by describing the language shift framework across generations of language minorities, which adheres to a language transformation taking place over time (2.1.1). Furthermore, three approaches that highlight the relevance of language use by and among bilinguals in a language minority context are presented: language use in relation to language learning (2.1.2); language use as distributed vocabulary and complementary communication (2.1.3); and language use as multicompetence, polylingual practice, and identity negotiation (2.1.4).

#### **2.1.1 The language shift framework**

Speaking of immigrants in terms of generations, typically first-generation immigrants (i.e., the parents of children born to immigrants) arrive in the host country in late adolescence or as adults and have been monolingual speakers of their heritage language until they learn the majority language, to various degrees, as a second language later in life (Montrul, 2013). Normally, the command of the first language is strong among this group, while the command of the heritage language has been found to decrease in later generations. The language transformation taking place within the generation of children born to immigrants (i.e., second generation) was recently described and explained in the following way by Montrul (2013):

Because the children are schooled in the majority language, they are drawn to fitting in with the new society. With language shift to the majority language come associated changes in the bilingual balance of second generation children throughout the developing years. As the majority language begins to be used more than the home language, especially at school and with peers, the input from and use of the heritage language decreases. Many of these children are either monolingual or dominant in their heritage language in early childhood. As bilingualism progresses

during the elementary school period, the children can pass through a seemingly balanced bilingualism (at around ages 10-11, according to Kohnert, Bates, and Hernández, 1999) and eventually become dominant in the majority language. When they reach adolescence, they are already dominant in the majority language, and by the time they are adults the majority language is both stronger and more dominant in grammatical ability and domains of use. Thus, as the second language becomes the primary and dominant language, their first and native language gradually becomes their secondary and weaker language. By the third generation (the grandchildren of the first-generation immigrants) heritage speakers are native and primary speakers of the majority language. Some may have partial knowledge of the heritage language, while most do not. (Montrul, 2013, p. 172)

In this excerpt, Montrul (2013) specifically attends to the transformation taking place over time within the generation of children born to immigrants. It is stated that many children may be either monolingual or dominant in their heritage language in early childhood but that during elementary school years—that is, during middle childhood, as they become more exposed to the majority language at school and by peers—the input and use of the heritage language decreases, and their competency in the heritage language does not continue to develop equivalent to their competency in the majority language. The two languages are expected to be balanced at some stage during elementary school before the stage in adolescence in which they are dominant in the majority language, both in terms of grammatical ability and domains of use. Observations of such a shift have led some to suggest that, over time, bilingualism in language minority contexts may be a temporary phenomenon (e.g., Pease-Alvarez, 1993).

The overall pattern of a language shift across generations of immigrants described above has been documented in several studies comparing multiple generations of immigrants across language groups and contexts (De Hower, 2007; Krashen, 1996; Portes & Rumbaut, 2006; Veltman, 1983; Wong-Fillmore, 1991; Zentella, 1997; Zhang, 2008; Zhang & Koda, 2011). However, language minority children who are exposed to two languages from an early age are also found to vary widely in the bilingual proficiency they achieve and in their language use patterns, even in early and middle childhood (e.g., Garcia, 2006; Hurtado & Vegas, 2004; Villa & Rivera-Mills, 2009). In addition, the language use of language minority families documented over time suggests that home language use patterns



over a period of years are more dynamic in some families and more stable in others (e.g., Hammer, Davison, Lawrence, & Miccio, 2009; Mancilla-Martinez & Kieffer, 2010; Portes & Rumbaut, 2006; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). For instance, Mancilla-Martinez and Kieffer (2010) studied changes in mother-to-child and child-to-mother language use from kindergarten to Grade 8 in a large sample of language minority learners from various language backgrounds in the US. The vast majority of the children in the sample were born in the US. The mothers were asked to rate the frequency with which they spoke their L1 with their child and their child's use of L1 with the mother at the entry point of the study (when child was in kindergarten) and during Grade 8. The results revealed that stability and change in native language use over the years of the study were about equally common in the sample: Half of the sample demonstrated stability in language use, more than one-third of the sample shifted towards less use of the heritage language, while about 13% shifted towards a greater use of the native language.

This variation in stability and change suggests a heterogeneity and complexity involved in being a language minority bilingual born to immigrants that is not easily accounted for in a generational model and not simply accounted for by the general process of increasing exposure to the majority language and decreasing exposure to the heritage language suggested in the above citation by Montrul (2013). Rather, when, how, and the extent to which a language transition happens within second-generation individuals depend on a number of more proximal circumstances within the individual and the family as well as proximal circumstances external to the family, for instance within peer relationships. Acknowledging the influence of more proximal circumstances on the individual's bilingual development makes it particularly relevant to focus on children's perceptions of being bilingual during late middle childhood.

### **2.1.2 Language use as language learning**

One way in which language use is relevant in bilingualism is in relation to language learning and language proficiency. Two partly contradicting hypotheses of the relationship between exposure to/use of languages and proficiency in languages have guided research for decades: the competition hypothesis (Edelsky, 1990; Porter, 2000; Rossel & Baker, 1996) and the interdependence hypothesis (Cummins, 1978, 1981, 2000). The discussion has evolved around whether or to what degree the relationship between language use and exposure and the learning of languages is language specific (i.e., competitive) or cross-linguistic (i.e., interdependent)—that is, whether the amount of time spent speaking and

being exposed to a language result in proficiency in only that language or whether proficiency will also be transferred to other languages not necessarily being exposed to or used to the same extent. The two hypotheses have guided research primarily within psycholinguistic and child language approaches to second language acquisition (Dickinson et al., 2012) in that the overall aim has been to understand what the strongest contributing factors are in learning the second language.

There is empirical evidence supporting both the competitive, language-specific hypothesis and the interdependent, cross-linguistic hypothesis of bilingual learning. It is not within the scope of this thesis to discuss critically the empirical evidence for the two approaches or to evaluate the different methodological designs and linguistic and contextual variables contributing to the nuances in results (for such critical and important discussions and nuances, see, for instance, Aagaard, 2011; August & Shanahan, 2006; Dixon et al., 2012; Genesee, Geva, Dressler, & Kamil, 2006; Hammer, Lawrence, & Miccio, 2008; Mancilla-Martinez & Lesaux, 2011; Melbye-Lervåg & Lervåg, 2011; Pearson, 2007; Quiroz, Snow, & Zhao, 2010; Rydland et al., 2014a). Of relevance to the present study is to acknowledge the issue regarding choice of language use inherent in the language use-language learning discourse. In their extremes, the two hypotheses adopt different normative positions regarding what languages should be spoken by and to language minority children, for instance in parent–child communication and at school. To date, researchers have been careful to draw conclusions regarding the delicate topic of parental and child language use in language minority families due to the limited empirical support for any advice and due to the complexity of factors involved in parent–child communication (Dixon et al., 2012; Goldenberg, Rueda, & August, 2006). Such complexities will be illuminated in Section 2.2.

### **2.1.3 Language use as distributed vocabulary and complementary communication**

Another way in which language use among bi- or multilinguals is made relevant stems from a more sociolinguistic perspective. According to a complementarity framework (Grosjean, 1985, 1998, cited in Grosjean, 2008), the relevant understanding of a child’s bilingualism must take into account the different premises for language use and proficiency for monolinguals and bilinguals rather than compare bilinguals’ level of language skills with that of monolingual peers or standards. The complementarity principle is grounded within a holistic view of bilingualism, where the bilingual is seen as an integrated whole who cannot easily be divided into two separate parts: “The bilingual is *not* the sum of two complete or

incomplete monolinguals; rather, he or she has a unique and specific linguistic configuration” (Grosjean, 2008, p. 13).

Within this framework, the specific linguistic configuration of bilingual children is seen in relation to the children’s different needs for the two languages and the different domains within which they use and are exposed to their two languages. Snow and Hakuta (1992) explained how bilinguals have different “spheres of life” (p. 387). In a similar vein, Ramirez (1988) suggested that the use of the two languages depends on situational pressures or sociolinguistic domains. While some domains may demand or prompt the use of one specific language, in other domains, both languages may be used, depending on the participants, topics, and/or even speech acts (e.g., advice or greetings) (p. 200). Hurtado and Vega (2004) raised the issue of domain-specific language use and skills in relation to the language shift among the Latino population in the US: “The presence of different sociolinguistic domains necessitates permanent bilingualism. Therefore, how does language shift to English take place, given the presence of many sociolinguistic domains in most Latinos’ lives?” (p. 140).

This also points to another important aspect within the complementarity framework—the focus on communication as the purpose of language use and language choice:

In the long run, the really interesting question of language learning and language forgetting is how the human communicator adjusts to and uses one, two, or more languages—separately or together—to maintain a necessary level of communicative competence, and not what level of grammatical competence is reached in each language taken individually and out of context. (Grosjean, 2008, p. 16)

The complementarity principle, then, highlight the importance of understanding bilingual language learning and language forgetting in a communicative context, that is, in terms of people’s need to be able to communicate fully with each other, rather than focusing on the level of “grammatical competence reached in each language taken individually and out of context”. In human communication, bilinguals will draw on their whole linguistic repertoire, including complementary alternation between languages. However, whether such language alternation represents a “necessary level of communicative competence” relies on the interlocutor’s ability to comprehend and respond to a similar bilingual communication.

While language alternation may be a fluent linguistic practice among speakers sharing languages, lack of relevant vocabulary in one language may lead to communicative challenges in other contexts, for instance in interaction with not same L1-speaking peers or in communication regarding school and homework based on the school language.

#### **2.1.4 Language use as multicompetence, polylingual practice, and identity negotiation**

Finally, a growing body of research has looked at language use in naturalistic interactions among bilinguals (e.g., Bhatia & Ritchie, 2013; Jørgensen, 2003, 2005, 2008; Wei, 1994, 2011). The focus on linguistic, or multilingualistic, behavior and alternation of languages in real-life language interactions has been labeled and interpreted by scholars from different theoretical approaches. From a purely psycholinguistic point of view, language alternation has often been labeled “code-switching,” and the focus has been on the grammar of the mixing in order to identify the underlying linguistic structures of language alternations among bi- or multilinguals (see MacSwan, 2013, for an overview of this perspective). Another conceptualization of language alternation, which is more relevant for the present study, is the focus on more social, psychological, and pragmatic factors in language mixing, such as on the motivation for the mixing, on the roles that mixing and language choice play in social interactions, and on the social evaluations of such multilingual practices (see Bhatia & Ritchie, 2013, for an overview).

Wei (2011) has referred to society as a stakeholder of a double monolingual norm and emphasizes how mixing and switching between languages tends to be viewed negatively:

There is a pervasive belief in society, bilingual or monolingual alike, that languages are best to be kept separate, discrete, and pure; mixing and switching between languages are seen as interference and trespassing, which would have detrimental effect on both individual language users and the community in which they live.  
(Wei, 2011, pp. 370–371)

However, based on observations of language use, researchers suggest that rather than language mixing being disruptive of communication and solely a result of lack of skills in a language, language alternation may be systematic, intentional and complex, reflecting both the ability to adjust to and influence the language use of one’s interlocutors (e.g., Bhatia & Ritchie, 2013; Edwards, 2013; Jørgensen, 2005; Romaine, 1995). Children as young as two years old growing up in families where the two parents have different mother tongues, have

been found to show great sensitivity and adaptation towards adults' linguistic behavior and adjust their alternation of languages in accordance to whether their interlocutors allow for a use of both languages or whether interlocutors facilitate, expect, or need a monolingual form of communication (Genesee, Boivin, & Nicoladis, 1996; Lanza, 1992). Furthermore, studies have also shown that bilingual children not only adapt to their interlocutors but also exert an intentional use of languages in social interactions and negotiate social relations when they communicate (Aarsæther, 2004; Grøver Aukrust & Rydland, 2008; Cekaite & Evaldsson, 2008; Jørgensen, 2003, 2005; Rydland & Kucherenko, 2013). In this way, access to more than one language is seen as a linguistic resource, as multicompetence:

The concept of multicompetence aims to capture the knowledge of the language user in a holistic way by accounting for all of the languages he or she knows, as well as knowledge of the norms of using these languages in context and of how the different languages may interact in producing well-formed, contextually appropriate mixed-code utterances. (Wei, 2011, p. 371)

Furthermore, language use and language choice from the multicompetence perspective is also linked to the concept of identity. Studies have identified how children and adolescents with diverse linguistic and ethnic backgrounds express their sense of belonging to different social groups through language choice and alternation between their two languages. For instance, speaking the heritage language can be used (or not used) by the speaker to indicate identification (or lack thereof) with same L1-speakers and co-ethnics or with other groups present in a social interaction, making language choice a potential act of identity. This has been argued, for instance, by Auer (2005) and is described by Wei (2013) in the following extract:

For the multilingual speaker, language choice is not only an effective means of communication but also an act of identity (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller, 1985). Every time we say something in one language when we might just as easily have said it in another, we are reconnecting with people, situations and power configurations from our history of past interactions and imprinting on that history our attitudes towards the people and language concerned. Through language choice, we maintain and change ethnic-group boundaries and personal relationships, and construct and define "self" and "other" within a broader political economy and historical context. (Wei, 2013, p. 43)

Conceptualized in this way, language alternation and language choice are potential expressions of identity. Wei points to how one through language choice can maintain and change group boundaries and personal relationships and construct and define “self” and “other.” However, an important condition is that it is only “when we might just as easily have said it in another [language]” that language choice becomes an expression of identity, pointing to the difference between language alternation as complementary due to the distribution of vocabulary across the languages and language alternation as a deliberate choice with a purpose beyond getting one’s meaning across.

Another line of research on bilinguals’ actual ways of speaking has argued even further along the multicompetence and identity line. Within a polylingualism perspective, the view of language as a phenomenon that can be separated into different languages, such as “Norwegian,” “Turkish,” and “Urdu,” is insufficient (Jørgensen, 2008; Jørgensen, Karrebæk, Madsen, & Møller, 2011). According to this view, “languages” are labels of sociocultural constructions and do not capture actual ways of speaking. Rather than understanding bilingualism at the level of languages, the concern is about how speakers use linguistic features associated with different languages in creative ways, even when they know very little of these languages. They suggest a norm of polylingualism:

*The polylingualism norm:* Language users employ whatever linguistic features are at their disposal to achieve their communicative aims as best they can, regardless of how well they know the involved languages; this entails that the language users may know—and use—the fact that some of the features are perceived by some speakers as not belonging together. (Jørgensen et al., 2011, p. 34)

The framework of language use as multicompetence or “polylinguaging” adds a dimension to the understanding of bilingualism that goes beyond language learning and beyond maintaining a necessary level of communicative competence. Rather, using a language and alternating languages has a value in its own right, potentially and intentionally communicating who you are. Furthermore, by acknowledging the value of mixed-utterances and creative use of linguistic features per se, even including languages other than that which the language user is in command of, the multicompetence and polylingual norms diminish the relevance of the relative qualities of each language (e.g., frequency of use, level of proficiency, balance and dominance). In this way, the norms may reframe the language shift framework and the notion of a heritage language loss across generations. It can be argued

that the phenomenon of “mixed language” becomes a new way of speaking, and, through this, the language of origin is revitalized (Dirim & Hieronymus, 2003).

## **2.2 Language use in language minority families**

I will now turn to focus on language use in language minority families. Understanding aspects of how bilingualism in transition may unfold in language minority families constitutes an important background for understanding language minority children’s perspectives on being bilingual. I highlight three main issues related to language use in language minority families. I look into unity and diversity in language use among family members (2.2.1), reciprocity and quality in parent–child communication (2.2.2), and parental concerns about children’s language learning (2.2.3).

### **2.2.1 Unity and diversity in language use among family members**

Distinctions in language use in language minority families have mainly been made between language use by parents when addressing their children, children’s language use when addressing their parents, and children’s language use when addressing each other (siblings). Most studies rely on parental, often maternal, reports of language use by the members in the family. While some studies address language use on a more general level (e.g., “Which language(s) do you or your child normally speak?”), others have posed more targeted questions (e.g., “When you speak to your child, how often do you use your L1?”) followed by alternative responses.

Knowing that language use is both dynamic, relational, and contextual in nature and that bilinguals often alternate between their languages within and across their utterances in a conversation, capturing actual language use through self-reports of the frequency of the use of each language has its obvious constraints. However, some overall patterns can be found across studies in larger samples. One robust finding is that the language use when parents and children in language minority families address each other is often dominated by the use of the heritage language to a larger degree than when siblings communicate with each other (e.g., Duursma et al., 2007; Garcia & Diaz, 1992; Lawson & Sacdev, 2004; Nguyen, Shin, & Krashen, 2001). When children themselves are the ones to report language use in their families, similar patterns are found. Jean (2011) conducted an interview study in a sample of 63 Spanish-English and Chinese-English heritage language learners in Grade 4 in Toronto, Canada. The children were interviewed about their heritage language (HL) use with various interlocutors (e.g., parents and siblings). The participants were required to rate their language used to speak to specific individuals and language used by specific

individuals to speak to the child on a 5-point scale that indicated the degree of use of his/her two languages used with the specified individual (*always in HL, more HL than English, HL and English about the same, more English than HL, and always in English*). In the analysis, the five categories were merged into three: mostly or all English, English and HL equally, and mostly or all HL. The children tended to use their heritage language when speaking to elder members of their families, including their parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, while only a small proportion of the children reported using all or mostly English to communicate with their parents. In contrast, the opposite pattern of language use was reported by children when asked about their language use with siblings; English was the predominant language reported to be used with and by siblings when addressing each other. One-fifth of the children indicated that their siblings spoke the heritage language and English equally, and a few reported that the heritage language was spoken always or mostly by their brothers or sisters.

Feinauer (2006) studied language use based on interviews with 76 Latino preadolescents in Grade 5 in Boston and Chicago in the US. She asked children in an open-ended approach to name the people with whom they spoke English and Spanish, respectively (“With whom do you speak English/Spanish?”). Students overwhelmingly reported parents as someone they would speak Spanish with, while the majority of the students reported their siblings as someone they would speak English with. That is, the study confirmed the associations of L1 use with older family members and L2 use with younger family members identified in scale-based studies. However, despite the dominant use of one of the languages with parents and siblings, it turned out that students quite often reported speaking Spanish and English with the same people, indicating that they perceived themselves as being bilingual communicators with both parents and siblings.

De Houwer (2007) studied family language use patterns in a large sample of 1,899 parent pairs in the Dutch-speaking region of Belgium in families in which at least one of the parents spoke a language other than the majority language (e.g., French, Turkish, English, Arabic, Berber, German, Spanish, or Italian). The parents were presented with three individual home language use patterns, including two monolingual and one bilingual alternative: *Dutch only, language X only, and language X and Dutch*. De Houwer found that among families with two parents at home, mothers and fathers showed fairly similar language use patterns. Both mothers and fathers used the bilingual pattern most often, but monolingual usage (of either Dutch [14.98%] or language X [36.23%]) accounted for just



over half the cases for both mothers and fathers, indicating that monolingual and bilingual language use patterns were equally common. Furthermore, regarding degree of overlap of language use in parent pairs within families, about half of the parent pairs shared language use patterns, while in the other half the mother and father reported to have different language use patterns, suggesting that unity and diversity in parental language use was equally common. However, the study does not account for whether parents had similar or dissimilar heritage language backgrounds.

De Houwer (2007) also studied to what extent siblings in bilingual families exhibit the same language use patterns. She found that children within a family to a large degree corresponded in their language use; 9 out of 10 sibling groups were reported by their parents to have the same language use pattern. Only in 6.52% of the 1,520 families with more than one child did the children differ from each other in their reported language use patterns. Contrary to this unity in language use among siblings, other studies have pointed to differences in bilingual trajectories among siblings within bilingual families (Barron-Hauwaert, 2010; Bridge & Hof, 2012; Parada, 2013), but there are few sibling sets in the academic research on bilingualism beyond case studies and anecdotal evidence from parent researchers documenting the development of their own children (Barron-Hauwaert, 2010). Moreover, according to my knowledge, most existing descriptions seem to stem from bilingual families where the parents have different native languages and different immigrant backgrounds, not from language minority families where both parents share linguistic and immigrant backgrounds. One exception is a study by Parada (2013). She studied siblings in a sample of 18 Spanish-English bilingual families of Mexican origin in the US. The families had a minimum of two and maximum of four children, 3–15+ years of age. The mothers reported their own use of Spanish with each of the children as well as their children's use of Spanish in the home and their attitudes towards speaking Spanish. Parada also included how entering school affected the use of Spanish in the home. Based on the mothers' reports, the pattern found was that for the third born children, the Spanish use at home was reported to be considerably less frequent than among first-borns and second-borns, even before the third born entered school, suggesting a significance of having an older sibling/siblings entering school. Moreover, Parada (2013) found that mothers perceived their children as having different attitudes towards which language they preferred to speak and suggested that there was a variation in siblings' personal connection with the Spanish language.

To sum up, regarding unity and diversity in language use among family members, the overall pattern of language use among language minority families has been found to be that the heritage language is more frequently included in parent–child communication than in sibling communication. This is also how language minority children themselves report family language use. Furthermore, the review also points to that parents within a family may have similar or dissimilar patterns of language use. When it comes to siblings, parents have been found to report both unity and diversity in the way their children use their languages. However, unity and diversity within generations in the family has not been the focus of studies to the same extent as language use across generations in the family. Also, language use has been measured in different ways, accounting for different aspects of variations. While some studies address the monolingual versus bilingual distinction, others capture the dominance versus balance distinction. Each approach contributes with different understandings of bilingual language use in language minority families.

### **2.2.2 Reciprocity and quality in parent–child communication**

The studies presented thus far addressed language use patterns by children with family members of different generations and differences and similarities within each generation of the family (among parents and among siblings). Other studies have looked specifically into the reciprocity in language use in parent–child communication. It has been found that bilinguals often organize their two languages according to their public world versus their private world (Bhatia & Ritchie, 2013), where the public language serves as the “they” code and the private language as the “we” code. The we-code of the family is expressed in different ways and conveys, for instance, intimacy and emotions. One concern in relation to the language shift is how it potentially (but not necessarily and always) involves challenges in parent–child communication—the we-code—due to language barriers. If the children do not learn the heritage language, and the parents do not learn the societal language sufficiently enough to allow for adequate communication, the consequences may be detrimental to the children and their families (Cho & Krashen, 1998; Oh & Fuligni, 2010; Portes & Hao, 1998; Tseng & Fuligni, 2000; Wong-Fillmore, 1991, 2000). Parents may feel forced to speak to their children in a language they do not master and therefore feel unable to express their thoughts and feelings fully to their children and vice versa. Thus, the quality of the parent–child relationship may be affected.

Studies in general find correlations between parental language use and children’s language use (De Houwer, 2007; Hakuta & D’Andrea, 1992; Pearson, 2007). This implies

that when a parent uses a language, there is a greater chance that the child will also use that language more, suggesting that many children have a language use pattern similar to that of their parents. However, there is also evidence of parents and children not sharing language use patterns (De Houwer, 2007; Sirèn, 1991). Rather, studies involving immigrant families have found that children may also respond in their L2 when parents address them in the L1 (e.g., Hurtado & Vega, 2004; Oller, Jarmulowicz, Pearson, & Cobo-Lewis, 2011), suggesting a non-reciprocal or dissimilar pattern of language use within parent–child interactions.

Non-reciprocal situations can be seen as the participants opening up for the use of what Lanza (1997) has termed “bilingual discourse strategies,” in which the parents (and children) allow the presence of two languages within one conversation. Hurtado and Vega (2004) studied what they called “linguistic bands” within language minority families. The authors interviewed 62 children in seventh grade and their parents about their language use using a 5-point scale from only Spanish to only English. In general, when the respondents (both the parents and their children) were asked what they spoke to others and what others spoke to them, there was a high reciprocity, suggesting that the individual respondent perceived that there was an overlap in one’s own and others’ language use. However, when correlating what the parents and what the children said they spoke to each other, there were low and not significant correlations, suggesting incongruent perceptions of the characteristics of language use in parent–child interactions held by parents and children. Firstly, the lack of correlation is a reminder of the inaccuracy of measuring actual language use through self-reports and the reports of others. Moreover, the authors concluded that “while the children may be speaking mostly in English, and the parents mostly in Spanish, they still can understand each other, and even have the notion that they do so in the same language” (p. 148). The authors highlight how this incongruence or non-reciprocity in language use is possible, and perhaps not even noticeable, due to the parents and/or children being receptive bilinguals. That is, they may be exposed to a language they may not speak but nonetheless comprehend, such that the quality of the communication is not affected by the non-reciprocity of language use.

Other studies have identified that language use may be related to the quality of communication and family relationships. Interviews with bilingual adults on their retrospect experiences of growing up bilingual in immigrant-background homes have revealed how differences in language proficiencies led to disruptions in family relationships, such as

breakdowns in ordinary communication leading to unnecessary arguments (Cho & Krashen, 1998) and hindering parents' and children's communication regarding their goals and accomplishments (Kouritzin, 1999). Rodriguez (1982) noted how Spanish was his and his family's language and expressed that the day his family decided to use English at home, family intimacy was not the same (Rodriguez, 1982, in Bhatia & Ritchie, 2013, p. 381). This intimate or emotional aspect of communication has also been underscored by parents who perceive their use of the L1 in communication with their children to have a symbolic value beyond the meaning of the exact words spoken (Svendsen, 2004).

In a survey of more than 600 adolescents from East Asian, Filipino, and Latin American immigrant families in the US, Tseng and Fuligni (2000) studied how language use affected adolescent–parent relationships. They found that adolescents who reported to communicate with their parents in English, or who reported that there was a mismatch in languages used by adolescent and parents, felt more emotionally distant from their parents and were less likely to engage in discussions with them than with their peers who mutually spoke the heritage language with their parents. In a similar vein, Portes and Hao (2002) studied the impact of heritage language proficiency on the adolescent–parent relationship among second-generation immigrant adolescents in the US. They found that adolescents who reported being able to speak their heritage language well—that is, who were monolinguals in their L1 or fluent bilinguals—were found to experience less language conflict and more family solidarity than those who did not speak the heritage language well—in other words, those who were English monolinguals or limited in both languages. In this study, they included reports of parents' knowledge of English in the analyses, and this did not affect the relationship. This suggests that it was the level of the adolescents' ability to speak their L1 that mattered, not parental ability to speak English. Furthermore, Oh and Fuligni (2010) suggest that the adolescents' level of proficiency in the heritage language rather than the individual choice to use it seems to be the key factor in language minority family relationships. This may support the notion of the importance of being able to comprehend a language sufficiently—that is, to have receptive knowledge of a language—in order for quality of communication not to be affected, as argued above by Hurtado and Vega (2004).

The latter studies applied to adolescent–parent relationships, where the demands and complexity of language skills needed in adequate communication might be higher than for preadolescents' communication with their parents. Still, one can expect the parent–child

communication to be affected by both the parents' and child's language proficiency also when children are younger. However, less is known about how children perceive being affected by their parents' lack of skills in the societal language or their own lack of skills in the heritage language. A related phenomenon that has been studied is that of how children experience language-brokering, meaning the process of translating between languages for parents or others who do not speak the majority language (e.g., Villanueva & Buriel, 2010; Weisskirch & Alva, 2002). Findings among adolescents reveal that they perceive this task differently. While some studies have revealed that language-brokering for parents is related to positive attributes such as greater social self-efficacy (Buriel et al., 1998; De Ment, Buriel, & Villanueva, 2005), other studies have found that language-brokering for some may be related to negative attributes such as annoyance and burden (DeMent et al., 2005) or stress (Love & Buriel, 2007). Moreover, some studies have found that language-brokering may not be seen by adolescents as the most important contribution by them to their family (Villanueva & Buriel, 2010), and, thus, may not be related to particular feelings.

Weisskirch and Alva (2002) investigated how preadolescents perceived language-brokering. The children were 36 Spanish-English Latino fifth graders, the majority born in the US to immigrants. The children were provided with a questionnaire addressing their language-brokering practices and their feelings towards this activity. The results revealed that all the children in the sample participated in translation to some degree. The children's level of agreement or disagreement with affective and attitudinal statements related to language-brokering indicated that the children did not find the experiences of language-brokering helpful or particularly enjoyable. They were least comfortable when translating for their parents, other relatives, and people who came to the door. The authors suggested that the closeness of the relationship as well as the intimacy of being home made the child more distressed about acting as a language-broker. Furthermore, the authors noted that the children seemed to devalue their language-brokering, finding it "hindering to their development, their parents' development, and their acculturation process in general" (p.376). The authors also suggest that language-brokering may be cognitively challenging for children who are still in the process of acquiring languages.

To sum up, language non-reciprocity in parent-child communication has been identified as a possible characteristic of language minority families. While some studies imply that parents and children can use different languages but still comprehend each other, others have pointed to a possible distortion of parent-child communication. The studies

suggested that it is heritage language proficiency rather than actual language use and the language proficiency of the children rather than of the parents that most strongly affects the quality of parent–adolescent relationships. To the best of my knowledge, no studies have looked further into language minority children’s perspectives on differences in language use and proficiency within their family. However, studies of how adolescents and children perceive language-brokering suggest that when it comes to translating for parents and translating at home, some children display a sensitivity towards parental lack of skills in the majority language, some do not seem to ascribe any particular value to this linguistic practice, while others hold positive attributes regarding this practice. Nevertheless, the studies points to the relevance of looking further into reciprocity and incongruence in language use in parent–child communication within language minority families.

### **2.2.3 Parental concerns about children’s language learning**

Language minority children live in families with different language policies (Oh & Fuligni, 2010; Romaine, 1995; Svendsen, 2004; Wei, 2012). In this section, I highlight some perspectives derived from studies addressing parental concerns about their children’s language development, particularly focusing on knowledge gained from parents in the Norwegian context.

Svendsen (2004) studied language socialization among a Philippine diaspora in Norway. Parents in five families who were themselves immigrants and were described as employed and highly educated were interviewed about their language socialization approaches towards their Norwegian-born children. The parent interviews revealed quite divergent and heterogeneous linguistic practices and policies among the parents. While some parents seemed to have made a deliberate choice about their language policy, others were more relaxed about their children’s language practices. Svendsen (2004) found that parents assigned their language socialization both a pragmatic dimension and a symbolic dimension. Among the pragmatic statements were those highlighting children’s freedom of choice to speak the language they preferred and a desire for their children to be bi- or multilingual and thus the parents took the responsibility to teach them the L1, they adjusted their language use to the their own skills or those of their children (for instance, speaking Tagalog because of one’s own limitations in Norwegian or periodically speaking Norwegian because of child’s limited Norwegian skills), or they felt a need to support their children’s learning of Norwegian as well and thus spoke both languages to their children. The symbolic value of the languages was inherent in their descriptions of switching

between languages dependent on the value ascribed to the languages within a specific context. For instance, parents used their L1 symbolically when angry or when correcting their children. One of the parents said that the point of using the L1 was not that the children understood the message better but that they knew the strength of the message (p. 352), underscoring the value of the L1 beyond mutual comprehension.

All the parents in the Svendsen study stressed that it was important for them and for their children to learn Norwegian since they work and live in Norway. The choice of some parents to periodically change their language use with their children into Norwegian in accordance with perceiving the children as being less proficient in Norwegian, even when the parents themselves did not have a very good command of Norwegian themselves, illustrates how language policies reflect an understanding of and a responsibility taken for children's language learning. Interestingly, to these parents, it was important to various degrees that the children also learned Philippine (Tagalog). Some parents were eager for their children to have continued bilingual development. Maintenance of the first language was first and foremost spoken of as important for their children to be able to communicate with their families in the Philippines. However, a few parents were considering the possibility that their children would return to the Philippines and attend school in the heritage country when choosing to speak the L1 with their children. Other parents were more pragmatic and emphasized the most important to be the ability to communicate: "as long as we understand each other."

In a study by Rydland and Kucherenko (2013), the language use of a Turkish-Norwegian 10-year-old girl<sup>1</sup> was studied in relation to her parents' language policies. The mother and father, who were both immigrants from Turkey and employed in Norway, were interviewed about their language policies. While stating that the family spoke mostly Turkish at home and stressing that they wanted their children to maintain the Turkish language, the parents simultaneously stressed the importance of their children gaining access to Norwegian-speaking peers and developing skills in the school language in order to succeed in the Norwegian society. The parents also indicated a flexible use of the two languages in the home, for instance, using Norwegian when helping the children with homework. In accordance with some of the parents in the Svendsen (2004) study, the mother also stated that she, for a period, chose to use Norwegian extensively at home when

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<sup>1</sup> This girl is included in the sample of the present study.

she perceived her children to be speaking too much Turkish with their friends. In this way, the mother demonstrated a constant concern about her children not having sufficient access to Norwegian-speaking peers during their school day as well as a flexibility in her language use with her children guided by her desire for her children to become bilingual and skilled in Norwegian.

The Svendsen (2004) study and the Rydland and Kucherenko (2013) study keenly capture and underscore the complexity involved in bilingual families' bilingual socialization. The statements from the parents illustrate how language learning is of great concern to parents, especially the learning of the majority language, pointing to the superior role of the learning of the second language or the school language in the homes. In the Rydland and Kucherenko (2013) study, this concern was also seen in relation to the actual opportunities the children had to learn the majority language in contexts outside the home. The parents in both studies took the responsibility to speak Norwegian with their children in order to enhance their learning of the language. The studies also point to how parents who perceive themselves to have limited skills in the majority language relate differently to their limitations; while some choose to use their first language because of their limitations in the majority language, others focus on their use of the majority language despite their limited skills.

Furthermore, international studies of language minority parents' attitudes also reveal that immigrant parents in general have high expectations for their children and are supportive of their children's school attendance and learning of the second language (Goldenberg et al., 2006). There is a tendency of parents reporting that they provide more literacy support in the second language than in the first language (Duursma et al., 2007; Quiroz et al., 2010). For instance, Duursma et al. (2007) saw in their study of fifth graders that, on average, their parents provided more literacy support in the L2 (English) than in the L1 (Spanish). The literacy support activity most frequently reported was helping the child with learning or homework in English, followed by reading with the child in English, suggesting that parents choose the school language when communicating with their children about school and literacy tasks. Other studies even suggest that the preference for the L2 in literacy activities starts early. Quiroz, Snow, and Zhao (2010) investigated mothers' language use in both L1 (Spanish) and L2 (English) with their preschool children in different linguistic interactions. Based on the mothers' reports, they found that literacy activities in the home were more likely to be practiced in English than in Spanish. The use



of English during literacy activities was also supported by the mothers' beliefs, made explicit in the home interviews, that English access would be the key to their children's school success. However, literature on *how* language minority families engage in direct support of school related tasks with primary school children is scarce (Goldenberg et al., 2006).

In Norway, a common educational strategy aimed at supporting children's learning has been homework support provided by the schools either during the school day or in after school programs. One aim behind this strategy has been to reduce social inequalities (Hassan, 2009). For language minority students in particular, the schools' offer of providing homework support has been argued to facilitate the learning of the Norwegian language. However, in recent surveys addressing the effectiveness of homework support provided in after school programs in primary schools, several critical remarks were put forward, amongst them that parents were less active in the children's school work when the children received external homework support (Backe-Hansen, Bakken, & Huang, 2013). Homework has been argued to facilitate parent-child communication about school-related topics. However, in another survey in Norway, Hassan (2009) found that children with at least one ethnic Norwegian parent are more likely to receive homework support from parents than children with two parents born in non-western countries. The latter group of children asked for support more often from sources other than their parents (siblings, others), and 19% of the sample did not receive help with their homework at home. The two studies do not look into why parents are not involved in their children's schoolwork, but they suggest that parental involvement in children's schoolwork may be challenging in many families.

Finally, a few studies including children's perspectives have found that children are aware of parental language strategies and of the role of language exposure in language learning. In her study, Svendsen (2004) conducted interviews with five children aged 8-9. She found that children's descriptions of family language use reflected the parents' descriptions of their language policies. For instance, one child brought up that his father had previously, when the boy was younger, read bedtime stories in Norwegian, whereas now he read them in Philippine. The boy related this change of language during bedtime reading to his own limited skills in Norwegian when he was in preschool. This suggestion of the father adapting his language exposure to the skills of his son was in accordance with what the father had described himself. Furthermore, in her interview study, Jean (2011) focused on children's perspectives on learning languages. The children's reasoning revealed that they

were very much aware of the relationship between language exposure and their own language proficiency. They pointed to the influence from the home on their Spanish skills and from the school (teachers and friends) on their English skills. The children also pointed to a lack of a more comprehensive use of Spanish as an explanation for them not maintaining the first language.

To sum up, the studies reflect the primacy parents in language minority families ascribed to the learning of the majority language. Parents have been found to acknowledge the importance of their children gaining skills in the second language and to facilitate this development through using the language and through engagement in literacy activities in the school language. At the same time, parents may be involved to different extents in terms of direct support of activities directly related to school work. Regarding the first language, parents seem to possess a more complex concern about their children's maintenance of the language. They emphasize their children's preference, their bilingual development, and their possible school attendance in the heritage country in the future. Some parents also emphasized the symbolic role of the L1 in communication with their children. Furthermore, a few studies addressing language minority children's perspectives suggest that in middle childhood, children may specifically adhere to the notion that elaborated exposure to and use of a language contribute to their learning of that language. Moreover, children this age have been found to be aware of their parents' language policies.

### **2.3 Language use in peer communication**

I will now turn to look at bilingualism as it may unfold in multilinguistic and multiethnic peer communities. More specifically, I have concentrated on the frequency of L1 use and access to same L1-speakers and co-ethnics (2.3.1), how language is used in creating "second lives" vis-à-vis a monolingual norm in the classroom (2.3.2), and how language minority children have been found to use their languages to negotiate identity vis-à-vis peers (2.3.3).

#### **2.3.1 Frequency of L1 use and access to same L1-speakers and co-ethnics**

Evidence of the consequences for language learning of growing up in surroundings with a high concentration of co-ethnics, so called ethnic enclaves, segregated neighborhoods, or schools with a high proportion of co-ethnics/same L1-speakers is widely discussed. The main discussion is related to how surroundings with high access to same L1-speakers provide opportunities to practice the languages involved. While high access to co-ethnics and same L1-speakers may facilitate in-group contact and minority language maintenance,

such surroundings might not provide opportunities for contact with members of the host community and speakers of the societal language and possibly lead to less use of and exposure to the majority language and lower L2 proficiency (see for instance Arrigada, 2005; Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; Bygren & Szulkin, 2010; Feinauer, 2006; Fekjær & Birkelund, 2007; Rydland et al., 2013).

Several studies have investigated how language minority children report their language use at school or outside school where they have access to same L1-speakers. Access to same L1-speakers has been found to be related to the frequency of L1 use by children at school (Arrigada, 2005; Feinauer, 2006; Rydland et al., 2013). Arrigada (2005) studied Spanish language use at school in relation to ethnic composition among Latin-American eighth graders in the US. Controlling for a range of factors such as generational status and geographic location, she found that children attending schools with a relatively high percentage of Latino students tended to report more Spanish language use when at school. Feinauer (2006) looked at peer language use among Spanish-speaking fifth graders in the US who lived in two different neighborhoods. She saw that the students (from Puerto Rico or the Dominican Republic) who lived scattered in throughout more ethnically heterogeneous neighborhoods reported speaking more English than Spanish with their friends, whereas the students living in areas dominated by Mexican co-ethnics reported speaking more Spanish.

In a similar vein, Rydland et al. (2013) studied students' reported language use with peers at school and with peers during leisure time in a sample of Turkish-Norwegian fifth graders living in two different neighborhoods in Norway. They found a difference between neighborhoods in relation to students' patterns of language use outside of the family context: The students in the neighborhood with a higher concentration of Turkish-speakers appeared to use the Turkish language more with peers at school and during leisure time than the students in the neighborhood with a lower concentration of Turkish-speakers. Together, the Arrigada (2005) study, the Feinauer (2006) study, and the Rydland et al. (2013) study point to how the level of concentration of same L1-speaking peers may foster the children's use of their first language outside of the family context.

However, the studies also suggest that there are nuances in relation to the role of access. Researchers have pointed to how minority bilingual children in a majority context have a tendency to use the majority language with peers, even when these peers also are in command of the same minority language (Oller et al., 2011; Thomas et al., 2014; Wong

Fillmore, 2000). In longitudinal studies of language minority children's language use and preference with peers at school in the US, it was found that language preference can shift quickly and early in life, under the influence of peers at school (Oller et al., 2011). In school contexts where children have learned a minority language at school (e.g., Welsh or Irish in Britain), research has identified that children tend to revert to the use of their L1, the majority language (English), with same L1-speaking peers (Thomas et al., 2014).

In the interview study by Jean (2011), the children were asked about their language use with their larger circle of friends as well as with their best friends. Nearly all children indicated that they spoke to their friends in all or mostly English, with the remaining children reporting equal use of the heritage language and English. Similarly, when speaking with their best friend, children tended to use English, with only a few children indicating using some heritage language. The friends and best friends of the interviewed children were also reported to speak English to the children. Few children reported equal use of the heritage language and English by their friends and best friends. However, the study did not account for the linguistic background of the friends and best friend, that is, whether they were same L1-speakers or not.

Finally, few studies have addressed whether children perceive their use of languages during leisure time in a way similar to when at school. Feinauer (2006) found in her interview study that more children reported speaking Spanish with "friends" than "when at school," the latter referring to with the teacher/in class. In fact, only one of the students reported speaking Spanish when at school. This underscores the superior role of the majority language within the classroom context. Again, the specific language background of the friends and classmates was not accounted for in the study. Hence, the reports do not point particularly to their language use in communication with same L1-speaking peers.

I will now look into how language use can be seen as playing a role in peer relationships at a more proximal level. In Section 2.1.4, I introduced the approaches to understanding language use as multicompetence, polylingual practice, and identity negotiation. In the two subsequent sections, I demonstrate further what such language use practices involve among peers in multilingual school contexts.

### **2.3.2 Creating "second lives" vis-à-vis a monolingual norm in the classroom**

In educational contexts in Norway and Scandinavia, the monolingual norm is described as being generally strong, in that the majority languages of the countries have the sole status of

language of instruction (Cromdal & Evaldsson, 2004; Rydland & Kucherenko, 2013; Svendsen, 2004). However, observations of adolescents' (e.g., Jørgensen, 2005) as well as elementary school children's and preschool children's (Cekaite & Evaldsson, 2008; Jørgensen et al., 2011; Rydland & Kucherenko, 2013; Wei, 2011) language interactions in multilingual and multiethnic school settings have showed how students of all ages use their linguistic repertoire to challenge the monolingual norms of interaction. For instance, Cekaite and Evaldsson (2008) studied language alternation among students and teachers in two multilingual and multiethnic primary classrooms in Sweden where classroom teaching was primarily in Swedish. The authors found that teachers brought up the monolingual norm as the prevailing norm in the classroom by explicitly and implicitly invoking Swedish as the dominant classroom language as a response to children's use of their L1 in conversations. They further explain how different sets of linguistic features utilized by the children (e.g., language choice, language varieties, juxtaposition between different languages) were made meaningful in relation to that monolingual norm. Dependent on how they appropriated, exploited, or challenged the monolingual norm when they spoke, the children were assigned to a category of group membership, such as "good language learners," "monolingual speakers," "bilingual trouble makers," etc.

Other studies have pointed to how students in bilingual teaching environments manipulate discrepancies in language proficiencies and preferences in L1 and L2 between themselves and their teachers to their own advantage in the classroom (Wei & Wu, 2009; Wei, 2013). Wei (2013) studied multilingual practices in complementary schools for Chinese-English 10–12-year-old children born to immigrants in the UK. The schools were teaching heritage language literacy, and there was a clear policy that only Chinese should be used by teachers and students. However, there was a significant difference between the teachers' and the students' language proficiency and preference at these schools; the teachers were native speakers of Chinese and were more experienced and skilled in the Chinese language, while the students were described as having had limited or context-specific input in Chinese and having high proficiency in English. Wei found in the observations of classroom conversations that in such an environment, the children created spaces for utilizing their multilingual competence. He illustrated how children were fully aware of the monolingual rules and expectations of the school and the teachers, but they creatively and critically chose between "following and flouting" the rules and norms of

behaviour and dared to challenge authority and tradition. He further stated that the students seemed confident about their identities and abilities.

Creese, Bhatt, Bhojani, and Martin (2006) studied children in an environment similar to that of Wei's (2013) study. They found that students in complementary classrooms obtained both an official teacher–student communication and an “unofficial” communication between students:

Across the case studies we saw students using varieties of parodic language to mock their teacher, to mock each other, to mock national students as second language learners, and to mock their school's attempts to transmit reified versions of “cultural heritage.” Students were able to create second lives in the classroom, where unofficial interactions and transactions could occur. (Creese et al., 2006, p. 32)

The creation of “second lives” in the classrooms has also been observed in Scandinavian classrooms. For instance, Evaldsson (2005) identified in observations of first graders in a multilingual classroom in Sweden how children organize their informal bilingualism as a “side activity” or as “side-conversations” amongst themselves. In a similar vein, in her study of language use by five Philippine-Norwegian children in a primary school context in Norway, Svendsen (2004) observed how the children's use of their heritage language became a “secret” act in light of the children's perception of a monolingual norm of linguistic practices at school. A monolingual norm was clearly communicated by the teacher in the classroom. Interestingly, the teacher in the study expressed that she perceived her students to be speaking Norwegian both inside and outside of the classroom, indicating that she had not noticed the language mixing taking place between the children. She also perceived the children's use of their L1 as exclusionary towards her and preferred that they did not speak “Philippine” when she was around (p. 356). Svendsen also saw that the children to various degrees used their L1 as a secret language at school, indicating that not all children embrace the possibility of creating “second lives” within the school community.

The findings presented above illustrate how the monolingual norm communicated by teachers is challenged by children in everyday classroom communication. The examples also demonstrate how vulnerable the teachers may be when their linguistic competencies differ from those of the students; when meeting with linguistic diversity, the teachers' authority and ability to comprehend and foresee the whole linguistic landscape of the

classroom is challenged. It should be noted that the contexts of the studies of complementary classrooms in the Wei (2013) and the Creese and colleagues (2006) studies are different from that of multilingual classrooms in Norwegian public schools. The confident linguistic creativity demonstrated by the Chinese-English bilingual children in these studies may have been facilitated by the shared status as learners of the heritage language, the shared status of being skilled in English, and the status of the teacher as less skilled in the majority language. However, the studies from Scandinavian school contexts revealed how bilingualism is made relevant vis-à-vis the teachers and the monolingual school norm also in these primary school contexts.

### **2.3.3 Negotiation of language and identity vis-à-vis peers**

I will now look further into how children in Norwegian primary schools have been found to negotiate language and identities vis-à-vis their peers. Aarsæther (2004) studied peer interactions among Urdu-Norwegian-speaking fifth graders in Norway. He found that students alternated between their two languages as a means of positioning themselves in situations of rivalry or conflict and in order to negotiate social status and hierarchy within a peer group. In a similar vein, Rydland and Kucherenko (2013) looked at the language interactions of a Turkish-Norwegian-speaking girl in a multilingual preschool classroom and a multilingual primary school classroom, and noted that the linguistic categories were made relevant in situations in which power relations were at stake, such as when creating and dissolving alliances through switching between which language to respond in. For instance, when one girl responded in Norwegian instead of in Turkish on a friend's use of Turkish (when being able to speak Turkish), she used her language to reject membership in the Turkish group and signal intentions of group membership with the Norwegians, while later in the interaction, the same girl switched to Turkish in order to ally with the Turkish-speaking friend and defend them against the Norwegian-only-speaking classmates. Svendsen (2004) observed how code-switching among the five Philippine-Norwegian fourth graders in her study served as a tool for the children in playing with the language, showing off, picking on each other, and negotiating social identities. All the studies suggest that the use of languages in demonstrating group affiliations is perceived by the children to be emotionally and socially significant.

Based on the observations of the Turkish-speaking girl and her classmates, Rydland and Kucherenko (2013) also concluded that the use of the heritage and majority languages was closely connected to contextual factors such as the language competencies of the

people participating or listening in on a specific conversation (e.g., considering peers who do not know the heritage language), the task at hand (e.g., explaining something to a peer in the language the peer prefers), and the norms of language use in various situations (e.g., being told by adults and peers to speak in one language). Against this background, the authors underscored the role as social actors played out by children in their classrooms:

Children are not simply reproducing the language ideologies that are communicated to them by parents or teachers. Linguistic differences become meaningful to children to the extent that they perceive them to be significant in their social world. Thus, as social actors in preschool and school, children engage in complex regulatory processes in which they monitor and shape their own and others' behavior in relation to linguistic differences. In this way, children's language use and activities are deeply intertwined with their understanding of themselves and others.

(Rydland & Kucherenko, 2013, p. 145)

Moreover, the Rydland and Kucherenko (2013) study noted that in preschool, the children made explicit references to their preferred language use or the norms of language use by telling each other which language to speak, while in Grade 5, the significance of language was more subtly communicated through language alternation and preference. This finding points to how language alternations are not explicated by children in middle childhood.

Finally, Svendsen (2004) emphasized how the children in her study moved along different social, cultural, and religious dimensions in their interactions. For instance, she saw how the children signaled their attachment to their home town and their peers in their home town when interacting with non-Philippine classmates. Gender also appeared as a social category during the children's group work, for instance when they created "boys-teams" and "girls-teams" during play and in how they labelled each other when talking. The study emphasizes how children move through different states of belonging and how language use was a part of marking these states of belonging. Svendsen emphasized that the group of children she studied was a small group of children who knew each other well, and thus the conditions for playing on all linguistic resources and identities might have been possible for these children as a type of in-group activity.

To sum up, what can be extracted from the observational studies of naturalistic language interactions among peers in multilingual contexts is that the children



demonstrate how their language use is a part of who they present themselves to be and thus are emotionally and socially significant to the children. The children also demonstrate the ability to adjust to contextual demands, such as the language skills of their interlocutors, the task at hand, and the linguistic norms of a situation. Finally, group membership is marked across a range of groups, including attachment to peers in the home town and gender, in middle childhood. The studies also illustrate that language alternations are not made explicit in middle childhood and that in order to play on all linguistic resources and identities, one may need to be familiar with the other participants. Together, the above studies of classroom conversations have illustrated the multicompetence demonstrated by bilingual children in communication in multilinguistic and multiethnic classrooms.

#### **2.4 How children perceive their language choice**

In this section, I will look further into how children have been found to describe their language use or language choice beyond reports of frequency.

In an interview study by Hakuta and Pease-Alvarez (1994), bilingual Mexican-American children in Grade 3 and one of their siblings were interviewed. When asked about their language choices with different interlocutors, they usually said that the interlocutor's proficiency or choice of language influenced their language choices. Some children referred to ethnicity and culture as factors that influenced language choice, for instance, that they would speak Spanish with a person because that person was Mexican or English with a person because that person was American, giving the impression that languages are to a certain extent delineated by people's cultural affiliation.

Thomas, Apollono, and Lewis (2014) conducted focus group interviews with 98 primary school-aged bilingual children (mainly aged 10–11) and addressed choice of language (Welsh (the minority language to be learned) and English). The children's reasons for speaking the English language were sometimes attributed to their own preference to speak English but also to others' desires, such as "*One in the group doesn't like speaking Welsh, so I have to speak English.*" Some of the children expressed a view that Welsh was more difficult than English, such as "*[English is] easier, Welsh I get all muddle muddle.*" Thomas and colleagues (2014) also found that children brought up the role of the teacher in their language choice. They implied that they would converse with one another in English when the teacher had left—for example, "*I always speak English with (the) group, but sometimes Welsh when Miss is around.*" Others in the sample reported that they would continue to speak in Welsh, even in the absence of the teacher, sometimes as a matter of

conformity, such as *“If we speak a lot in English, someone will tell on us and we would be in trouble. . .so no one really speaks English.”* Also, statements were made implying that the children felt a greater freedom to code-switch when the teacher was absent, such as *“We do Welsh, but because he is. . .teacher not there. . .we don’t have so much pressure, so we use more English words.”*

Mills (2001) conducted semi-structured interviews with a smaller sample of third-generation children of Pakistani origin (aged 5–19) in the UK. The children indicated an awareness of their different uses and commented on the domains where they come into play and some of the choices that this involved. All the children reported experiences with code-switching, but not all commented in great detail on the nuances involved in this ability. What they did comment on were instances where they code-switched because of a lack of fluency in Punjabi or Urdu—for instance, replying in English when being addressed in Urdu or Punjabi, mixing languages because they knew more words in English than in Urdu, and “getting stuck” when speaking the heritage language and thus saying it in English. One child commented upon being more used to speaking English and not liking some words in Urdu. These children were described as fluent in English, and they commented upon their lack of skills in their heritage languages. The two oldest participants (aged 14 and 19) distinguished between levels of conversation. One of them said that when talking “deep,” when hard words came up, he ran out of words in Punjabi, but that he was able to conduct conversations on daily life issues. The other explained that she could not find the equivalent word(s) quickly enough and would either code-switch or spend more time trying to find the Urdu word. These perceptions reflect that their use of the heritage language was being restricted to certain topics and contexts, particularly basic conversations; that it was challenging to retrieve a full range of vocabulary in the heritage language; and that they would be able to communicate with a different quality if they knew more of the heritage language.

Svendsen (2004) pointed out that the children, similar to their parents, ascribed a symbolic value to their languages. They explained that they used their L1 as a “secret language” at school or with their parents, when they did not want others to understand what they were saying. When in the Philippines, the children used Norwegian as the secret language for the same purpose. Dirim and Hieronymus (2003) interviewed multilingual adolescents (aged 14–16) in a German context, where the focus was particularly on the role of the Turkish language in mixed cultural groups. They found that the adolescents were

very much aware of the including and excluding functions of their language choice. Youth who were not speakers of Turkish demonstrated a sensitivity towards not understanding what their friends were talking about in Turkish. Turkish-speakers, for their part, spoke of the choice of speaking German amongst them as a strategy of submission and displayed an awareness of the linguistic norms and degree of legitimacy of the languages in use (Dirim & Hieronymus, 2003, p. 45). That is, the principle that all people involved in a particular speech event should understand what was happening was highlighted by the youth.

To sum up, previous studies attending to the perspectives of bilingual children and youth demonstrate that they carry with them an awareness of their language choices, which entails a concern about their personal preferences, others' language skills, and the including and excluding functions of the use of a language not spoken by all members of a conversation. Children have also been found to be aware of the fact that they adjust to and challenge the expectations from teachers of speaking the language of instruction when in class. In addition, children across studies related their language choice—either the choice of mixing or the choice of responding in the majority language—to the effort it takes to speak a heritage language in which they are less skilled.

## **2.5 Language use in Turkish and Pakistani families in Norway**

In this final section of this review chapter, I present how language use has been investigated in samples including Turkish- and/or Urdu-speaking populations in Norway. One robust finding is that the Turkish-speaking immigrant populations in Western Europe maintain their Turkish language across generations (see Backus, 2013, for an overview), including in Norway (Rydland et al., 2013; Türker, 2000). In addition, previous studies of Pakistani immigrant groups in Norway suggest that the heritage language (Urdu/Punjabi), at least as an oral language, has a strong position among the speakers both in family and in peer contexts (Aarsæther, 2004, 2009; Karlsen & Lykkenborg, 2012; Østberg, 1998).

A few studies have looked into language use patterns in Pakistani-Norwegian families. Aarsæther (2004) studied language use within nine Pakistani-Norwegian families. Based on parents' reports on questionnaires, he found that Urdu and Punjabi were frequently in use by children both at home and among peers, but he also saw a tendency towards a language shift: the children used more Norwegian than the parental generation and more Norwegian with friends than with their parents. Lervåg and Grøver Aukrust (2010) included a sample of 90 Urdu-speaking second graders in their longitudinal study of differences in reading comprehension development between first and second language

learners of Norwegian. In this study, the parents were provided with a questionnaire about home language use. The parents reported that they spoke both Norwegian and Urdu with their children (but slightly more Urdu), while the children spoke more Norwegian than Urdu with both their siblings and friends, confirming the pattern identified in the Aarsæther study and also suggesting that the parents to a certain extent display a bilingual language use pattern.

Karlsen and Lykkenborg (2012) investigated language use patterns based on reports from 67 Pakistani-Norwegian families. The parents reported their language use across different contexts as well as one of their children's (aged 4 or 5) language use patterns. The majority of the parents were immigrants themselves. Karlsen and Lykkenborg (2012) identified three groups of language use in the families based on parental language use: both mother and father use mainly Urdu with the child ( $n=20$ ), parents who use Urdu and Norwegian in different combinations ( $n=33$ ) (i.e., both parents speak both Urdu and Norwegian with the child; one parent speaks Urdu, while the other parent speaks Norwegian; or one parent speaks both Urdu and Norwegian, while the other speaks either Urdu or Norwegian), and parents where one or both also include Punjabi, alone or in combination with Urdu/Norwegian ( $n=14$ ). The variation inherent in the second group illustrates the diversity of parental language use patterns. The study did not look into the degree to which mothers and fathers overlap but suggests some differences between parents. Furthermore, the parents reported the language use of the siblings when addressing the child. They found that in families where parents spoke mainly Urdu, the majority of the siblings also spoke Urdu (59%). This was in contrast to the families where the parents spoke Urdu and Norwegian; in this case, the majority of the siblings were also reported to speak Urdu and Norwegian (63%). Besides these overlapping patterns between parental language use and siblings' language use, the study revealed a large variation in how siblings within each parental group used their languages.

Østberg (1998) conducted an ethnographic study among five Pakistani-Norwegian families. She found that the young generation maintained their oral command of their Urdu/Punjabi even though not having received formal instruction in the first language. Based on the interviews, she pointed to two reasons why Pakistani language and culture maintain a strong position in Norwegian-Pakistani groups: the relatively high concentration of the Pakistani population in certain neighborhoods and the similar qualities of the background of the immigrant population. Aarsæther (2009) added that the relatively high

number of family reunifications among this group contributes to the maintenance of Urdu and Punjabi within this group.

The few studies including the Turkish-speaking population in Norway also reveal that the Turkish language has a strong position within the families (Løwe, 2008; Rydland et al., 2013; Rydland et al., 2014a; Türker, 2000). In a longitudinal study of 26 Turkish-speaking children recruited from 20 different preschool classrooms in Norway, Rydland, Grøver, and Lawrence (2014a) found that according to the parents' reports in interviews and on questionnaires, the families mainly spoke Turkish at home while the children attended first and fifth grade. The strong position of the Turkish language within the family was confirmed by children's descriptions of their language use with parents and siblings in the Rydland, Grøver, and Fulland (2013) study. However, in an overview of Turkish as an immigrant language in Europe, Bacus (2013) highlighted that there are also intra-group variations among Turkish-speakers, specifically when it comes to language use outside of the family. For instance, he refers to the research on German-Turkish young adults by Keim (2003, 2008, as cited in Bacus, 2013) and on Danish-Turkish children and adolescents in the Køge project in Copenhagen (e.g., Jørgensen, 2004, 2010, as cited in Bacus, 2013), where different styles of code-switching and language alternations have been identified among Turkish-speakers.

Also, in Norway, as previously described, Rydland and colleagues (2013) found that Turkish-speaking children living in neighborhoods with different concentrations of co-ethnics vary in their language use outside of the family. In a similar vein, Türker (2000) investigated Turkish-Norwegian code-switching and language change among intermediate and second-generation Turkish immigrants in Norway. She found great variation in how the participants code-switched. In her concluding remarks, she states the following, which I believe is an adequate description of the environment within which the children in the present study develop and are bilingual:

In immigrant communities such as that of the Turks in Norway, the process of language change can be detected, but the progress of language shift is difficult to predict for the time being because there is always commotion within the community stimulated by newcomers from Turkey, changes in social status (in the work environment, for example, a shift from Norwegian to Turkish colleagues or vice versa), daily contact with spoken and written Turkish—including Turkish television channels as well as the Turkish newspapers, holidays in Turkey, contact with

relatives and friends from Turkey, and assemblies for cultural and social events. Such stimuli combined with a generally strong solidarity and cultural identity among the community members, delay and complicate the process of language change and attrition. Individual choices and differences play an important role in this complicated process as well. (p. 203)

In the final line, Türker emphasizes the individual choices and differences that play a role in this “complicated process.” The present study will shed light on how children perceive some of the choices that are to be made.

I conclude this chapter by referring to two larger surveys conducted in Norway where children and youth from the Pakistani and the Turkish immigrant populations were included in the samples. Løwe (2008) studied the living conditions of adolescents growing up in Norway with parents from Pakistan, Turkey, or Vietnam. A sample of 870 adolescents aged 16–25 with Pakistani (231), Turkish (277), and Vietnamese (362) backgrounds were personally interviewed. The adolescents were descendants or early immigrants. Regarding home language use, around three-quarters of both the Turkish and Pakistani groups reported speaking mostly their L1 at home. These reports by adolescents resemble the previously presented patterns reported by Turkish and Pakistani families when children are younger. Furthermore, the majority of the adolescents with Turkish or Pakistani backgrounds also reported to have *good* or *very good* skills in their L1, and the majority of both groups reported being able to speak their L1 at a level equal to that which they reported being able to speak Norwegian. It should be noted that in this study, as many as 50% did not respond to the survey. Youth with good language skills and education may be overrepresented in the study. With this consideration in mind, the survey results indicate that when reaching adolescence, the Turkish- and Urdu-speakers born in Norway or arriving before onset of school to a large degree perceive themselves as bilinguals who are skilled in both their languages after finishing high school.

Moreover, in a more recent study conducted in the Norwegian context simultaneously with the present study, Alves (2014) studied emotional problems in preadolescents with immigrant background in a sample of 427 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders with non-Western immigrant background (47 % of the sample, the remaining were categorized as non-immigrants), and three of the largest national groups included in the study were from Pakistan (n = 124), Turkey (n = 45) and Sri Lanka (n = 43). A self-administered questionnaire containing questions about mental health was administered to the children,

with particular emphasis on family and academic factors. The children were to report school hassles, parental achievement values (i.e., how strongly parents emphasize the child's achievement), parental comparison (i.e., parents' explicit comparison of their child's achievement with that of others), and emotional problems. The overall results from the study indicate that both parental achievement values and comparison may be risk factors for emotional problems in preadolescents with immigrant background regardless of gender, while school hassles may be related to increased emotional problems in boys with immigrant background. Moreover, results indicate that already during preadolescence, immigrants and children of immigrants in Norway may be at higher risk for developing emotional problems. Against this background, Alves (2014) argues that it is important to undertake studies in the subpopulation of immigrants and children of immigrants from an early age. The study underscores the need to look further into nuances in perspectives held by language minority children in the Norwegian context about proximal features of their lives, such as how they perceive being bilingual in the family and school contexts.

## 2.6 Summary

In this chapter, I have reviewed the literature concerning bilingualism and language use. From an overall perspective, a language shift across generations of immigrants has been observed, where the majority language gradually becomes the dominant language within the generation of children born to immigrants, as described by Montrul (2013). At the same time, the studies reviewed reveal how the continued use of the heritage language by children born to immigrants is found to vary to a great extent.

At a more proximal level, the notion of language use must be understood from at least three different angles, as attended to in Section 2.1. One angle is the emphasis on the relationship between language use and language learning. Children need to use and be exposed to a language in order to learn the language, but for bilinguals, there is an ongoing debate about how families and education should balance the input of the first and second languages in order to facilitate language development and language learning for language minority children. The debate is rooted in different assumptions and empirical findings of language-specific (Edelsky, 1990; Porter, 2000; Rossel & Baker, 1996) and cross-linguistic (Cummins 1978, 1981, as cited in Cummins, 2000) language learning processes. Another angle is to understand bilingual language use as a question of drawing upon one's total linguistic repertoire distributed across the two languages in order to communicate sufficiently (Grosjean, 1985, 1998, as cited in Grosjean, 2008; Snow & Hakuta, 1992). In

this way, domain-specific vocabulary and a complementary relationship between the two languages are acknowledged, along with the alternation between languages in communication as related to the distribution of vocabulary. The complementarity framework also acknowledges the social and contextual pressure on heritage language maintenance from all sociolinguistic domains within which the heritage language plays a role. A third angle is that of language use as multicompetence (Wei, 2011, 2013) and as polylingual practices (Jørgensen, 2008; Jørgensen et al., 2011). These conceptualizations of language use place an emphasis on language alternation and language choice as being valuable as a competence on its own, as a tool for constructing social interactions, and as potential expressions of identity. Both the complementarity perspective and the norms of multicompetence and polylingualism have been argued to question the relevance of the language shift discourse (Dirim & Hieronymus, 2003; Hurtado & Vega, 2004). The polylingual perspective also questions the relevance of adhering to the language-specific qualities of the two (or more) languages in use.

Furthermore, what being bilingual may imply for language minority children can be seen in light of specific issues related to language use within language minority families. This was the topic of the review in Section 2.2. There is a consistent finding in the literature that parents and children use more heritage language in communication with each other than siblings do. However, studies across families reveal that both parents' communication with children, children's communication with parents, and sibling communication may be of a monolingual or a bilingual character, may be dominated by one language or more balanced, and may be reciprocal or non-reciprocal in nature, indicating that language minority children grow up with family members displaying a variety of language use patterns. Few studies have focused particularly on the language use nuances among family members within the same family along all three dimensions, and not merely from the perspectives of children.

Furthermore, studies of adolescents have revealed that adolescents' lack of proficiency in and lack of speaking the L1 affect the quality of parent–adolescent relationships (Oh & Fuligni, 2010; Portes & Hao, 2002; Tseng & Fuligni, 2000), while studies on language-brokering have revealed that children and adolescents may be sensitive to their parents' lack of skills in the majority language (Love & Buriel, 2007; Villeneuve & Buriel, 2010; Weisskirch & Alva, 2002). Thus, differences in language use and skills between parents and children may be expected to be a relevant part of being bilingual.



Furthermore, the review revealed that language minority parents have been found to be concerned about their children's language learning, especially their learning of the majority language. Parents may take the responsibility to speak Norwegian with their children in order to enhance their learning of the language (Rydland & Kucherenko, 2013; Svendsen, 2004). Parents also report that they help their children with school work in the majority language (Duursma et al., 2007; Quiroz et al., 2010; Rydland & Kucherenko, 2013). At the same time, studies of parental engagement in school-related tasks reveal that language minority parents to various degrees are directly engaged in supporting their children in homework (Hassan, 2009). When interviewed, children in middle childhood were found to be aware of the language learning policies of their parents (Svendsen, 2004) as well as of the impact of language learning contexts on their own language development (Jean, 2011; Mills, 2001). Against this background, many language minority families may be continuously balancing the need for the L1 in parent-child communication with concern over the children's need to learn the majority language. Such balancing is yet to be investigated from the children's point of view.

Concerns related to bilingual language use in peer communication were raised in Section 2.3. The presented research regarding access to same L1-speakers pointed to how more extended access may facilitate more use of the L1 (e.g., Arrigada, 2005; Rydland et al., 2013) but also to how access alone cannot account for the amount of L1 used. Research has also pointed to how language minority children in multilingual school environments consistently report using and are observed to use the majority language when at school, strongly influenced by peers (Oller et al., 2011). However, the studies all describe the concentration of co-ethnics on a more distal level, that is, on school or neighborhood level, rather than being based on the access children have to same L1-speaking peers at a more proximal level, for instance, in their own classroom. Moreover, children's use with same L1 peers during leisure time is less studied. When asking children to report their language use with friends, the linguistic backgrounds of the friends have not necessarily been accounted for (Feinauer, 2006; Jean, 2011); in other words, one cannot conclude whether the children actually have a choice to use their L1 with their friends.

At the same time, language minority children in naturalistic interactions have been observed to draw upon broad linguistic repertoires in their classrooms. The presented studies of classroom interactions in sections 2.3.2 and 2.3.3 illustrated the multicompetence demonstrated by bilingual children vis-à-vis their teachers and their peers. The children

were shown to attend to but also to challenge the monolingual norm of language use instituted by the teachers in their classrooms (e.g., Cekaite & Evaldsson, 2008; Rydland & Kucherenko, 2013; Wei, 2013). It was also pointed out how several studies have observed that children use their languages to create “second lives” or “side activities” within the classroom conversation (Creese et al., 2006; Evaldsson, 2005). The observations of students challenging the monolingual norm and creating “second lives” suggest that the teachers’ authority and ability to comprehend and foresee the whole linguistic landscape of the classroom is challenged by the multilingual competencies of the children.

Children’s multicompetence is further illustrated through studies that have shed light on the multiple ways in which language choice and language alternation can be used as a tool for children in demonstrating and creating who they are and want to be, making language use in peer contexts emotionally and socially significant for the children (e.g., Aarsæther, 2004; Rydland & Kucherenko, 2013; Svendsen, 2004). In these studies, children also demonstrate the ability to adjust to contextual demands, such as the language skills of their interlocutors and the task at hand. Finally, the observations of children also illustrated how children position themselves on a range of locally valued identities, such as ethnicity, learner identity, and gender identity, demonstrating the multi-layered aspects of identities (Cekaite & Evaldsson, 2008; Rydland & Kucherenko, 2013; Svendsen, 2004). It was also highlighted that children do not explicate their language alternations in middle childhood (Rydland & Kucherenko, 2013) and that in order to play on all linguistic resources and identities, children may need to be familiar with the other participants and share some significant features with the group (Svendsen, 2004).

When it comes to children’s perspectives on their own language choice, previous studies reviewed in Section 2.4 reveal that language minority children in middle childhood can be expected to be aware of several aspects of their language use and language choice, including personal preference, their own and others’ language skills, and the including and excluding functions of the use of a language not spoken by all members of a conversation and sensitivity towards interlocutors (Hakuta & Pease-Alvarez, 1994; Jean, 2011; Svendsen, 2004; Thomas et al., 2014). Particularly, children across studies have been found to relate their language choice—either the choice of mixing or the choice of responding in the majority language—to the effort it takes to speak a heritage language in which they are less skilled (Mills, 2001; Thomas et al., 2014). Children have also been found to be aware of the

fact that they adjust to and challenge the expectations from teachers of speaking the language of instruction when in class (Thomas et al., 2014).

Finally, previous studies on the Turkish and Pakistani immigrants in Norway have revealed that the heritage language (Turkish and Urdu/Punjabi) has a strong position in these populations (Aarsæther, 2004; Karlsen & Lykkenborg, 2012; Lervåg & Grøver Aukrust, 2013; Rydland et al., 2013; Türker, 2000; Østberg, 1998). The generation of children born to immigrants grow up in families where the heritage language is widely in use by parents while the children themselves use their L1 to different degrees and in different ways. Larger scale studies including self-reports from preadolescents and adolescents with Turkish and Pakistani immigrant backgrounds have suggested that children and youth who are Norwegian-born to immigrants or early immigrants themselves see themselves as skilled in their L1 when they enter adulthood (Löwe, 2008), and that, as a group, they may be particularly sensitive towards school- and familyrelated factors in relation to their emotional well-being (Alves, 2014), even from an early age. However, to the best of my knowledge, no studies have looked further into how Norwegian-born or early immigrated children from these two linguistic and ethnic backgrounds perceive being bilingual in middle childhood.



### **3 Bilingualism and language attitudes**

In this chapter, I illuminate how bilingualism involves attitudes held by the bilingual person towards the languages to be learned or maintained. I start by presenting two overall frameworks for understanding language attitudes in a bilingual context (3.1), before I turn to look at what previous research has found regarding bilingual children's attitudes towards their two languages (3.2). A summary of the review is provided in Section 3.3.

#### **3.1 Overall frameworks**

Two approaches to making language attitudes relevant are presented here: language attitudes as the willingness to make an effort to speak a language (3.1.1) and language attitudes in relation to the need for communication (3.1.2).

##### **3.1.1 Language attitudes as the willingness to make an effort to speak a language**

The power of the desires, needs, attitudes, and motivations of ordinary people in bilingual language learning is acknowledged on a general basis and is illustrated in the following two citations:

If we agree that language is a social activity, and if we accept that almost everyone is cognitively capable of learning second (and subsequent) varieties, then it follows that the force of the situation, and the attitudes it provokes in potential learners, are central. (Edwards, 2013, p. 18)

In the end, language attitude is always one of the major factors in accounting for which languages are learned, which are used, and which are preferred by bilinguals. (Grosjean, 1982, p. 127)

Gardner (1982, 2010) was an early speaker of the influence of attitudes and motivation on language learning, building his hypotheses primarily in relation to second language learning in a foreign language learning context (see also early studies by Ellis, 1994; Lambert, 1963, 1967). One of Gardner's hypotheses was that motivational characteristics are related both to indices of participation in language-related situations during training and also to attempts to maintain second language skills once training has been completed. That is, he suggested that an individual's orientation towards other groups and languages and attitudes towards the language learning context will affect an individual's orientation towards opportunities for learning. Subsequently, participation in

language-related situations will again increase the likelihood of an individual to maintain or learn a language.

In this regard, Gardner and Lambert (1972) described a type of second language learner motivation that they called integrative motivation. Integrative motivation here refers to the desire to acquire the target language in order to learn about the members of the linguistic group or culture, possibly to become part of the community. Such a motivation may lead to a pattern of interaction and communication with second language users, resulting in more exposure and more use of the language. In this way, Gardner and Lambert (1972) highlight the relational aspect of language attitudes and learning by stressing the role of personal relationships with speakers of the target language. The role of personal relationships in language learning has also been emphasized in later studies of foreign language learning. For instance, it was found that foreign language learners' contact with L2-speakers contributed generally to positive attitudes toward the L2 and the L2 culture as well as to higher learner self-confidence in using the L2 (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2005).

In a similar vein, the willingness to communicate in a second language has been proposed in the model of second language confidence and affiliation developed by MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1998). Willingness to communicate here refers to the probability of engaging in communication when free to choose to do so (McCroskey & Baer, 1985, as cited in MacIntyre et al., 1998). Willingness to communicate represents a psychological readiness to speak a second language and is based on much more than objective linguistic skills. In this regard, others have stressed that in order for children to be willing to use a language, children need to feel proud to use and speak the language in a supportive and encouraging environment (Hickey, 2007; Thomas et al., 2014), thereby stressing the role of the context in preserving children's attitudes and willingness to communicate in a language in a sustainable way.

Against this background, language attitudes manifested in a willingness to speak the language and an effort to get in contact and establish relationships with native speakers of the language seem to play an important role in the learning of a language and in the learner's confidence in using the language. However, these hypotheses and findings emerged in relation to foreign language learning contexts, where the language learner needs to actively consult opportunities to practice the second language and to build relationships with L2-speakers outside of the class. In language minority contexts, language minority learners are surrounded by the majority language and native speakers of the language in the

society. On the other hand, in a multilinguistic reality, at the more proximal level, schools and classrooms, neighborhoods, and peer groups might be dominated by other second language learners rather than by native speakers of the majority language, and minority children might have to put effort into getting access to native L2-speakers. Moreover, the majority language not only “belongs” to the native speakers of the language but is also the common language in which children from diverse linguistic backgrounds communicate in. Against this background, the notion of integrative motivation to learn a language suggested above by Gardner and Lambert (1972) in relation to foreign language learning needs to be expanded to encompass the notion that the learning of the majority language is about acquiring a necessary tool for communication with children from multiple backgrounds and that “becoming part of the community” may refer to becoming part of a multicultural community where the majority language is the common language but where children also draw upon other linguistic resources (see Dörnyei & Csizér, 2005, for a further discussion of the assumptions of one language-one culture underlying the integrative motivation concept). At the same time, children may also need to choose to make an effort to stay in contact with and remain a part of their heritage community, keep relations with same L1-speakers, and practice their L1 with native speakers of that language, which they may not be fully in command of. In this way, the notions of personal relationships, integrative motivation and willingness to speak are also relevant in relation to heritage language maintenance.

### **3.1.2 Language attitudes and need for communication**

Another, but related, way of framing language attitudes as relevant for bilinguals is related to the individuals’ ideas of the needs for knowing the languages involved and the consequences of not knowing the languages involved. Edwards (2013) states that for many bilinguals, including those who are language learners in a minority-group setting, simple necessity is the great motivator and the great exterminator of how far the competence in each language develops, referring to the “force of the situation” (p. 18, see citation in previous section). In a similar vein, as already introduced in Section 2.1.3, Grosjean (2008) makes a specific comment about the necessary level of communicative competence needed by bilinguals in their environments. Grosjean (2008) stresses that an individual will always maintain a necessary level of communicative competence relative to the communicative competence required of him or her in the context. It has, for instance, been found that the mutual understanding of the dominant language among all speakers in a conversation reduces the speakers’ perception of the need to use the minority language (Gathercole,

2007). Within such a conceptualization, the needs language minority children perceive they have for developing skills in their first and second languages, and how well they perceive they need to be able to speak their languages, becomes relevant to how they make meaning of being bilingual.

### **3.2 How children display attitudes towards their languages**

I will now look at what previous research has found regarding bilingual children's attitudes towards their two languages. I focus particularly on the positive versus negative attitudes ascribed to the languages by the children (3.2.1) and on how the children explain their language attitudes (3.2.2).

#### **3.2.1 Positive and negative language attitudes**

Positive and negative language attitudes have been addressed in relation to the affective aspect of possessing or learning the languages as well as to the importance attached to possessing skills in and learning the languages. When bilingual children in elementary and middle school years have been asked about their attitudes towards their heritage language, many studies reveal that they have positive attitudes towards their L1 (Cho, Shin, & Krashen, 2004; Nguyen et al., 2001). For instance, in a study by Nguyen, Shin, and Krashen (2001), Vietnamese-English elementary and middle school children in the US were presented with the statement "It is important to speak, read, and write Vietnamese." Eighty percent of the children agreed that it was *very important* or *important*. In another US study, Shin and Lee (2003) presented preadolescents who were Hmong speakers with the statement "It is important to maintain the Hmong language." Ninety-six percent of the children endorsed this statement as *very important* or *important*.

Furthermore, studies involving attitudes towards both the heritage and the majority language reveal that children in middle childhood also tend to have positive attitudes towards the majority language and towards bilingualism (Hakuta & Pease-Alvarez, 1994; Oliver & Purdie, 1998; Pease-Alvarez, 1993, 2002). Some studies have found that children ascribe a similar degree of importance to their two languages (Pease-Alvarez, 1993, 2002). Pease-Alvarez (1993) saw in her case studies of six Spanish-English 8–9-year-olds that the children found being able to speak well in Spanish, English, and in both languages to be important to them. In a similar vein, Feinauer (2006) investigated fifth grade Latino children's language attitudes by asking the children, "What do you think about being able to speak both Spanish and English?" The students' responses to this open question were coded for negative, neutral, and positive affect. Overall, 70% of the children provided positive



responses to being able to speak both languages, while only 3% responded in a negative manner. Thus, the students were overwhelmingly positive about their bilingualism. In an ethnographic study of 13 children aged 7–13 who were Spanish-English bilingual and biliterate, Soto (2002) found that the children were willing to advocate bilingualism despite growing up in a school context described as English-only oriented and where the children expressed that they were not allowed to speak Spanish. Zhang (2008), on the other hand, found in a sample of second-generation Chinese immigrant children in the US that the children often were happy about learning their L1 during early elementary grades, while their enthusiasm for their L1 use and learning usually waned as they progressed in their American school, despite attending weekly formal L1 instruction.

It can also be pointed out that studies have found positive attitudes towards L1 maintenance among children and early adolescents who at the same time indicate a preference for using the majority language (Hakuta & Pease-Alvarez, 1994; Pease-Alvarez, 1993; Shin & Lee, 2003). That is, finding the heritage language to be important or liking to speak it does not necessarily mean that you actually speak it. This implies that attitudes towards a language should not be intertwined with the preference of using a language.

Others have found that children report a preference for the majority language over their L1 (Jean, 2011; Martin & Stuart-Smith, 1998; Oliver & Purdie, 1998; Portes & Hao, 1998). For instance, Martin and Stuart-Smith (1998) found that Punjabi-speaking children in the UK possessed more negative feelings towards their L1 than their L2. Jean (2011) asked children from Spanish and Chinese heritage language backgrounds in Canada about their language attitudes by asking the children to describe the emotional experience of a child presented in a visual scenario where the child was engaged in different communicative contexts, for instance, speaking to a friend or talking with someone at home. The children were provided with visual stimuli of facial expressions symbolizing a happy, neutral, or sad face. While the children's affective responses towards the English language were uniform and positive, she found a greater variation in children's affective attitudes towards their heritage language.

Thomas et al. (2014) used a questionnaire addressing attitudes and perceptions of the importance of Welsh (heritage language) and English (first language and majority language) presented as statements the children were to agree or disagree with on a 7-point scale. Based on the questionnaires, the children overall displayed more favorable views towards English than towards Welsh. However, their responses to the researchers' questions during

subsequent focus group sessions revealed that children were clearly aware of the importance of Welsh language use in school and at home, and the majority of the children demonstrated a strong desire to increase such use. Whilst children understood that the focus on Welsh was necessary and important in order to provide children—particularly those from non-Welsh-speaking homes—with exposure to the language, children in Wales simultaneously required the opportunity to enrich their use and knowledge of English alongside that of their Welsh: *“I just really like speaking Welsh in the school but we need English lessons to improve English.”* In a similar way, Mills (2001) found that the children and youth in her study advocated the importance of their first language, Punjabi/Urdu. When asked about their own values of their languages, they all said Punjabi/Urdu were important, and they were committed to maintaining them, while at the same time citing English as the language they would choose to keep above all.

To sum up, the studies reviewed here address both attributes of importance and more emotional or affective responses to knowing or speaking languages. Some findings suggest that children value their L1 maintenance, their second language, and their bilingualism. At the same time, when the importance of the two languages is to be weighed, the studies here reveal that the L2 has a less questionable position than the first language. Moreover, there may be more negative reports when children are to report their emotional aspects of speaking a language rather than reporting their ideas about the importance of a language, suggesting that these aspects of attitudes need to be investigated separately. Furthermore, language attitudes should be separated from actual language use.

### **3.2.2 Children’s explanations for their language attitudes**

A few studies have looked into children’s explanations for their language attitudes. Focus has been particularly on the attitudes displayed towards the heritage language. In this review, I mainly rely on a core sample of studies and highlight the categories of explanations identified in these studies.

One explanation for negative attitudes towards the heritage language has been found in relation to children’s *growing insight of the status of the heritage language as a minority language*. A few studies have indicated how preadolescents may begin to experience an ambivalence related to their heritage language and the status it has as a minority language (Tse, 1998). In a similar vein, the children in the interview study by Jean (2011) tended to associate positive affect with oral language activities that took place in the home context, while they held disparate views towards listening and speaking the heritage language in

public. The children also brought up the impact of characteristics of the interlocutors in conversations when they talked about their affective responses to speaking their heritage language. If they believed that the interlocutors were an English monolingual or had negative attitudes towards the heritage language, the children seemed to ascribe negative affect to speaking the language.

Another related reason underlying language attitudes identified in the Jean (2011) study was categorized as *group membership* (see also Jia & Aaronson, 2003; Siraj-Blatchford & Clarke, 2000). This theme encompassed several categories including children's personal identification with the target language and group and their recognition of the influence of language upon social relationships with both heritage language- and English-speakers. The children interpreted the presented scenarios in terms of how language facilitated or limited membership in specific groups. The negative responses to heritage language use in the scenarios appeared to be associated with concerns about the isolation from peers that results from heritage language use, as heritage language use was seen as limiting connections with non-heritage language users. On the contrary, children viewed English use as prompting the formation of friendships with English speakers. In a similar vein, Wong-Fillmore (2000) presented a thorough description of a young Chinese-American boy and other bilingual students at his school and his experience of understanding how a lack of majority language skills is a barrier to social success and the formation of friendships with native L2 speakers. Wong-Fillmore (2000) states:

Children in such situations, irrespective of background or age, are quick to see that language is a social barrier, and the only way to gain access to the social world of the school is to learn English. The problem is that they also come to believe that the language they already know, the one spoken at home by their families, is the cause of the barrier to participation, inclusion, and social acceptance. They quickly discover that in the social world of the school, English is the only language that is acceptable. The message they get is this: "The home language is nothing; it has no value at all." If they want to be fully accepted, children come to believe that they must disavow the low status language spoken at home. (p. 208)

In this way, children's desire to fit in with their majority speaking peers, and their motivation to learn the language of the groups in which they want membership and to avoid feeling different from their peers is underscored as significant to how language minority children make meaning of being bilingual.

Others have suggested that negative feelings towards a language are related to *proficiency* in that language. One aspect of this is the unpleasant reactions from other speakers of the language when communicating (Krashen, 1998; Mills, 2001; Snow & Hakuta, 1992). This “language shyness” was proposed by Krashen (1998) and has most often been argued to be related to the heritage language. It has, for instance, been suggested that younger, later-born siblings are left with a greater challenge in first language maintenance due to their comparison with their more skilled older siblings (Bridges & Hoff, 2012; Shin, 2002). Also, the children and youth in the Mills study (2001) referred to a normative pressure from relatives who commented that the children should be better in speaking their heritage language. In a similar vein, Feinauer (2006) found that linguistic proficiency or non-proficiency in Spanish was cited by the children in her study as the reason either to like or dislike speaking Spanish.

Others have brought up a personal discomfort related to speaking a second language in a language minority context as well (Jean, 2011; Snow & Hakuta, 1992). Jean (2011) found that children most frequently explained their affect towards speaking the heritage language and English by referring to their skills in the language. Negative affect was related to a lack of skills, while positive affect was related to possessing good skills in the language. As the author noted, many of the children seemed to have developed the ability to compare and judge their skills in the heritage language and English:

[...] contrary to the notion that young children may not be self-conscious about their proficiency and performance in their languages and will use them uninhibitedly, many children in this study expressed worries regarding others’ reactions to their language competence due to their perceived lack of skills. (Jean, 2011, p. 204)

Feinauer (2006) also found that positive feelings towards speaking Spanish often were due to the recognition that speaking Spanish allowed the children to *communicate with and translate for members of their family* (pp. 120–121). Pease-Alvarez (1993) found in her case studies that, for some children, the desire to take on the role of family translator is part of what motivates them to learn English. In the Mills (2001) study, in spite of their acknowledged lack of competence in speaking their Asian languages, the children and youth reported that the crucial role of their languages was the maintenance of the bond with

their families and communities. The children also brought up a desire to maintain the Pakistani culture by maintaining the language and passing it on to children.

Thomas et al. (2014), who studied children in a language minority context of learning Welsh as a second language at school, found that the children cited both *functional reasons* (e.g., more job opportunities if you speak Welsh, for example: “*Also your job. If you work in Wales, you want to know Welsh because you [have] more chance to do the job*”) and *socio-political reasons* (e.g., speaking the language of the country, for example: “*If they are in Wales it is important because Welsh is the language of Wales, and I think it’s important to try to speak it*”) for supporting the learning and use of Welsh. In a similar vein, the children in the Mills (2001) study provided *instrumental reasons* for retaining their L1: lead to a career and enable you to help others in more than one language. There were also statements where the children said that the English language enabled them to communicate with almost everybody and to get a good education, pointing to the need for the second or majority language to meet demands in the society.

Finally, others in the Thomas et al. (2014) study brought up statements that implied that it’s all about *personal preference or interest*, making comments such as “*I think everyone can [speak more Welsh] with lots of opportunity, but they just can’t or just don’t want*” or “*I don’t do Welsh.*” A similar observation was found by Jean (2011), where children were reported to bring up their degree of interest or preference for a language when talking about either their positive or negative responses to the use of either of their languages (e.g., “*I like English better than Chinese*”).

To the best of my knowledge, no study has looked into language attitudes in a larger sample of language minority children in Norway. Kulbrandstad (1997) conducted a study of 12 language minority children and their bilingualism in Norway. The children were in grades 3 and 8, and their L1 was Vietnamese or Persian. Most of them were immigrants and had started school in Norway at different ages. Data were collected in 1993, when the school curriculum explicated that the educational goal for language minority students was to develop “functional bilingualism” (Kulbrandstad, 1997). The neighborhood and schools they attended were described as consisting of few same L1-speakers. He conducted interviews with the students targeting attitudes towards their languages. In general, the children were positive towards both L1 and L2, and they wanted to learn more of each language. From the children’s answers, Kulbrandstad identified three categories of motivations for the maintenance of L1, which resemble the categories from the literature

presented above: *instrumental* (work, possible return to heritage country, and support for learning Norwegian), *integrative* (contact with family and friends), and more *general* values (“*It is my mother tongue*”) (Kulbrandstad, 1997, p. 121, my translation). This study was conducted under different curricular and linguistic contexts than those of the present study. It is of interest whether similar positive attitudes towards the L1 and L2 and motivations for L1 maintenance are present among Norwegian-born or early immigrated language minority children in multilingual schools under the conditions of a second language learning focus embodied in the school curriculum.

### 3.3 Summary

In this chapter, I have reviewed the literature related to bilingualism and language attitudes. I firstly described how language attitudes may be conceptualized as children’s effort to seek personal relationships and contexts in which they can practice the language skills they need to learn. Such an understanding referring to an integrative motivation and a willingness to speak a language is built on knowledge derived from studies within foreign language acquisition (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2005; Gardner & Lambert, 1972; MacIntyre et al., 1998), but a similar willingness and effort may also be relevant for language minority children who want to practice and develop skills in their two languages. Furthermore, I presented how language attitudes may be related to children’s perceptions of their needs for their two languages based upon the linguistic requirements in their environments (Grosjean, 2008), pointing out that how well the children perceive they need to be able to speak their languages in these contexts becomes relevant.

Previous studies of children’s perceptions of language attitudes have addressed both importance attributions and affective attributions to knowing and speaking the two languages involved. Some findings suggest that children value their L1 maintenance, their second language, and their bilingualism (e.g., Feinauer, 2006; Pease-Alvarez, 1993; Soto, 2002). At the same time, the studies presented here revealed that the majority language has a less questionable position than that of the first language (Jean, 2011; Mills, 2001; Oliver & Purdie, 1998; Portes & Hao, 1998; Thomas et al., 2014; Zhang, 2008). Moreover, seen together, the studies implied that more negativity may surface when children are to report on the emotional aspects of speaking a language rather than reporting their ideas about the importance of language. That is, children may separate their attitudes towards the importance of knowing a language and their feelings about speaking a language, suggesting that these aspects of language attitudes need to be investigated separately. Also, children

may hold attitudes about languages that are not consistent with their actual language use (Pease-Alvarez, 1993; Shin & Lee, 2003), implying that language attitudes and actual language use should be studied as separate aspects of bilingualism.

The review of the international literature on language minority children's explanations for their language attitudes revealed a range of reflections across the studies. From the studies presented here, I identified that children's explanations were related to children's growing insight into the status of the heritage language as a minority language (Jean, 2011; Tse, 1998), their concerns about group membership (Jean, 2011; Wong-Fillmore, 2000), their language proficiency (Feinauer, 2006; Jean, 2011; Mills, 2001), their communication with their heritage group (Feinauer, 2006; Mills, 2001; Pease-Alvarez, 1993), instrumentality (Mills, 2001; Thomas et al., 2014), and personal preference and interest (Jean, 2011; Thomas et al., 2014). To the best of my knowledge, no study has looked more profoundly into language attitudes within a larger sample of language minority children in Norway. In a smaller interview study by Kulbrandstad (1997) among children who were immigrants themselves, children were positive towards both their L1 and L2, and they wanted to learn more of each language. This study was conducted under different curricular and linguistic contexts than those of the present study. It is of interest whether similar positive attitudes towards the L1 and L2 and motivations for L1 maintenance are present among Norwegian-born or early immigrated language minority children in multilingual schools under contemporary conditions.





## **4 Bilingualism and ethnic identity**

In this final review chapter, I focus on bilingualism in relation to ethnic identity. I have already illustrated how bilinguals use their whole linguistic repertoire, including their skills in two (or more) different languages, to negotiate identities and mark belonging to different groups during peer interaction or vis-à-vis teachers in school (see Chapter 2). In this chapter, I focus specifically on the notion of social group membership and on ethnic identity and how these constructs have been found to be relevant for understanding language minority children's perceptions of self and others. I start by presenting the overall frameworks of social identity theory and the contextual development of ethnic identity (4.1) before I look into the research on how children explore and make meaning of ethnic identity in middle childhood, particularly emphasizing the role children have ascribed to language as a marker of belonging (4.2). A summary of the review is provided in Section 4.3.

### **4.1 Overall frameworks**

In order to illuminate how language minority children in preadolescence make meaning of their ethnic belonging, I introduce the overall framework of social identity theory (Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1986), within which a central body of research on ethnic identity has emerged (4.1.1). I also present a framework for understanding how ethnic identity is assumed to be made relevant and explored in middle childhood from a developmental (Phinney, 1989, 1993) as well as contextual perspective (4.1.2).

#### **4.1.1 Social identity theory framework**

Social identity refers to the part of an individual's self-concept derived from membership in a social group (e.g., Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004; Maestas, 2000; Tajfel, 1981). Social identity theorists and researchers assume that human beings define themselves in multiple ways according to the social groups to which they belong by birth (e.g., ethnicity or gender), achievement (e.g., school, work), or choice (e.g., political) (Ashmore et al., 2004; Okagaki, 2006; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). According to social identity theory, identifying with a social group requires categorization, that is, that one categorizes a group based on differences between the group and other groups (e.g., between girls and boys, between bilinguals and monolinguals) and similarities within groups (e.g., common characteristics of the bilingual group). Furthermore, the individual integrates this categorization with an evaluation of the group and by attributing meaning to the categorization (Ashmore et al., 2004; Rogers, Zosuls, Halim, Ruble, Hughes, & Fuligni, 2012). That is, people who would all label themselves as "girl," "bilingual," or "language

minority student” may hold different ideas about what being a member of these groups implies for them. In this way, the theory takes into account the socially constructed and subjective nature of social identities, and the meaning making process becomes the foundation for the construction of a social identity (Rogers et al., 2012).

Furthermore, acknowledging the multidimensionality of social group identification, the current approaches to social identity often highlight different components of the attachment to a given group (Ashmore et al., 2004; Ruble et al., 2004). Researchers within the tradition of measuring social and ethnic identity using scale measures have conceptualized and operationalized ethnic identity differently (for overviews see Ashmore et al., 2004; Phinney & Ong, 2007; Maestas, 2000). In a review of various assessment tools measuring ethnic identity among adolescents and adults, Maestas (2000) identified four overarching dimensions of ethnic identity: 1) *ethnic identification*: the way in which a person self-identifies as a member of a group or labels his or her ethnic group membership; 2) *sense of belonging*: the extent to which a person attributes importance to and is emotionally attached to his or her ethnic group; 3) *attitudes*: comprising either positive or negative attitudes toward his or her ethnic group; and 4) *participation in ethnic activities and cultural practices*: one’s participation in specific traditions and practices such as language, behavior, and customs.

Finally, heritage language has been found to be an integral part of ethnic identities, and the maintenance of the heritage language across generations is argued to be a key factor in the maintenance of such identities (e.g., Imbens-Bailey, 1996; Lanza & Svendsen, 2007; Oh & Fuligni, 2010; Phinney, 1990). However, the specific aspects of language that are of importance is not univocal. Some suggest that level of proficiency is critical, as skills in the heritage language facilitate participation in cultural activities and communication with parents and others who serve as mediators of the ethnic culture (Bankston & Zhou, 1995; Imbens-Bailey, 1996; Oh & Fuligni, 2010). For instance, Oh and Fuligni (2010) suggested that proficiency in one’s heritage language not only allows people to communicate in the language but might also be an indicator of their connection to and respect for their heritage culture (cf. presentation of parent–adolescent communication in Chapter 2). Others suggest that the actual use of a language is of more importance in that it enhances positive attitudes towards one’s own ethnic group (Bernal et al., 1990; Tse, 2000). Either way, the heritage language may facilitate the building of relationships with mediators of the heritage culture, in this way “maintaining children’s sense of origin, affiliation and belonging to a country

they may have never visited,” as suggested by Mills (2001, p. 400). At the same time, there are also studies documenting that pride in one’s socio-cultural and linguistic background can be strong even when maintenance of the community language in terms of both use and proficiency is low (Extra & Yagmur, 2010). Against this background, it can be argued that actual heritage language use and proficiency on one hand and sense of belonging to the heritage group on the other are different constructs and that sense of belonging can be mediated through the majority language.

#### **4.1.2 Contextual development of ethnic identity**

Existing conceptualizations of ethnic identity are mainly based on the assessment tools and research addressing ethnic identity among adults and adolescents. Until the last decades, little empirical research had been done addressing ethnic identity formation and meaning making in middle childhood, despite long-existing theories about early developmental trajectories of social and ethnic identity (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1980; Phinney, 1989, 1993; see Bennett & Sani, 2004, for an overview of social identity development). Preadolescents were earlier presumed in developmental stage theories to be in a phase of ethnic ambivalence or unexamined ethnic identity, while adolescence was viewed as the period of seeking out, exploring, and developing a sense of one’s ethnic self, until reaching a fully achieved ethnic identity in late adolescence (e.g., Phinney, 1989, 1993; Quintana, 1998). More recently, researchers have argued that middle childhood is rather an active period of exploration and meaning making (Akiba, Szalacha, & García Coll, 2004; Feinauer & Cutri, 2012; Rogers et al., 2012, Ruble et al., 2004). During middle childhood, children have been found to establish group membership (label) and understand its permanence (consistency) before acquiring the more meaningful aspects (content and meaning) of the identity and actively considering what it means to be a member of a group (exploration) (e.g., Ocampo, Knight, & Bernal, 1997). Studies have also demonstrated that children are more sophisticated in their later middle childhood than in the beginning of middle childhood (Akiba et al., 2004; Marks, Szalacha, Lamarre, Boyd, & García Coll, 2007).

This turn towards acknowledging the earlier onset of ethnic exploration is partly grounded in sociocognitive models, which assume that children acquire the capacity to form ethnic identities as early as during middle childhood, when their cognitive abilities and social interactions become more sophisticated and abstract (Aboud & Doyle, 1993; Bernal et al., 1990). Another acknowledgement is that of the role of context in providing children with early experiences where ethnicity becomes a relevant social category. In multiethnic

and multilingual societies, ethnicity is a central issue that may be encountered early in life, and language minority children might have a heightened awareness of ethnicity as a marker of belonging (Feinauer, 2006; Marks et al., 2007; Rogers et al., 2012; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001). Observational studies of how children interact with each other naturally in early childhood have revealed how awareness of ethnicity develops and plays a role in social interactions and in how children come to see themselves as similar to and different from others from an early age (e.g., Van Ausdale & Feagen, 2001).

In the US context especially, emphasis has been given in research to the strongly distinct, yet intertwined, histories and social statuses of different ethnic groups. Attention has been given to understanding ethnic identity development in the lives of children and adolescents with different immigrant and cultural backgrounds, who have different historical and sociopolitical backgrounds and statuses and who are socialized by parents and by schools to understand their ethnic heritage as well as exposed to American culture (Hughes, Bachman, & Ruble, 2006; Marks, Patton, & Garcia Coll, 2011; Rogers et al., 2012; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001; Way et al., 2008). As stated by Su and Costigan (2009):

Because of their minority status, ethnicity may be especially salient for ethnic minority children in constructing their identities. The need to consider who they are as ethnic individuals, in addition to other aspects of identity formation, may make the process of identity formation more challenging for ethnic minority children. (p. 639)

In the US, it is assumed that understanding ethnic identities in heterogeneous societies is important because of the identified relevance of ethnicity and ethnic identity in educational and health outcomes at both individual and societal levels (see, for instance, Okagaki, 2006, for further details or Hurtado & Vegas, 2004, for a brief description of the history of dismantling inequalities in US education). In Norway, various anthropological studies have suggested that equality is an idea of particular importance and value (e.g., Fasting, 2013; Gullestad, 2001), and ethnic identity has not been made relevant in relation to education in a similar manner as in the US context. However, some have argued that equality and implicit ideas about sameness and similarity between children in Scandinavian classrooms have been emphasized at the expense of appreciating differences (Cromdal & Evaldsson, 2004; Lie, Linnakylä, & Roe, 2003; Lien & Lidén, 2001). In fact, observations

of students' interactions in Norwegian preschools and schools imply that ethnicity is viewed as a relevant category of identification by children and youth in peer interactions (Grøver Aukrust & Rydland, 2009; Rydland & Grøver Aukrust, 2008). For instance, Grøver Aukrust and Rydland (2009) and Rydland and Grøver Aukrust (2008) looked at how children in multiethnic Norwegian preschools explored themselves as similar to and different from others in ways which revealed that ethnicity is also an important marker of belonging in the Norwegian context. Moreover, the study by Alves (2014) in Norway based on minority children's self reports of emotional problems suggest that already during preadolescence, immigrants and children of immigrants in Norway may be at higher risk for developing emotional problems compared to non-immigrants, underscoring that there may be a particular sensitivity towards risk-factors in this subpopulation of children in Norway.

Studies of meaning making by children in middle childhood related to social categories such as gender and ethnicity have provided insight into how young children construct their social identities. In the remaining subsections of this chapter, I will look into the research on how preadolescent minority children make meaning of and explore their belonging to their ethnic group. The emphasis is on the role ascribed to language.

## **4.2 How children make meaning of and explore ethnic identity in middle childhood**

In this section, I focus specifically on how children have been found to conceptualize and ascribe content to their own ethnic identity (4.2.1) and on how children have been found to ascribe priority and salience to their ethnic identity in relation to other identities (4.2.2).

### **4.2.1 Conceptualizing and ascribing content to one's own ethnic identity**

Firstly, some studies have defined language minority children's exploration of ethnic identity in terms of the number and characteristics of ethnic labels selected by children to describe themselves (Akiba et al., 2004; Marks et al., 2007; Rogers et al., 2012). In such studies, children have been presented with a given number of labels, including labels that relate to belonging to their ethnic group (e.g., Dominican, Chinese, or American) and have then been asked to determine whether this label fits as a description of him or her. For instance, Akiba, Szalacha, and García Coll (2004) and Marks, Szalacha, Lamarre, Boyd, and García Coll (2007) studied two cohorts of children of immigrants from different backgrounds in the US in grades 1 and 4 (aged 6–12 years old) using this approach. The children were provided with a list of labels describing their ethnic or multiethnic background in different ways (e.g., Dominican, Latino, Dominican-American, and "mixed")

in addition to labels that pertained to gender and role (e.g., boy, son, sister, student, and so on). In both studies, they found that the older the children, the greater the number of labels they selected to describe themselves. The associations among number and characteristics of labels selected and child age suggested that children around the age of 10 (grades 4–6) were aware of a greater variety of labels connecting them to their ethnicity than their younger counterparts. This finding was seen to indicate that children in late middle childhood have a more multidimensional conceptualization of their ethnic identity.

Another approach has been to explore how children conceptualize or make meaning out of their ethnic identity using their own words. In the Akiba et al. study (2004), the children were asked “Tell me, why is [label] about you?” in order to examine their construction of the labels they had chosen to describe themselves. The children’s reasons given for each label were coded into categories. In general, the children’s responses included *concrete ideas* such as physical traits (“*I am white because my skin is white*”), nativity or geography (“*I was born here*”), and linguistic abilities (“*I speak Spanish*”); *relational ideas* such as their families’ heritage (“*My mom is Portuguese*”); *valence-attached reactions* (“*I am a girl because boys are bad*”); and responses revealing *socially defined expectations* (“*I am a girl because I get to wear dresses and fix my hair*”). The older children demonstrated a more complex reasoning when describing why the labels were selected in terms of numbers of and variations in responses provided. The authors highlighted that the breadth of responses clearly signaled that “these questions elicited a variety of notions reflecting notable variability not only across children but also across labels” (p. 55), again confirming that preadolescents do indeed perceive the inherently multidimensional nature of these group labels.

On the other hand, the same study also pointed out that it proved to be a somewhat challenging task to come up with content explanations, particularly for first graders. This could be seen in answers of “*I don’t know*,” in answers that simply repeated the label “*Because I am ...*,” and answers that were non sequitur (“*I am Catholic because I can jump high*”). Among the older children who chose an ethnic label as the most important descriptor of the child, 11% responded “*I don’t know*,” while for younger children, as many as 31% responded “*I don’t know*.” These findings suggest a large variation regarding the degree to which preadolescents demonstrate complex reasoning related to their sense of belonging.

In a similar vein, Rogers et al. (2012) studied how second and fourth graders made meaning of ethnic identity. The children were 403 US-born second, third, or later generation immigrants of different ethnic origin (Chinese, Dominican, Russian, White, and Black American) all living in New York City. The analyses were based on the children's responses to the open-ended question "What does it mean to be [ethnicity]?" Children's responses were coded into eight categories of content related to ethnic identity, and the frequency with which a category occurred as a descriptor in the sample was identified. The authors noted that there was no content code that was used by all children or even by a majority of the children in the sample. *Language* was the most prevalent content code, brought up by 30% of the children, followed by *heredity and birthplace*, brought up by 21% of the children. The references to language and heredity and birthplace were more prevalent among the children of immigrants compared to the children of US-born parents. The authors discuss the idea that language is a central marker of belonging for children of immigrants whose ethnic group speaks another language than the majority language and that the more frequent references to heredity and birthplace may indicate their awareness of their origin, their ties to two countries, and that their family comes from or still lives in a different country. Again, older children (fourth graders) elaborated more (i.e., provided a higher number of descriptors) on their ethnic identities than younger children did. As many as 19% of the children remained in the category of "*I don't know*" after being probed.

In another US study, Feinauer and Cutri (2012) reported how 72 fifth grade Latino/a children with Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Dominican backgrounds living in the Boston and Chicago areas expressed their sense of belonging to their ethnic group. All children were either born in the US or immigrated with their parents early in life. They lived in neighborhoods that were either ethnically homogeneous, being dominated by their own ethnic group (Mexican), or ethnic heterogeneous, including Spanish-speakers from different ethnic backgrounds (Mexican, Dominican, or Puerto Rican). In semi-structured interviews, the children were asked the question "What are the ethnic things in your life?" The authors coded the children's responses into themes and presented the frequency with which a theme appeared in the sample compared to other themes. Overall, the authors noted that the students spoke about the "ethnic things" in their lives in concrete and descriptive ways, relying on symbols and markers. Three themes emerged with the most frequency in the children's descriptions: *food* (22%), *language* (21%), and *family* (20%). In this way, the content markers partly overlapped with the ones identified in the Akiba et al. (2004) and the

Rogers et al. (2012) studies, but the frequency with which the markers occurred are not directly comparable. Feinauer and Cutri (2012) also noted that several students asked for clarification on what “the ethnic things in your life” meant and suggested that this may indicate that children are not used to talking about elements of ethnic identity in their school settings.

The Feinauer and Cutri (2012), Akiba et al. (2004), and Rogers et al. (2012) studies all identified that children make meaning of their ethnic belonging through—among other less frequently occurring markers—*language* and through *heredity and family*. Feinauer (2006) investigated the role of the heritage language in the development of ethnic identity in a subsample of 16 preadolescent bilingual Latino students with different bilingual proficiencies. As previously discussed in Section 3.2.2, these children related their positive and negative attitudes towards their heritage language to their level of Spanish proficiency. However, differences in measured Spanish language proficiency were not reflected in the children’s language attitudes. Rather, differences in language attitudes related to the context the children lived in, suggesting that the children “were making affective, rather than proficiency related choices with regard to language attitudes” (p. 91). The study also highlighted how visits to and from the country of origin helped maintain children’s connection with extended family, while at the same time the children possessed diverging ideas about their relatedness to their country of origin in terms of whether or not they felt at home there. Feinauer’s study underscores the idea that language is not only an instrumental tool for communication but is also deeply affective in its nature, anchored in the children’s relationships with their families (p. 91). In a European context, the in-depth interviews conducted by Mills (2001) in a smaller sample of third-generation Pakistani children in the UK (see also Chapter 3) revealed that the children spoke of the ways their Asian languages linked them to the core values of their heritage, family, religion, and community, in spite of acknowledging their lack of proficiency in speaking these languages. In this way, the heritage language was described as having symbolic and emotional value in maintaining the children’s sense of origin, affiliation, and belonging to their heritage.

To sum up, previous studies have shown that one’s ethnic understanding appears to become multifaceted during middle childhood, as children ascribe multiple meanings to ethnicity rather than singular descriptions as well as reflect social experiences encountered throughout middle childhood. Akiba et al. (2004) and Rogers et al. (2012) conclude that the content middle childhood children ascribed to ethnic identity is similar to that ascribed to



the ethnic category by adolescents and adults (Berry et al., 2006; Way et al., 2008). That is, they reference similar ideas, but this may not mean that they have the same level of sophisticated reasoning regarding their sense of belonging. In fact, a relatively large proportion of the children (11–31% in the Akiba et al. study, 19% in the Rogers et al. study, and “several students” in the Feinauer & Cutri study) did not explicate the content of a label describing their ethnic identity or needed clarification of the question asked. Finally, the studies revealed that although no marker of belonging was brought up by the majority of the children in any of the samples, language and family or heritage occurred as frequent content markers in all the studies. Against this background, the role of language may particularly revolve around their family relations in the country they live in as well as their country of origin.

#### **4.2.2 Priority and salience of ethnic identity in relation to other identities**

The next and last prominent issue to be elaborated here is how children have been found to ascribe priority and salience to their ethnic identity in relation to other identities. It has lately been argued that it is important to situate ethnic identity within the context of other identity domains (e.g., Akiba et al., 2004; Umana-Taylor et al., 2014). Two issues have particularly been paid attention to: how language minority children have rated ethnicity as a relevant marker of belonging compared to other more distinct identities (e.g., gender) and how children have rated their ethnic identity in relation to the ethnic/national identity of their country of residence (i.e., ethnic identity versus national identity versus hybrid/bicultural identity).

As discussed in Chapter 3, gender and ethnicity have been found to be categories that elementary school children frequently use to classify themselves and others into meaningful groups. However, previous research assessing the degree to which children consider gender and ethnicity to be central to their sense of self when asked about this issue has yielded mixed results. One approach has examined whether children spontaneously mention gender or ethnicity when they are asked to describe themselves (e.g., Aboud & Skerry, 1983; Alvarez, Cameron, Garfinkle, Ruble, & Fuligni, 2001; Feinauer, 2006). These studies generally report that children describe themselves in terms of their favorite activities (e.g., favorite subject at school) or personality traits (e.g., smart, funny) instead of ethnicity or gender. In her study of Latino/a fifth graders in the US, Feinauer (2006) asked the 16 children in the subsample open questions about what they perceived to be the most important features of their identity (“Can you tell me the most important things about

yourself?” and “What others think most about me is...”). According to Feinauer, no student explicitly identified their ethnic identity or ethnic identification as being the most important feature regarding what they or others thought about themselves (p. 69). Rather, the most important features of their identity were related to school, good character, and family. Half of the children, including students struggling linguistically, provided school-related responses when asked what they or others thought was most important about themselves. Feinauer pointed out that though some of the students may not have performed as well as others at school, they had internalized that it was important to do so (p. 70).

Another approach has been to examine whether gender and ethnicity are central to children’s self-concept, relative to other components of their identity. These studies typically have children rank order a set of possible identities. In general, studies using this approach have found gender and ethnicity to be relatively central to children compared with other social group identities (Akiba et al., 2004; Alvarez et al., 2001). For instance, in the Akiba et al. (2004) study, they looked further into the salience of ethnic identity dimensions in relation to other identities (e.g., gender, family roles). All the children chose a gender descriptor and at least one ethnicity label, and 77% also chose a family role (e.g., child, daughter, sister). Furthermore, the relative importance among identity dimensions was identified (i.e., priority) and was indicated by the children’s ranking of the selected labels. Ethnicity was ranked by most as the most important construct by the Cambodian and the Dominican children (45% and 46%, respectively), followed by gender (34% and 27%, respectively), while among the Portuguese children, the most important construct was that of gender (45%), followed by ethnicity (26%). Again, differences between ethnic groups were prevalent.

Other studies have measured the relative centrality of ethnicity in both ways. Turner and Brown (2007) looked at the extent to which 5- to 12-year-old children considered gender and ethnicity to be central components of their self-concept as well as the relative centrality of these identity components compared to one another and to other identity components. Participants consisted of 102 children belonging to an ethnic majority (i.e., European-American) or an ethnic minority (i.e., Latino/a, African-American, Asian) group in the Los Angeles area in the US. Indicators of identity centrality were children’s open-ended self-descriptions (whether children spontaneously described themselves in terms of their gender or ethnicity) as well as children’s ranking of a set of possible identities, which included the child’s gender and ethnicity, in terms of the most important identity

description. Four additional categories were included: children who are the same age as the child, children who like video games and/or computers, children who like pets/animals, and children who like sports (see Brown, 2006, for a further description of school children's typical self-descriptions).

Regarding children's spontaneous self-concepts, the children most often described their favorite activities or subjects in school (e.g., "*I play soccer,*" "*I like science*") and features of their environment or family life (e.g., "*I live in Los Angeles,*" "*I have a little sister*"). No children indicated their ethnicity specifically in their self-description, corresponding with the findings by Feinauer (2006). Regarding relative centrality, overall, children rated age as most important to their self-concept, followed by sports, computers, gender, and ethnicity. A high proportion of children did not identify with either their ethnic (57%) or their gender (40%) group. This was opposed to the findings by Akiba et al. (2004). However, children in minority ethnic groups considered ethnicity to be more central to their self-concept than did ethnic majority children (one-quarter of ethnic minority vs. no ethnic majority children said it was among their most central identities). This difference grew as the children got older. The authors note that children in minority ethnic groups may attend more to their ethnicity because of its significance in their family life and its implications in society at large.

In a related study by Brown, Alabi, Huynh, and Masten (2011), ethnicity was not rated highly compared to other identity markers. However, despite not rating ethnicity highly as an identity marker, when asked about rating its centrality, the subjects reported positive identifications with the centrality of their ethnic group membership. This study particularly points to how different operationalizations may elicit different perspectives from children regarding their identity. Against this background, although gender and ethnicity are categories elementary school children frequently use to classify themselves and others into meaningful groups, gender and ethnicity do not necessarily appear to be among the most central aspects of children's self-concepts in relation to other dimensions of belonging such as age group and activities. It has been suggested that children may place more importance on the social groups they can choose to belong to (e.g., groups based on common interests) than on the groups they belong to because of their birth (Brown et al., 2011). However, this does not necessarily imply that gender and ethnicity are unimportant to children. As suggested by Brown and colleagues (2011), it may be that gender and ethnic

identities play a central role in children's self-concepts, but the role may be so fundamental that it "goes without saying."

In her in-depth interview study, Mills (2001) found that the oldest participants in her study (15–19) weighed the importance of different markers of belonging. Nuances of how they were attached to different group markers appeared in their reflections, for instance, around both Britain and Pakistan being "home," while at the same time recognizing different affiliations such as "being born" in Britain while "coming from" Pakistan and establishing a coherent sense of self.

### 4.3 Summary

In this chapter, I have focused specifically on social group membership and on ethnic identity and how these constructs have been found to be relevant for understanding language minority children's perceptions of self. I first presented the social identity theory as an overall framework of ethnic identity (Ashmore et al., 2004; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Within this framework, processes of categorizations of social groups based on markers such as ethnicity or gender and attribution of meaning to these categorizations are the foundation of the construction of a social identity. I further presented the four dimensions of ethnic identity identified by Maestas (2000), including ethnic identification, sense of belonging, attitudes, and participation in ethnic activities and cultural practices. In particular, the attention given to role of the heritage language in mediating attachment to one's ethnic heritage group was highlighted (Extra & Yagmur, 2010; Imbens-Bailey, 1996; Oh & Fuligni, 2010; Tse, 2000).

Furthermore, the review looked into the contextual development of social and ethnic identity. Children are expected to develop more sophisticated conceptualizations of their group memberships during middle childhood, where they not only distinguish between groups but also increasingly explore the content of and ascribe meaning to the categories (Akiba et al., 2004; Ocampo et al., 1997; Rogers et al., 2012; Ruble et al., 2004). Furthermore, language minority groups have been found to consider ethnicity to be more central to their self-concept than ethnic majority children (Akiba et al., 2004; Turner & Brown, 2007). Whereas in the US context, it is assumed that an empirically grounded knowledge of ethnic identity plays a role in educational and health outcomes at both individual and societal levels (Hurtado & Vegas, 2004; Okagaki, 2006), ethnicity as a marker of identity has been less emphasized in the equality-centered Norwegian context (Fasting, 2013; Gullestad, 2001; Lie et al., 2003). However, observations of students'

interactions in Norwegian preschools and schools imply that ethnicity is made relevant as a category of identification by children and youth in peer interactions (Grøver Aukrust & Rydland, 2009; Rydland & Grøver Aukrust, 2008).

The review further looked into how children conceptualize and ascribe content to their own ethnic identity. Previous studies show that ethnic identity becomes multifaceted during middle childhood, as children ascribe multiple meanings to ethnicity rather than singular descriptions (Akiba et al., 2004; Feinauer & Cutri, 2012; Marks et al., 2007; Rogers et al., 2012). Across studies, the children describe themselves with multiple labels, and identify a broad range of content to the ethnic category. At the same time, no marker of belonging was brought up by a majority of the children in any of the samples. The content ascribed to the ethnic label partly overlapped and partly were unique to specific samples. Language and family or heredity are the categories that appeared with the greatest frequency across studies (Akiba et al., 2004; Extra & Yugmur, 2010; Feinauer & Cutri, 2012; Mills, 2001; Rogers et al., 2012). It was highlighted that in middle childhood, children's language attitudes and sense of belonging to their ethnic heritage group might be closely connected to their family relations in the country they live in as well as their country of origin. Furthermore, it turned out that when compared, references to language and heredity and birthplace were more prevalent among the children of immigrants than among the children of US-born parents (Rogers et al., 2012).

Furthermore, within and across studies, there was a great variation in how concrete or abstract children demonstrated their thinking and in how many categories a child came up with or how many labels a child identified with. In addition, a relatively large proportion of the children did not explicate the content of their ethnic identity, needed clarification of the question asked, or came up with non sequitur responses. Altogether, previous studies suggest that in middle childhood, children range from displaying a multidimensional meaning making of ethnicity as a group marker to displaying no explicated indication of how they make meaning of the ethnicity label.

Finally, the review focused on how children ascribe priority and salience to their ethnic identity vis-à-vis their identification with other groups. Previous research addressing the topic has yielded mixed findings. While ethnicity is a category elementary school children frequently use to classify themselves and others into meaningful groups, children are seldom found to bring up ethnicity as a central aspect of who they are when asked to describe themselves (e.g., Alvarez et al., 2001; Feinauer, 2006; Turner & Brown, 2007).

While some have found that children rate their ethnicity as more central than other group identities (Akiba et al., 2004), others have found that children seldom consider ethnicity as the most central label when asked to rank different markers of belonging (Brown et al., 2011; Turner & Brown, 2007). Rather, other aspects such as family, age group, school achievement, activities, and grade level have been found to be of more relevance when children describe themselves, suggesting that children may place more importance on the social groups they can choose to belong to (e.g., groups based on common interests) than on the groups they belong to because of their birth, or that the role of gender and ethnicity may be so fundamental that it “goes without saying.”

## 5 Summary of review and empirical research questions

This study addresses the overall question *How do language minority children in the Norwegian context perceive being bilingual?* by investigating language minority children's perspectives in a sample of preadolescents of Turkish and Pakistani heritage in Norway. In the preceding three chapters, I have reviewed the literature related to three different, but related, aspects of bilingualism: bilingualism as language use, as language attitudes, and as related to social and ethnic identity. I also argued that based on previous studies of the Pakistani and Turkish populations in Norway (Aarsæther, 2004; Karlsen & Lykkenborg, 2012; Lervåg & Grøver Aukrust, 2013; Rydland et al., 2013; Rydland et al., 2014a; Türker, 2000), it can be expected that Norwegian-born or early immigrated children of Pakistani or Turkish heritage grow up in families where both the heritage language (Urdu/Punjabi and Turkish) and the majority language play important roles. However, to the best of my knowledge, no studies have looked more profoundly into how Norwegian-born or early immigrated children from these two or other language minority populations living and learning in multilinguistic environments perceive being bilingual during middle childhood. Based on perspectives gained from self-reports by immigrant children in her larger survey in Norway, Alves (2014) argued that it is important to undertake studies in the subpopulation of immigrants and children of immigrants from an early age. In the present study, I look further into nuances in perspectives held by language minority children in the Norwegian context about proximal features of their lives, in relation to how they perceive being bilingual in the family and school contexts. In the following, I summarize the review and specify the three empirical research questions and related sub-questions to be addressed in the present study of how language minority children in the Norwegian context perceive being bilingual.

One important aspect of being bilingual to be investigated is language use and communication within the family. In Chapter 2, I argued that one robust finding, based on both parental and child reports, is that of a language difference or language shift across generations; parents and children use the L1 more when addressing each other than children do when addressing each other (De Houwer, 2007; Duursma et al., 2007; Feinauer, 2006; Jean, 2011; Nguyen et al., 2001). At the same time, there is also often a correlation between parental language use and the child's language use with his/her parents (De Houwer, 2007; Hakuta & D'Andrea, 1992; Pearson, 2007). The latter findings suggest that the heritage language plays an important role in communication between parents and children in many

language minority families. However, Oller et al. (2011) noted that when children turn the majority language into the dominant language, parent–child communication is non-reciprocal in terms of parents speaking the L1 and children speaking the L2. Furthermore, parents within the family have also been found to share language use patterns to various degrees (De Houwer, 2007; Karlsen & Lykkenborg, 2012). This suggests that children may perceive language use in parent–child communication to be dependent upon with which of the parents they communicate.

Furthermore, when acknowledging within-family nuances in language use, it becomes relevant how families embrace the language differences in communication across generations (between parents and children). Some findings point to the fact that parents and children can use different languages but still comprehend each other and not even be aware of the difference in languages used when speaking (Hurtado & Vega, 2004). This suggests that even though not actually speaking the languages to a similar extent, children and parents may have a receptive vocabulary that allow them to comprehend both languages and makes communication with the use of two languages fluent (De Houwer, 2007). Others have pointed to the possible distortion of parent–child communication due to differences in language use and skills. Such perspectives have especially been brought up in retrospect by bilinguals rendering the use of the majority language as limiting emotional family communication (e.g., Cho & Krashen, 1998). The emotional, or symbolic, component of including the heritage language in parent–child communication was also pointed to by parents, who said that their use of the first language with their children was about the strength of the message (Svendsen, 2004). Furthermore, studies including adolescents' reports have revealed that the emotional quality of parent–adolescent relationships, family solidarity, and engagement in academic communication was lower, and language conflict more frequent, when the adolescents did not speak (Tseng & Fuligni, 2000) or were less skilled in (Oh & Fuligni, 2010; Portes & Hao, 2002) the heritage language.

According to my knowledge, children's perceptions of parent–child differences in language use has not been thoroughly investigated. The reviewed studies of children's perspectives on language-brokering practices suggest that children hold various attitudes towards the role they are assigned when translating for parents (Buriel et al., 1998; De Ment et al., 2005; Weisskirch & Alva, 2002). In Chapter 3, I also presented findings of children possessing positive feelings towards speaking their L1 due to the fact that speaking the L1 allowed them to be able to translate for members of their family (Feinauer, 2006) and of



children saying that they are motivated to learn the majority language so that they can take on the role of family translator (Pease-Alvarez, 1993). These findings suggest that children are sensitive towards parental comprehension of the societal language. In addition, when children have been asked about their language use in general, they are often found to express that they do adjust their own language use to the language skills and language use of others (Hakuta & Pease-Alvarez, 1994; Thomas et al., 2014). In this way, children have presented themselves as flexible in their alternation between languages. However, language minority children across the presented studies have also stated that they relate their less frequent use of the heritage language to the effort it takes to speak a language in which they are less skilled (Feinauer, 2006; Jean, 2011; Krashen, 1998; Mills, 2001; Thomas et al., 2014). Against this background, switching between languages may be linguistically strenuous for some children, including in communication with their parents.

Finally, the review pointed out that children in middle childhood display an awareness of their parents' language policies and exposure strategies (Jean, 2011; Svendsen, 2004). Language minority parents overall are deeply concerned about their children's learning of the majority language (Goldenberg et al., 2006; Svendsen, 2004; Rydland & Kucherenko, 2013), supported by studies finding that the majority language is the language in which literacy activities are most often facilitated by parents (Duursma et al., 2007; Quiroz et al., 2010). However, in contrast to the identified concern about children's learning of the majority language, survey studies have revealed that language minority parents in Norway to various degrees are directly engaged in supporting their children with homework (Backe-Hansen et al., 2013; Hassan, 2009). This may suggest a gap between parental concerns about their children's learning of the majority language and the tools they perceive themselves to have to engage directly in providing the support when children are engaged in language learning tasks. In this vein, statements from language minority parents illustrate that parents relate to the task of supporting their children's second language development differently (Rydland & Kucherenko, 2013; Svendsen, 2004). When possible, parents display a great willingness to speak the majority language with their children in order to enhance their children's learning of the language. However, parents who perceive themselves as having limited skills in the majority language relate differently to their linguistic limitations: while some choose to use their first language with their children, others strive to increase the use the majority language despite their limited skills.

In conclusion, the review suggests that in middle childhood, children are sensitive towards the bilingual characteristics of their different family members as well as towards their own language use vis-à-vis their different family members. Moreover, studies across families reveal that both parents' communication with children, children's communication with parents, and sibling communication may be of a monolingual or a bilingual character, may be dominated by one language or more balanced, and may be reciprocal or non-reciprocal in nature. That is, language minority children grow up with family members displaying a variety of language use patterns. However, according to the best of my knowledge, no studies have looked more profoundly into how children in middle childhood perceive nuances in family language use. Against this background, the present study of how language minority children in Norway perceive being bilingual addresses the following research question and related sub-questions:

*RQ 1: How do the children perceive language use in communication within their families?*

*RQ 1a) To what degree do the children perceive themselves using their L1 in communication with parents and siblings, to what degree do they perceive their parents using their L1 when talking to them, and to what degree do the children's self-ratings reflect reciprocity and unity in language use in parent-child communication?*

*RQ 1b) When engaged in talk about language use in parent-child communication, what perceptions do the children bring forward?*

A second important aspect of being bilingual to be investigated relates to children's perceptions of language use in multilinguistic peer contexts. In the description of the language shift provided by Montrul (2013), it was highlighted that during elementary school years, that is, during middle childhood, children are more exposed to the majority language at school and by peers and that this contributes to a decrease in input and use of the heritage language. The review in Chapter 2 revealed that on an overall level, language minority children in multilinguistic school environments overwhelmingly report using the majority language when at school (e.g., Feinauer, 2006; Jean, 2011; Oller et al., 2011; Thomas et al., 2014). However, the review also pointed to nuances in language use among peers in multilinguistic contexts, indicating that children also use their L1 with peers at school.

One nuance relates to access to same L1-speakers at school. Studies by Arrigada (2005), Feinauer (2006), and Rydland et al. (2013) pointed to how higher concentrations of

co-ethnics and same L1-speakers at school and in the child's neighborhood may foster more use of the first language with peers. Furthermore, as highlighted in Chapter 2, language minority children in naturalistic interactions are observed to draw upon a broad range of linguistic repertoires in their classrooms. In peer interaction in multilingual classrooms, children actively use their heritage languages to mark group belongings and position themselves vis-à-vis each other (Aarsæther, 2004; Rydland & Kucherenko, 2013; Svendsen, 2004). The children's multicompetence as bilinguals has also been demonstrated in how children both attend to and challenge the monolingual norms of the school, vis-à-vis their teachers and each other (Rydland & Kucherenko, 2013; Wei, 2013). It was also pointed out that children use their languages to create "second lives" or side activities within the classroom conversation (Creese et al., 2006; Evaldsson, 2005). Against this background, it becomes relevant to investigate the degree to which children perceive themselves using their L1 when addressing other same L1-speakers in such peer contexts, and to look further into what nuances they bring up regarding their language use.

Moreover, studies of children's language use have addressed access to same L1-speakers at a more distal level—that is, at school, in the neighborhood, or language use with friends in general—rather than looking into the language use specified when with same L1-speaking peers in specific contexts, for instance, in their own classroom. Both Jean (2011) and Feinauer (2006) found that children reported an extensive use of English with their "friends," and Feinauer found that children reported less use of the heritage language "when at school" than with "friends." However, when asking the children to report their language use with "friends," the linguistic background of the friends or the particular context (e.g., when at school or during leisure time) has not been sufficiently accounted for. That is, one cannot make conclusions regarding whether less use of the heritage language is reported due to a lack of friends who speak the same L1 or due to a choice of not speaking the L1 with same L1-speaking friends.

In Chapter 3, I presented the significance of the willingness to make an effort to speak a language and build relations with native speakers of the language in order to learn a language (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2005; Gardner & Lambert, 1972). I argued that in multilingual realities, contexts at the more proximal level, such as classrooms and peer groups, might be dominated by other second language learners rather than native speakers of the majority language, and minority children might have to put forth effort into getting access to and building relationships with native L2-speakers. In this regard, Rydland and

Kucherenko's (2013) study pointed to how parents whose children attend schools with a high concentration of same L1-speakers displayed a constant concern about their children not having sufficient access to Norwegian-speaking peers during their school day in order for the children to learn Norwegian. On the other hand, children may also need to make an effort to stay in contact with and remain a part of their heritage community and keep relations with same L1-speakers and practice their L1 with native speakers of that language. Studies of children's perspectives on their own language learning have pointed out that children are aware of the influence from the school (teachers and friends) and the home on their language skills (Jean, 2011). These studies suggest that both parents and children are concerned about the impact of their peer environments on the children's language use and skills.

Finally, as attended to in Chapter 2, language minority children have been found to be aware of the contextual and relational complexities inherent in their choice of language. They are aware of their personal preference, their own and others' language skills, and the including and excluding functions of the use of a language not spoken by all members of a conversation (Hakuta & Pease-Alvarez, 1994; Jean, 2011; Svendsen, 2004; Thomas et al., 2014). Children have also been found to be aware of the fact that they adjust to and challenge the expectations from teachers of speaking the language of instruction when in class (Thomas et al., 2014). Furthermore, in Chapter 3, I identified children's explanations of their positive and negative affects towards speaking a specific language. Children exerted great sensitivity towards speaking their L1 in different contexts. For instance, children underscored the desire to fit in with their majority-speaking peers and their motivation to learn the language of the groups in which they desire membership (Jean, 2011; Wong-Fillmore, 2000).

Against this background, previous research brings up numerous relevant nuances related to bilingual language use in multilingual peer contexts. The present study of how language minority children in the Norwegian context perceive being bilingual elaborates on language minority children's perspectives on their peer language use by addressing the following research question and related sub-questions:

*RQ 2: How do the children perceive language use in communication with and among same L1-speaking peers?*

*RQ 2a) To what degree do the children perceive themselves using their L1 in communication with same L1-speaking friends at school and during leisure time?*

*RQ 2b) When engaged in talk about language use with and among peers, what perceptions do the children bring forward?*

A third and final aspect of how language minority children perceive being bilingual to be investigated relates to children's perspectives on the importance of their languages. Previous studies of children's attitudes towards their two languages have addressed both attributes of the importance of and more affective responses to knowing or speaking languages. The review in Chapter 3 addressed children's reports of positive and negative language attitudes. Some findings suggest that children value their heritage language maintenance, their second language, and their bilingualism (e.g., Feinauer, 2006; Kulbrandstad, 1997; Pease-Alvarez, 1993; Soto, 2002). Other studies suggest that when the importance of the two languages is to be weighed, the majority language has a less questionable position than the first language (e.g., Jean, 2011; Mills, 2001; Thomas et al., 2014).

In Chapter 3, I also presented language attitudes as the individuals' ideas of the need for knowing the languages involved in order to be able to communicate at a necessary level (Grosjean, 2008), referred to by Edwards (2013) as "the force of the situation." In this way, children are believed to develop their attitudes towards learning or maintaining their languages in relation to the skills they perceive are required of them in their environments. Acknowledging that different contexts may require different qualities of heritage language skills makes it relevant to investigate language minority children's perspectives on the importance of their languages in relation to how they perceive their needs for developing skills, and, even more, high skills, in their two languages.

Furthermore, children have been found to attach a number of evaluations to the importance of knowing and the feelings of speaking their languages. Four reoccurring topics were their concerns about *group membership* (Jean, 2011; Wong-Fillmore, 2000), their *language proficiency* (Feinauer, 2006; Jean, 2011; Mills, 2001), their *communication with their heritage group* (Feinauer, 2006; Kulbrandstad, 1997; Mills, 2001; Pease-Alvarez, 1993), and *instrumentality*, such as getting a job (Kulbrandstad, 1997; Mills, 2001; Thomas

et al., 2014). Thus, both skill aspects and relational aspects may be relevant when children are to ascribe importance to their languages.

In this regard, in Chapter 4, I highlighted that across studies, language minority children are found to make meaning of their ethnic belonging through *language* and through *heredity and family* (Akiba et al., 2004; Feinauer, 2006; Feinauer and Cutri, 2012; Mills, 2001; Rogers et al., 2012; Turner & Brown, 2007). The in-depth studies by Feinauer (2006) and Mills (2001) underscore that language is not only an instrumental tool for communication but is also deeply affective in its nature, anchored in the children's relationships with their families. Against this background, children's perceived importance of languages may revolve around their family relations in the country they live in as well as the country of origin—that is, revolve around the role of language as a marker of belonging to their ethnic heritage group.

However, as presented in Chapter 4, studies generally report that children spontaneously describe themselves in terms of a range of identity markers: their personality traits (e.g., smart, funny), their favorite age- and school-related activities, their grade level, or their family roles as well as ethnicity and gender (e.g., Akiba et al., 2004; Turner & Brown, 2007; Brown et al., 2011; Feinauer, 2006). When children have been asked to rank a set of possible identities, studies yield mixed findings of what children perceive as being the most central identity markers (Akiba et al., 2004; Alvarez et al., 2001; Brown et al., 2011). It has been suggested that children may place more importance on the social groups they can choose to belong to (e.g., groups based on common interests) than on groups they belong to because of their birth. It was also suggested that the role of gender and ethnicity may be so fundamental that it “goes without saying” (Brown et al., 2011). Thus, when inviting children to talk about their sense of belonging to their ethnic heritage group, one must assume that one may not be approaching the most salient or easily explicated self-concept of the child.

Seen together, the previous studies of language minority children's explanations for their language attitudes (Chapter 3) and the previous studies of how language minority bilinguals in middle childhood relate to their ethnic heritage group (Chapter 4) have revealed that during middle childhood, children's language attitudes are closely connected to their perceptions of the competencies required of them in their environments as well as to their concerns about group membership and a sense of belonging. The present study of how language minority children in the Norwegian context perceive being bilingual explores their

language attitudes further by addressing the following research question and related sub-questions:

*RQ 3: How do the children perceive the importance of their two languages?*

*RQ 3a) To what degree do the children find it important to be able to speak well in their two languages?*

*RQ 3b) When engaged in talk about language attitudes and a sense of belonging to their ethnic heritage group, what perceptions of the roles of language as a skill and language as a marker of belonging do the children bring forward?*

By addressing these three research questions and related sub-questions, the main contribution of the present study of how language minority children in the Norwegian context perceive being bilingual is two-fold: The study firstly applies previously studied categories of language use and language attitudes from the international literature to the Norwegian context. Secondly, the children's contributions have allowed me to elaborate on and add nuances to the ways children make meaning of aspects of being bilingual that are familiar in the literature but that have not yet been profoundly investigated from the perspectives of children in middle childhood.





## 6 Methods

In this chapter, I describe the methodological approach to addressing the three empirical research questions presented in Chapter 5: *How do the children perceive language use in communication within their families?* (RQ 1), *How do the children perceive language use in communication with and among same L1-speaking peers?* (RQ 2), and *How do the children perceive the importance of their two languages?* (RQ 3). I first describe the research design as a study of children's perceptions through semi-structured interviews (6.1). I continue with a description of the sample (6.2) and the data collection procedure, where I present the interview protocol, the interview procedure, and the transcription procedure (6.3). As will be evident, the interview consisted of both fixed-choice questions and open-ended questions. The children's responses to the fixed-choice questions are referred to as children's *self-ratings* and constitute the data used in the analyses addressing RQ 1a, RQ 2a, and RQ 3a. The self-rating categories and scoring procedures are presented in Section 6.4. The children's spontaneous or prompted elaborations of their responses to the fixed-choice questions and their responses to the open-ended questions in the interview are referred to as *children's talk* and constitute the data used in the analyses addressing RQ 1b, RQ 2b, and RQ 3b. The analytical procedures of extracting and constructing *elaborative themes* from children's talk are presented in Section 6.5. In Section 6.6, I give an orientation of the theoretical framework of reliability and validity adhered to in the study and provide a cohesive review of how I applied the framework to ensure the quality of the study. Finally, in Section 6.7, I reflect upon ethical considerations of relevance.

### 6.1 Studying children's perspectives through semi-structured interviews

Researching children's perceptions involves acknowledging children's participation (Ulvik, 2014). The present study relied on children's participation in individual in-depth, semi-structured interviews. The interview design combined the tradition of researching children's perspectives through a standard set of fixed-choice questions with a more open-ended, individually tailored approach directed by the voice of the child in the individual interview conversation (Feinauer, 2006; Jean, 2011; Pfeifer et al., 2007; Thomas et al., 2014). I chose this combined interview approach to be able to complement children's identification with core categories already applied in research on language minority children with an exploration of their own experiences and perceptions of being bilingual. The study design is confirmatory and seeks to identify and further explicate the conceptualizations investigated among children in previous research while also being exploratory by encompassing how

children in this particular sample made meaning of certain aspects of their bilingualism (Miles & Huberman, 2014).

When investigating children's perspectives through interview conversations, different terminologies have been applied to label the perspectives derived from the interviews, depending on the approach to interviewing and to analyzing data. Children's *perceptions, experiences, beliefs, voice, expressions, views, discourse, meaning making, narratives, and talk* are all labels found in the literature (Freeman & Mathison, 2009; Hedegaard et al., 2012; Parkes, 2007; Soto & Swadener, 2005; Ulvik, 2014). In the present study, I chose to apply the overall label *children's perceptions* of being bilingual, which again is operationalized as *children's self-ratings* (i.e., their identifications with the pre-defined categories presented to them through fixed-choice questions) and as *children's talk* (i.e., their own elaborations, spontaneous or prompted, occurring as the children spoke throughout the interview), the latter emphasizing that the perceptions were derived from children's own talk with the interviewer about specific topics during the interview.

The subject of analysis in this study is *what* the children said in their talk about being bilingual rather than how it was said (Kvale, 1996). However, what the children said and how their meanings are to be interpreted are strongly dependent on how their meanings were retrieved. The structure of an interview conversation ascribes specific roles to the interviewer and the interviewee and represents a specific context in which the participants come forward with their perspectives (Hedegaard et al., 2012; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015; Punch, 2002; Soto & Swadener, 2005; Ulvik, 2014). While children on a general basis have been found to have the capacity to share their experiences in an interview setting (Clark, 2004, as cited in Freeman & Mathison, 2009), a child's behavior in a specific interview situation should be understood as a person-in-situation (Westcott & Littleton, 2005, as cited in Freeman & Mathison, 2009). Previous interview studies with children in middle childhood suggest that how articulate children are depends on numerous personal and situational characteristics (Freeman & Mathison, 2009; Punch, 2002). Punch (2002) noted that the challenge of interviewing children is how best to enable children to express their views to an adult researcher at the point of data gathering in order to enhance their willingness to communicate and the richness of the findings (p. 325). This study acknowledges the role of the interviewer in facilitating children's competence in coming forward with their perceptions and in contributing to the children's meaning making during the interview. The fixed-choice questions were embedded in the interview conversation and

were subject to joint inquiry by the child and the interviewer whenever a child initiated it (see sections 6.3 and 6.4). Thus, the interview as a whole is seen as a “co-elaborated” act on the part of both parties rather than a gathering of information by one party (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 8).

Figure 6.1 displays the overall study procedure. Phase 1 illustrates the data collection, that is, the interview. Because children’s self-ratings are presented as separate results addressing separate sub-questions in the study, the fixed-choice questions are highlighted as a distinct part of the interview in the figure. Phase 2 illustrates the data analyses for each of the three research questions. The self-ratings derived from the fixed-choice questions (see Section 6.4) allowed for frequency analyses of the prevalence of specific perceptions among the children, addressing RQs 1a, 2a, and 3a. Elaborative themes (see Section 6.5) were constructed from cross-case analyses of children’s talk in their elaborations of their responses to the fixed-choice questions and in their responses to the open-ended questions, addressing RQs 1b, 2b, and 3b. Phase 3 illustrates how the results from the frequency analyses and qualitative analyses were integrated and discussed for each research topic. The intertwined nature of the fixed-choice questions and the follow-up and open-ended questions is reflected in how the elaborative themes illuminate the nuances identified in children’s self-ratings. Phase 4 illustrates how the findings regarding the three research questions merge into an overall discussion of findings regarding how language minority children in the Norwegian context perceive being bilingual.

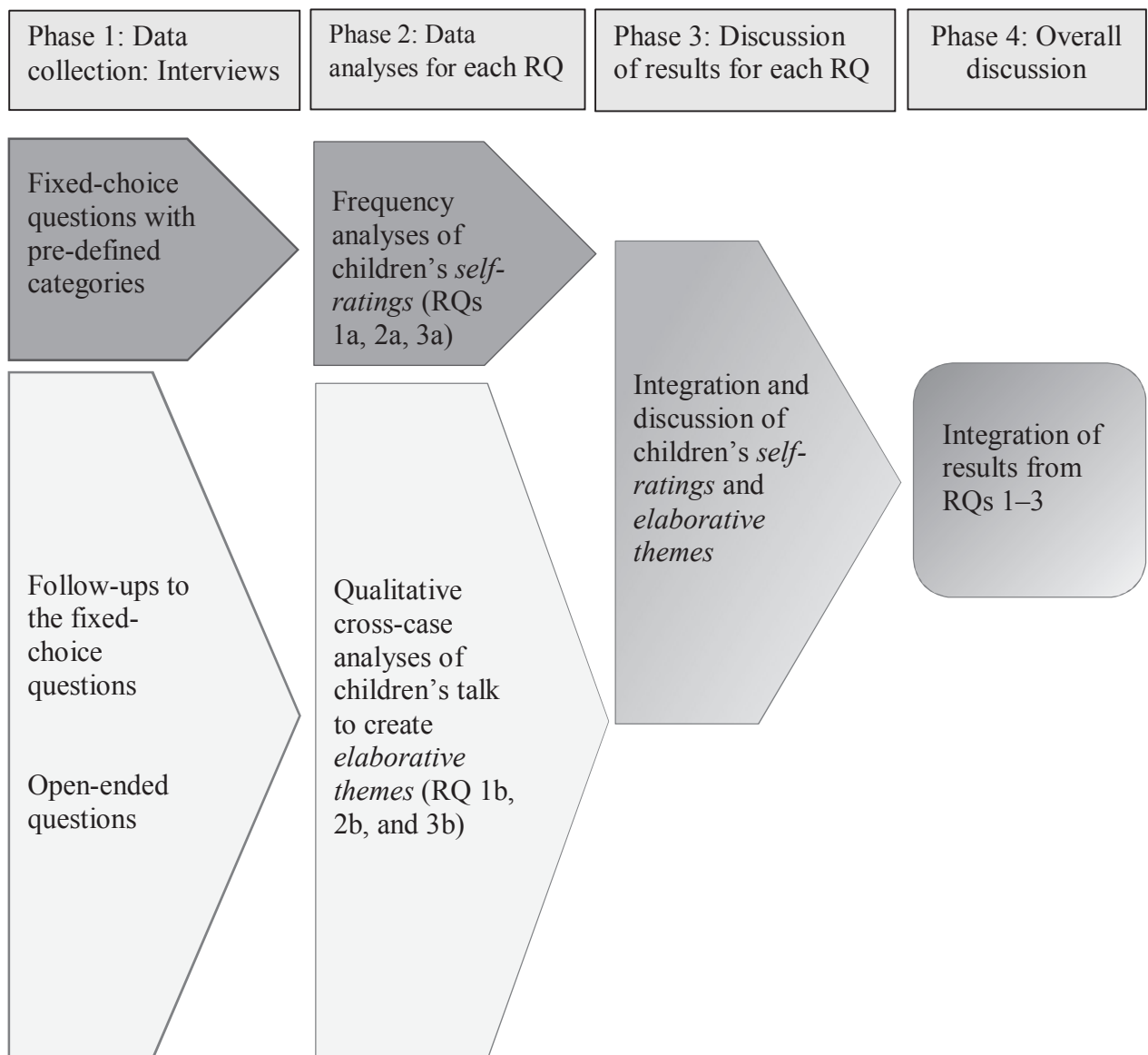


Figure 6.1 Display of the overall study procedure.

## 6.2 The sample

The study sample consisted of 56 language minority children from multilingual fifth grade classrooms in Norway. The participants turned 10 years old during the year of data collection. The children were Turkish-speakers of Turkish heritage ( $n=25$ ) and Urdu-speakers of Pakistani heritage ( $n=31$ ), and the vast majority of the children were Norwegian-born to immigrant parents. In the following, I describe the selection and recruitment procedure (6.2.1), present relevant demographic characteristics of the sample (6.2.2.), and comment on the role of background variables in the present study (6.2.3).

### 6.2.1 Selecting and recruiting the students

The study was part of the larger research project “Classroom Discourse and Text Comprehension,” headed by Vibeke Grøver (see, for instance, Rydland et al., 2012; Rydland et al., 2013). This larger project was a follow-up study of 26 Turkish-speaking children in Grade 5 already recruited at the age of 4–5 in the project “From Kindergarten to School,” also headed by Vibeke Grøver (see, for instance, Grøver Aukrust & Rydland, 2009). The present study sampled Turkish- and Urdu-speaking students from the classrooms of the children recruited into the project at the age of 4, who attended 12 different fifth grade classrooms during data collection in spring 2008.<sup>2</sup> Consent forms were distributed by the teachers to the parents of all the Turkish- and Urdu-speaking students in the classrooms, requesting permission to conduct in-depth interviews with the students about how the children perceived being bilingual. The consent form was translated into Turkish and Urdu and sent to the families in Norwegian as well as their first language. For the sake of convenience, not all students from whom consent was obtained were interviewed. In the end, 56 students were selected to participate in the interview study: Urdu-speaking boys: n=17, Urdu-speaking girls: n = 14, Turkish-speaking boys: n= 13, and Turkish-speaking girls: n= 12.

### 6.2.2 Socio-demographic characteristics of the sample

Information about the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample was derived from the children’s responses on a background questionnaire, addressing child and parental birthplace and years in Norway, number of siblings, maternal and paternal employment, years of preschool attendance, and years of L1 instruction at school. An overview of the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample is presented in Table 6.1. Due to the skewed distribution of the variables, the median is presented as the middle value.

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<sup>2</sup> The author was employed in the project in fall 2007. Hence, the children recruited at the age of 5 who attended Grade five in spring 2007 were not included in the present interview study.

Table 6.1

Socio-demographic characteristics of the sample: Min–Max and Median.

Socio-demographic variable	n	Min–Max	Median
Children's years in Norway	56	4–10	10.00*
Number of siblings	56	0–6	2.00
Maternal employment	54	0–2	1.00
Paternal employment	53	0–2	2.00
Years of preschool attendance	54	0–5	3.00
Years of L1 instruction	56	0–5	2.00

\*10 years indicates that the child was born in Norway.

#### 6.2.2.1 Family characteristics

Five children were foreign-born but immigrated to Norway at an early age. The remaining children were born in Norway. The majority of the parents were reported born in a country other than Norway (the interviews revealed that all but one of the foreign-born parents were born in Turkey or Pakistan), while one of the parents in seven of the families were born in Norway. Against this background, this sample mainly consists of children who were Norwegian-born to parents who were both immigrants. The interviews revealed a large variation in the age of the parents by the time they immigrated. Thus, the parents could be expected to have had various degrees of exposure to and skills in the Norwegian language. Furthermore, the number of siblings ranged from 0–6, with a median of 2.00 (Table 6.1). The age of the siblings varied from newborn to young adults, but the majority of the children's siblings were still living with their families.

The children were asked to state where their parents were working and what type of jobs their parents possessed. Based on the children's statements, both maternal and paternal employment were scored according to the required educational level of the employment. All children lived in homes where parental occupational status could be categorized on a three-point scale: 0 = *parent did not work outside of the home*, 1 = *parent possessed work demanding no formal vocational or educational training* (for instance cleaning), or 2 = *parent possessed work demanding limited vocational or educational training* (for instance,

taxi-driver or preschool assistant).<sup>3</sup> Parents typically held jobs as cleaning personnel, bus/taxi/service drivers, and assistants in health care/preschools or as owners or workers in food shops. As seen in Table 6.1, the occupational status of the fathers (median = 2.00) was in general higher than that of the mothers (median = 1.00). The mothers were more often reported as not working outside of the home than the fathers (41% and 7%, respectively).

#### *6.2.2.2 School background and classroom characteristics*

Only one child reported not to have attended preschool in Norway.<sup>4</sup> The remaining children reported to have attended preschool from 1–5 years, with a median of 3.00 years (Table 6.1). All children attended schools where Norwegian was the language of instruction in all subjects. However, the schools differed in their policies regarding the L1 support offered to their students. According to children’s own reports, their years of receiving L1 instruction varied from 0–5, with a median of 2.00 years (Table 6.1).

All 12 classrooms were multilinguistic but varied in student composition and in number of children recruited to the study. Table 6.2 provides an overview of the student composition of the 12 classrooms (labeled 1–12). The table includes the total number of students as well as the number of Turkish-speaking students, Urdu-speaking students, other language minority students (i.e., “Other LM students” in the table), and native Norwegian-speaking students for each classroom. Furthermore, the table includes the total number of sampled children from each classroom and an overview of each sampled child represented by a number (1–56), language background (T or U), and gender (B or G).

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<sup>3</sup> It is important to note that parental occupation status may not reflect parental education level, as immigrants in Norway often face problems with utilizing their educational degree to attain employment. It can, however, be assumed that the parents working at the category 2 level were more likely to encounter the Norwegian language at work than parents employed at the category 1 level or when not working outside of the home. The parents who were reported to not work outside of the home may have been job seekers, students, or voluntary homeworkers. It is also important to note that the ratings relied on the parents’ present employment status; employment history is not accounted for (see also Rydland et al., 2013, for further descriptions).

<sup>4</sup> This was the only child in the sample who arrived in Norway after the onset of school.

Table 6.2

Student composition and distribution of sampled children across the 12 classrooms.

Student composition						Sampled children	
Class-room	Total students	Turkish-speakers	Urdu-speakers	Other LM* students	Native Norwegian-speakers	Total	Child number, language, and gender
1**	37	3	2	17	15	1	<i>Child 1 (T/B)</i>
2**	-	-	-	-	-	2	<i>Child 2-3 (T/Gs)</i>
3	18	1	0	8	9	1	<i>Child 4 (T/B)</i>
4	15	1	4	4	6	4	<i>Child 5 (T/G)</i> <i>Child 6-7(U/Bs)</i> <i>Child 8 (U/G)</i>
5	20	2	7	7	4	8	<i>Child 9 (T/B)</i> <i>Child 10 (T/G)</i> <i>Child 11-12 (U/Bs)</i> <i>Child 13-16 (U/Gs)</i>
6	22	2	1	13	6	1	<i>Child 17 (T/B)</i>
7	14	1	5	3	5	3	<i>Child 18 (T/B)</i> <i>Child 19(U/B)</i> <i>Child 20 (U/G)</i>
8	19	1	1	7	10	1	<i>Child 21 (T/B)</i>
9***	27	1	6	5	15	4	<i>Child 22 (T/G)</i> <i>Child 23 (U/B)</i> <i>Child 24-25(U/Gs)</i>
10***	20	6	1	5	8	4	<i>Child 26-28(T/Gs)</i> <i>Child 29 (U/B)</i>
11***	26	8	8	9	1	16	<i>Child 30-33 (T/Bs)</i> <i>Child 34-37 (T/Gs)</i> <i>Child 38-43 (U/Bs)</i> <i>Child 44-45 (U/Gs)</i>
12	22	5	10	7	0	11	<i>Child 46-48 (T/Bs)</i> <i>Child 49-52 (U/Bs)</i> <i>Child 53-56 (U/Gs)</i>

\*Students with language minority background other than Turkish- or Urdu-speaking.

\*\*Classrooms 1 and 2 adhered to alternative organizations of the grade level. Data on Classroom 2 are missing.

\*\*\* Classrooms 9, 10, and 11 are parallel classrooms at the same school.



As shown in Table 6.2, more than half of the sampled children ( $n = 35$ ) were recruited from classroom 5, 11, and 12. Hence, excerpts from the interviews with children from these three classrooms appear more frequently in the results than those from the other classrooms. However, particularly talkative children who appear in multiple examples in the results stem from several of the classrooms (i.e., Child 1, Child 4, Child 10, Child 13, Child 14, Child 20, Child 22, Child 32, Child 45, Child 53, Child 54, and Child 56). When classroom composition appeared to be a relevant aspect related to the children's talk about language use with same L1-speaking peers at school, this is commented upon in the results (see Chapter 8).

### **6.2.2.3 Children's language skills**

Rydland et al. (2012) did not find significant intergroup differences in Norwegian oral language skills in a group of Turkish- and Urdu-speaking children that included the sample in the present study. The standard deviations for Norwegian vocabulary breadth (PPVT translated into Norwegian) and for Urdu and Turkish vocabulary breadth (BPVS translated into Turkish and Urdu) were large and suggested a large variation in language skills among the students in both Norwegian and the heritage language (see also Monsrud, Thurman-Moe, & Bjerkan, 2010, for a discussion of the translation of tests). Against this background, the present sample of language minority children consisted of children with different bilingual profiles in terms of balance and dominance in skills across their two languages.

## **6.3 Data collection: conducting the interviews**

The interviews were conducted over a period of four months during the spring semester in fifth grade in 2008 and were conducted by the author (40 interviews) and a co-researcher (16 interviews).<sup>5</sup> In this section, I present the interview protocol (6.3.1), the interview procedure (6.3.2), and the transcription procedure (6.3.3).

### **6.3.1 The interview protocol**

The interview protocol was developed in collaboration with the principal investigator and the co-researcher. The protocol was developed from a varied body of literature containing questionnaires and interviews applied in samples of language minority children on related topics (Feinauer, 2006; Jiménez, García, & Pearson, 1996; Kulbrandstad, 1997; Pfeifer et

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<sup>5</sup> Data in the larger project were collected in collaboration with the principal investigator, a co-researcher, and research assistants from spring 2007 to spring 2008 (see Rydland, 2009; Rydland et al., 2012; 2013, for further descriptions of the complete data collection procedures in the larger project).

al., 2007; Snow, Porche, Tabors, & Harris, 2007; Svendsen, 2004).<sup>6</sup> The interview was constructed to address a broad range of aspects of the children's bilingualism in their everyday lives. The complete interview protocol in Norwegian is attached in Appendix I, while a version of the complete interview protocol translated into English can be found in Appendix II.

The interview mainly consisted of three overall sections. In Section 1 (Parts 1, 2, 3, and 4), *Language use and communication* was the main topic. Parts 1 and 2 addressed children's language use within the family (Part 1) and children's language use with same L1-speaking peers at school and during leisure time (Part 2). These parts included fixed-choice questions, where the children were introduced to and asked to identify with five mutually exclusive categories indicating the degree of L1 use with specified individuals, ranging from *Never* to *Always* (see items 1b, 1c, 1e, 2b, and 2c in the protocol). This way of asking about language use is common in questionnaire-based research on language use when addressing adults, adolescents, and children (e.g., Duursma et al., 2007; Jean, 2011), and is normally used as a 5-point nominal scale. In the present study, the scale was used as a categorical scale in order to focus on the qualitative characteristics of the children's perception of degree of L1 use by themselves and their parents. Children were also encouraged to elaborate on their responses to the fixed-choice questions regarding language use through individually tailored follow-up questions (see further descriptions in 6.5.2 and 6.5.3). Furthermore, in Part 1, language use within the family was approached in an open-ended manner regarding contact and communication with grandparents and extended family in Norway as well as in the heritage country (items 1f and 1g). In Part 2, children were also asked in an open-ended way about who they preferred spending time with at school (item 2d) and about their leisure time activities (item 2e). Furthermore, Section 1 of the interview also contained open-ended questions regarding the use of two languages in school-related tasks and learning (Part 3) and regarding children's contact with friends and family on the Internet and mobile phones (Part 4), focusing on the oral and written language use within these contacts and communications. Section 1 of the interview provided the data that were analyzed in order to address RQ 1 and RQ 2. The particular scoring of the fixed-choice questions addressing language use within the family (RQ 1a) and with same L1-speaking

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<sup>6</sup> At the time of creating the interview protocol, some of the core studies of children's perceptions included in the present review had not been published.

friends (RQ 2a) is presented further in 6.4.1, while the analysis of children's talk addressing language use in parent-child communication (RQ 1b) and language use with and among peers (RQ 2b) is described further in sections 6.5.2 and 6.5.3, respectively.

In Section 2 of the interview (parts 5, 6, and 7), *Reading in Norwegian* was the overall topic. Part 5 consisted of open-ended questions related to children's experiences with and perceptions of reading in general, Part 6 contained fixed-choice questions regarding perceptions of their own reading skills, while Part 7 contained fixed-choice questions regarding reading motivation. The present study of how language minority children in the Norwegian context perceive being bilingual does not include data from this section. Thus, this part of the interview is not explained in further detail.

Section 3 of the interview attended to children's *Language attitudes and ethnic identity* (Part 8). This section of the protocol consisted of fixed-choice questions only, but children were encouraged to elaborate on their choices through individually tailored follow-up questions (see further descriptions in 6.5.4). The questions regarding sense of belonging to ethnic heritage group were extracted from the Pfeifer et al. (2007) study (items 8a, 8b, 8c, and 8h). The items in the Pfeifer et al. (2007) study came directly from the social identity literature and were based on those used with adults and adolescents (Ashmore et al., 2004) but were revised into the Harter-format to be suitable for young children. In addition, the protocol contained a final item regarding the experience of being teased due to ethnic background (item 8i), but the children's responses to this item was not included in any analyses. Questions regarding the importance of being skilled in a language were derived from previous studies of children's language attitudes (e.g., Nguyen et al., 2001; Pease-Alvarez, 1993; Shin & Lee, 2003) (items 8d-g). The language attitudes questions addressed the importance of being able to speak their L1 and Norwegian well (items 8d and 8f) and the importance of being able to read in their two languages (items 8e and 8g).

The questions regarding language attitudes and ethnic identity were put forward in a fixed-choice question format developed by Harter (1985) in the "Self-Perception Profile for Children" manual (in the following referred to as the Harter-format). This format has previously been adapted in interviews with language minority children in second and fourth grades related to ethnic identity by Pfeifer et al. (2007) and Brown et al. (2011) and used when investigating motivation for reading among children and youth by Snow et al. (2007). In this format, children are first asked to identify with one of two fictive groups of children presented to them and subsequently asked to decide whether they are *a little* similar or *very*

similar to the group they have chosen. The format was chosen because of its ability to deal with children's tendency to give what they deem to be socially desirable responses. In order to address the degree to which the children found it important to be able to speak well in their two languages (RQ 3a), children's responses to items 8d and 8f regarding the importance of oral skills were selected for analysis. Children's spontaneous and prompted elaborations of their responses to items 8a–8g constitute the data analyzed to address how the roles of language as a skill and language as a marker of belonging were explored by the children (RQ 3b). The scoring of the fixed-choice questions is presented in 6.4.2, while the procedure of the qualitative analysis of children's talk is described further in Section 6.5.4.

### **6.3.2 The interview procedure**

The author and the co-researcher, both native Norwegian-speakers, conducted the interviews at the children's school during a regular school day. The interviews were in Norwegian and lasted about one hour. The interview protocol was used in all interviews. All children were given the same timeframes and opportunity to talk. All interviews were tape-recorded.

A typical interview would start with an introduction and the children's consent to continue. As an introduction to the interviews, we explained that we would like to talk to the children about how they use their two languages and what they think about being users of more than one language. We also explained why we had to use a tape recorder. The establishment of a relationship between the researcher and the child is significant (e.g., Freeman & Mathison, 2009), and care and time were invested in creating a trustful atmosphere throughout the interview session (see also 6.6.2). After the introduction, the interview typically started with open-ended questions regarding, for instance, what they had done in the previous recess or in their class before we started with the targeted questions from the interview protocol. While we followed the main structure of the interview protocol, the order of the questions varied according to each conversation—for instance, according to how they described their language use, how they perceived their skills in each language, in what way they described their social relationships, and the initiatives they took to share their reflections and experiences that appeared relevant or interesting to them at the time. We let the child take the lead in the conversation and explored the children's initiatives whenever possible. Thus, there was a flexibility in the design and an aim towards facilitating subjective data, where the children's voice and language is not "contaminated" by the researcher, while at the same time making sure the targeted questions in the protocol

were presented. Finally, when closing the interviews, the children were encouraged to ask questions if they had any, and we explained how we were going to use the interviews in further work.

### **6.3.3 Transcription procedures**

In order to clarify the interviews for further analyses, the author and four research assistants transcribed all audiotapes. The research assistants were three master's students and one high school student and were all paid for the transcription work. In order to improve the quality of the transcripts and ensure reliability across transcribers, I developed and explained a transcription guide with clear instructions about the procedure and purposes of the transcriptions. The transcription was based on the basic level of the transcription format CHAT, called minCHAT, which was appropriated to prepare the transcripts for cross-case search for emergent themes in the children's talk. Verbatim transcriptions including grammatical errors and repetitions, pauses and question marks were included (see Appendix III for the applied transcription guidelines and MacWhinney, 2000, for a complete version of the tool). The author checked the initial transcriptions made by the assistants with the audiotapes to look for incoherence and was available to the transcribers for questions along the way.

One concern when presenting interview excerpts is how to present children's statements in a way that resembles what they intended to say. This was particularly relevant due to the second language status of the informants. Kvale (1996) stated that in order to do justice to the interviewees when presenting what they have said, one could imagine how they would have wanted to formulate their statements in writing (p. 172). The focus of the present study was not on linguistic features in children's talk per se but rather on the content of what they were communicating. Thus, where examples of children's responses are provided in the results chapters, they are presented close to their original expression but with corrections in major grammatical errors and repetition, and with adjustments in punctuation in order to increase the readability of the examples (see Appendix IV for examples of how interview excerpts were adjusted for presentation and readability purposes).

## **6.4 Self-ratings on fixed-choice questions**

In this section, I describe the categories in the fixed-choice questions regarding the degree of L1 use with parents and siblings (RQ 1a) and the degree of L1 use with same L1-speaking friends at school and during leisure time (RQ 2a) (6.4.1) as well as the

degree of importance of being able to speak their languages well (RQ 3a) (6.4.2). All responses to the fixed-choice questions were coded into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software for frequency analyses.

#### 6.4.1 Self-ratings of degree of L1 use (RQs 1a and 2a)

This analysis was conducted to address the sub-questions 1a) *To what degree do the children perceive themselves using their L1 in communication with parents and siblings, to what degree do they perceive their parents including their L1 when talking to them, and to what degree do the children's self-ratings reflect reciprocity and unity in parent-child communication?* and 2a) *To what degree do the children perceive themselves using their L1 in communication with same L1-speaking peers at school and during leisure time?* The children were asked, "How often do you use [Turkish/Urdu] when you speak with your /parents/siblings/same L1-speaking friends at school/ during leisure time?" (See items 1b, 1c, 1d, 2b, and 2c in the protocol.) They were then introduced verbally to five mutually exclusive categories: "Do you think it is *Never*, *A little*, *Half the time*, *Mostly*, or *Always*?" The children were asked in a similar vein to categorize parental L1 use when speaking with the child. The five categories were presented to provide children with a range of perceptions of L1 use. The categories *Never* and *Always* refer to perceptions of a more monolingual communication pattern in one of the languages, the categories *A little* and *Mostly* refer to perceptions of a bilingual pattern of language use dominated by one of the languages, and the category *Half the time* refers to a perception of a more balanced bilingual language use pattern.

Since the questions were posed in an interview context, the children were supported in their responses when needed. Their responses were scored during the interview based on an agreement between the child and interviewer on which category would fit the child's perception best. Some children identified immediately with one of the presented categories, while others contextualized their language use, and stated, for instance, that the language they use with their parents and siblings depends on whether they are at home or in public, on who in the family is present, and whether they are doing homework or talking about family issues. When the children contextualized, or if they used their own labels spontaneously to describe their use of L1, for instance, "I *mix*" or "I speak *all the time* Urdu," the interviewer would ask the child to specify their L1 use in accordance with the five categories (e.g., the interviewer would say: "So you mix the two languages, would you say you speak both of them *Half the time*, or do you use one of the languages more than the

other when you mix?” or “When you say you speak Urdu all the time, would you say it is *Always* or *Mostly*?”). In this way, we strove to make the distinctions between the categories comprehensible to the children. The scores were checked by the author against the transcripts when coded into SPSS.

Language use with and by mothers and fathers (items 1a and 1b) were scored separately. On occasions when a child distinguished between L1 use with different siblings (item 1c), a decision was made to score the child’s language use with the sibling(s) the child interacted most with, typically the one(s) closest in age. It can also be noted that at the beginning of each interview with the Urdu-speaking children, the interviewer would ask about the use of Urdu and Punjabi in the family, respectively, to make sure we addressed the right language. The interviews revealed that the majority of the children said that Urdu rather than Punjabi was the language used among siblings and by children in parent–child communication. In terms of parental language use, the children often said that Urdu was the language parents addressed their children in, while the parents could speak Punjabi, or, in a few instances, Pashtu, between them. However, there were also children who said that their parents spoke both Urdu and Punjabi when addressing their children. On these occasions, parental language use when addressing the child was scored on the basis of the degree to which a parent would use one of the languages when addressing them compared to the use of Norwegian. In this way, parental use of L1 could contain the use of both Urdu and Punjabi.<sup>7</sup>

Before presenting the questions regarding language use with same L1-speaking peers (Part 2 of the interview), the interviewer asked whether the child had friends and spent time with same L1-speakers at school and/or during leisure time. Subsequently, items 2b and 2c in the protocol regarding L1 use with same L1-speaking friends were asked in relation to the specific peers identified by the child. That is, the scores represent language use within different types of same L1-peer constellations. Similar to the responses regarding language use within the family, some children responded immediately in accordance with

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<sup>7</sup> According to Karlsen and Lykkenborg (2012), Urdu (and Norwegian) is the more prevalent language reported to be used by parents in Pakistani-Norwegian families in language activities such as reading, telling stories, playing, and watching TV. Like the children in the Mills (2001) study, children often referred to Punjabi as being a colloquial language. Against this background, the choice of terming Urdu as the L1 in this study is believed to correspond with how the sampled children as well as the larger population of Pakistani-Norwegian families present their languages. However, see, for instance, Aarsæther (2004, 2009), Karlsen, and Lykkenborg (2012) or Østberg (1998, 2003) for further descriptions of the position of Punjabi and Urdu in the Pakistani-Norwegian population in Norway.

the presented categories, while others brought up nuances in their language use, which was not originally accounted for in the question, for instance, reporting their L1 use to be dependent on context, such as when in the classroom or during recess, or dependent on specific L1-speakers. On these occasions, care was taken to score the child's perceptions of herself as a language user within the peer context defined by the child.

#### **6.4.2 Self-ratings of the importance of being able to speak the languages well (RQ 3a)**

This analysis was conducted to address sub-question 3a): *To what degree do the children find it important to be able to speak well in their two languages?* In items 8d and 8f, the child was first presented verbally with two fictive groups of children: "Some children find it important to be able to speak [Turkish/Urdu/Norwegian] fluently, while other children do not find being able to speak [Turkish/Urdu/Norwegian] fluently to be important." The child was then asked, "Which group of children is most like you?" Secondly, the child was asked to evaluate whether he or she was *a little similar* (weak identification) or *very similar* (strong identification) to the chosen group of children. It turned out that not all children were familiar with the term "fluency," hence the term "well" was often used to emphasize the focus on the level of proficiency inherent in the question. In this way, scores ranged from 1 to 4, resembling four mutually exclusive categories: 1) Strong identification with speaking [Turkish/Urdu/ Norwegian] well not to be important, 2) Weak identification with speaking [Turkish/Urdu/ Norwegian] well not to be important, 3) Weak identification with speaking [Turkish/Urdu/ Norwegian] well to be important, and 4) Strong identification with speaking [Turkish/Urdu/ Norwegian] well to be important. The children were scored according to one of the four possible categories during the interviews based on an agreement between the child and interviewer regarding which category would fit the child's perception best. The scores were checked by the author against the transcripts when coded into SPSS.

#### **6.5 Construction of elaborative themes from children's talk**

The following citation from Kvale (1996) is illustrative of the qualitative analysis process and the role I have taken on as a researcher: "The analysis of an interview is interspersed between the initial story told by the interviewee to the researcher and the final story told by the researcher to an audience" (p. 184). As I stated in Section 6.1, the interview is a project of "co-elaboration" by the interviewer and the interviewee during the interview. After the interview, the researcher continues to work on these co-constructed stories and interpret them into meaningful presentations, or new stories, to be told by the researcher to the



readers. In the present study, the qualitative analyses consisted of identifying relevant units within and across cases and interpreting the meaning of what was said by the child in the units in light of the three empirical sub-questions addressing the children's perceptions of language use in parent-child communication (RQ 1b), language use with and among same L1-speaking peers (RQ 2b), and the roles of language as a skill and as a marker of belonging to ethnic heritage group (RQ 3b).

There are multiple ways of generating meaning from interview material (e.g., Hedegaard et al., 2012; Kvale, 1996; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Ulvik, 2014). For the purpose of investigating the content of how children perceive being bilingual in the present study, I looked for patterns and themes that occurred across cases as well as for talk that added nuance to the themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 246). I finally organized the children's talk into what I have labelled *elaborative themes*. I chose this term to capture the fact that the themes encompass nuances and complexities as well as elaborations of patterns that occurred in the children's self-ratings. In the following, I present the approach to extracting episodes and constructing elaborative themes from the children's talk. I first present the overall approach to selection of episodes (6.5.1). I then present the specific approaches to the construction of elaborative themes in relation to each specific research question: language use in parent-child communication (6.5.2), language use in peer contexts (6.5.3), and the roles of language as a skill and as a marker of belonging to ethnic heritage group (6.5.4). I return to a further discussion of the validity of the interpretations in Section 6.6.2.2.

### **6.5.1 The overall approach to selection of episodes**

The process of analyzing the children's talk went through multiple phases over the course of the research process. The initial phases of the analysis consisted of continued readings of the transcripts. I read the transcripts through to get an overall impression, deleted superfluous material, such as interruptions, detailed descriptions of books they had read, or stories of the achievements of their favorite football team. This was information not considered related to the aspects of being bilingual focused on in the study. The second phase of the analysis consisted of extracting meaning units from the transcripts into a case-level partially ordered meta-matrix organized by overall topics (Miles & Huberman, 1994, pp. 177) for the purpose of an initial exploration of the children's talk and the perspectives inherent in the sample. In a third phase, I conducted preliminary interpretations of selected meaning units, where I searched for the common essence of what was communicated in the

particular episode. The interpretation consisted of a process of rereading transcripts, rereading the literature, writing and rewriting interpretations, discussing the interpretations with co-researchers, and looking for other meaning units that shed light on a given topic. The elaborative themes finally appeared as multi-faceted and nuanced constructions of the children's awareness of aspects of being bilingual.

The final phase of the analysis consisted of constructing the elaborative themes within each of the three research questions (RQs 1b, 2b, and 3b). The construction of the elaborative themes involved working out structures and relations of meaning from the children's talk (Kvale, 1996, p. 201) (see the following sections). The common criteria for selecting episodes was that the children's meaning making was visible within the extract (Ulvik, 2014). That is, I selected episodes across cases where the children added a story about or a perspective on the specific theme into the conversation. Younger children's way of expressing themselves is often contextual, referring to particular experiences or to something told to them by others, for instance, parents, siblings, or teachers (Punch, 2002; Soto & Swadener, 2005). Sometimes, a child's perspective was inherent in a co-construction by the interviewer and the child, where the interviewer explored and supported the child's meaning making, as illustrated in the following example:

Example 8.4, Child 55 (U/G/Classroom 12):

INT: you have others in your class who can speak Urdu. do you sometimes speak Urdu at school?

CHI: a little. but then we get into trouble.

INT: you get into trouble? why do you think that is?

CHI: because we are not allowed to speak Urdu in class.

INT: is that a rule?

CHI: yes. *Norwegian school* our teacher says.

INT: so really you have to speak Norwegian. but when do you speak Urdu then?

CHI: on the break.

INT: (...).but, if you are in class and are helping each other with assignments and things?

CHI: the girl that sits beside me can't speak Norwegian, so I translate to Urdu.

INT: so you help her by translating. but is that ok with the teacher?

CHI: yes.

INT: du har jo flere i klassen din som kan snakke urdu. hender det at dere snakker noe urdu på skolen?

BAR: litt. men da får vi kjæft.

INT: da får dere kjæft? hvorfor det tror du?

BAR: for det ikke er lov til å snakke urdu i klassen.

INT: er det en regel?

BAR: ja. *norsk skole* sier læreren vår.

INT: så da må dere egentlig snakke norsk. men når er det dere snakker urdu da?

BAR: i friminuttet.

INT: (...). men du, i timen da hvis dere skal hjelpe hverandre med oppgaver og sånn?

BAR: hun som sitter ved siden av meg kan ikke norsk så jeg oversetter på urdu

INT: så hun hjelper du med å oversette. men er det greit da for læreren?

BAR: ja.

Other times, a child's perspective had the form of a more coherent story or narrative told by the child, as in the following example:

Example 8.9, Child 30 (T/B/Classroom 11):

CHI: for example, now I tell myself that I don't know much Norwegian. then I tell myself *I have to practice practice practice*. so I have to find myself some Norwegian friends, too. but no one in our class is Norwegian, so I can't. for example, now I am friends with [urdu-speaking boy]. he knows a lot of Norwegian, so I learn a little from him, and he learns a little from me.

BAR: for eksempel, nå sier jeg til meg selv jeg kan ikke så mye norsk. så jeg sier at *jeg må øve det øve det øve det*. så jeg må finne noen norske venner også. men ingen i klassen vår er norsk så jeg kan ikke. for eksempel, nå er jeg venn med [urdu-talende gutt]. han kan mye norsk så jeg lærer litt av han og han lærer litt av meg.

In addition, a nuance illuminating a theme could be found more implicitly in what the children said, when a statement was seen in relation to other statements a child made during the interview. These types of data can be seen, for instance, inherent in the talk by the child in Example 7.5, or in the cross-references to the talk by the child in examples 7.3 and 9.2.

In presenting the elaborative themes, I have made a large number of data extracts available to the readers to illustrate the phenomenon examined and to allow readers to critically assess the analyses. The illustrative examples are presented by example number (linked to the chapter number, e.g., Example 7.x, 8.x, or 9.x), Child number (Child 1–56), language background (T or U), gender (B or G) and Classroom number (Classroom 1–12) (see Table 6.2).

### 6.5.2 Elaborative themes regarding parent–child communication (RQ 1b)

This analysis was conducted to address sub-question 1b): *When engaged in talk about language use in parent–child communication, what perceptions do the children bring forward?* As already stated in Section 6.4.1, when responding to the fixed-choice questions regarding L1 use with and by parents (items 1b and 1c in the protocol), many children brought up reasons for parent–child language use. The episodes illuminating parent–child communication were to a large degree chosen from these follow-up conversations regarding parent–child and family language use. In addition, aspects of parent–child communication appeared in the talk related to the open-ended questions regarding the use of two languages in school-related tasks and learning (Part 3 of the interview protocol). The homework situation was also brought up spontaneously by the children as a context within which the children saw their language use with parents as distinct from more regular interactions. The children also brought up the fact that their language use with parents was dependent on whether they were at home or outside of the home as well as on the language skills and preferences of the specific family member with whom they spoke. Acknowledging these

contextual and relational nuances in language use in parent–child communication, the guiding principle for constructing elaborative themes was to display perceptions of how bilingual characteristics were made relevant by the children in relation to parent–child communication. In the end, I created three elaborative themes that shed light on the children’s awareness of such nuances in parent–child communication.

### **6.5.3 Elaborative themes regarding language use in peer contexts (RQ 2b)**

This analysis was conducted to address sub-question 2b): *When engaged in talk about language use with and among peers, what perceptions do the children bring forward?* As already pointed to in Section 6.4.1, the fixed-choice questions regarding L1 use with same L1-speaking peers at school and during leisure time (items 2b and 2c in the protocol) elicited talk regarding the significance of who the interlocutors were (e.g., the best friend or a group of people) and in what contexts the communication took place (e.g., inside the classroom or outside during recess, when being in someone’s house or out in the street). Again, language use was spoken of as contextual and relational in nature. In addition, the interviews also targeted a broad range of aspects of the children’s school day and leisure time through open-ended questions initiated through items 2e and 2e in the protocol. The children were, for instance, asked about what they liked to do at school, with whom they spent time, and who their friends were. In this way, the children provided rich descriptions of their peer contexts within which their own and their peers’ language use was an integrated, but far from the only, relevant aspect. It turned out that the children’s talk regarding the school context in particular provided nuances in relation to the children’s perceptions of their language use. Against this background, the guiding principle for constructing elaborative themes was to display the children’s perceptions of how bilingualism was made relevant to them in multilingual peer contexts, with emphasis on the school context. In the end, I created five elaborative themes that shed light on this issue.

### **6.5.4 Elaborative themes regarding language as a skill and as a marker of belonging (RQ 3b)**

This analysis was conducted to address sub-question 3b): *When engaged in talk about language attitudes and a sense of belonging to their ethnic heritage group, what perceptions of the roles of language as a skill and language as a marker of belonging do the children bring forward?* The starting point for this analysis was the children’s elaborative responses to the fixed-choice questions in the Harter-format regarding language attitudes and ethnic identity in Section 3/Part 8 of the interview. In addition to the questions

regarding the importance of being able to speak their languages well described in Section 6.4.2, the children were asked whether they believed being Turkish/Pakistani was an *important* (item 8a) and *big* (item 8c) part of themselves, whether they *liked* being Turkish/Pakistani (item 8h), and whether they saw themselves as *more Turkish/Pakistani than Norwegian* or *more Norwegian than Turkish/Pakistani* (item 8b). The children were also asked about the importance of possessing reading skills in their two languages (items 8e and 8g). When presented with the questions, the children spontaneously or when prompted provided their reflections upon their choice of category. Based on the children's responses, the interviewer followed up and added nuance, for instance, "Do you think Turkish is important when you are in Norway?," "How do you think you can use Urdu when you grow older/in the future?," "What do you think being Pakistani means to you?," "What do you like about being Turkish?" or, if a child reported identifying *a little* with finding being Pakistani to be a big part of him, the interviewer would ask, "Do you know why you are only a little similar to this group of children?."

In this way, the children were supported in their talk through the two-step process in the Harter-format of first identifying with two different groups of children and secondly deciding upon the strength of their identification. In the subsequent analysis, I extracted the units where children elaborated their responses to each question and inspected the extracted units for talk regarding the children's perceptions of their need for good language skills in their two languages separately and how they related language and sense of belonging. In addition, talk that appeared during other stages of the interviews was included in an elaborative theme structure in order to add nuance. The talk in relation to Section 1 of the interviews addressing contact with extended family was particularly relevant in this regard. In the end, I created five elaborative themes.

## **6.6 Considerations regarding the quality of the study**

The quality of a study refers to the "goodness" of the conclusions drawn from the study (Miles & Huberman, 1994), which in turn is related to how reliable, valid, and trustworthy the conclusions are. There are different frameworks to apply when justifying research, and there are different traditions within quantitative and qualitative research (e.g., Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Kvale, 1996; Lund, 2005; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Shadish, Cook & Campbell, 2002). The choice of framework is dependent upon the type of research questions addressed and the types of data used to address the research questions. In the present work addressing children's perceptions of being bilingual through semi-structured

interviews, I considered the framework of judging the quality of qualitative studies and interview studies in general (Kvale, 1996; Miles & Huberman, 1994) and studies with children in particular (Freeman & Mathison, 2009; Punch, 2002) to be the most relevant frameworks.

A commonly applied framework for establishing the trustworthiness of naturalistic research was developed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and expanded and described by Miles and Huberman (1994). They discuss five main, somewhat overlapping issues of trustworthiness: *confirmability* and *dependability*—which specifically adhere to reliability issues—and *credibility*, *transferability*, and *application*—which adhere to validity and generalizability issues. In the following, I will summarize how I have striven to conduct a trustworthy inquiry by discussing the strategies I have used to meet particular threats within each of the five criteria. The final judgement of the quality of the conclusions drawn in the study must be made by those who read the work as it has progressed and in its complete version.

#### **6.6.1 Dependability and confirmability**

*Dependability* refers to whether the process of the study is consistent and reasonably stable over time and across researchers and methods (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In a similar vein, *confirmability* refers to the relative neutrality or reasonable freedom from unacknowledged researcher biases, at a minimum, and explicitness about the inevitable biases that exist (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 278). The emphasis is on the replicability of the study and on minimizing the unintended ways in which the specific researcher could affect the data gathered and the conclusions drawn. In the present study, the relevant question is in regard to the degree to which I have retrieved and analyzed the information in the interviews in a reliable way.

To ensure dependability and confirmability, the way the interview was developed and conducted is described explicitly and thoroughly (Section 6.3.1). One possible threat to confirmability in the present study is that of systematic differences in data retrieval and data preparations across data sources (informants and interviewers). To reduce this source of error, the use of Norwegian facilitated the same “language mode” across children throughout the study (see Grosjean, 1998, for a discussion of the importance of language modes in research with bilinguals). Related to this issue is interviewer reliability. The two interviewers developed the protocol together, piloted the protocol, and used identical protocols during the interview. In addition, during the months of interviewing, the two

interviewers had frequent discussions and shared experiences in between the interviews. This was partly in order to refute the possibility of an inter-interviewer effect and partly to continuously discuss subject matters that occurred during the conversations. Another possible threat was that of transcriber reliability. In order to achieve reliable transcripts across multiple transcribers, I created transcription guidelines, which were available for the transcribers during transcription (see 6.3.3). In addition, I checked the initial transcriptions made by the assistants vis-à-vis the audio tapes as well as checking the audiotapes during the initial phases of reading through the transcripts where the transcribers had marked uncertainties. Furthermore, the interview protocol and the transcription guidelines are available to the reader as appendices.

Yet another threat is related to the confirmability of the scoring of the children's self-ratings on the fixed-choice questions and of the procedure of constructing the elaborative themes. Regarding the scoring of degree of L1 use within the family and with same L1-speaking peers at school and during leisure time and the importance of being able to speak the languages well, the procedures were explicated in Section 6.4. The scores were co-constructed by the interviewer and child; that is, the reliability of the coding was checked vis-à-vis the child during the interview. In addition, I checked the scores against the transcripts when coding the children's responses into SPSS. Regarding the procedure of constructing the elaborative themes, I have explicated the different steps of the analysis process to promote transparency and confidence in the neutrality of the process in Section 6.5. During the process of extracting and interpreting episodes, I involved the co-researchers in reading through and discussing preliminary interpretations and themes. This use of multiple interpreters provided a certain control over arbitrary or biased subjectivity in the interpretation process. Furthermore, the display of a large number of examples from the material that constitute the elaborative themes allows others to confirm or disconfirm the interpretations of the extracted data material. In addition, the displayed data either contained the interviewer's voice or were introduced with the context within which a statement occurred, allowing readers to consider the researcher's role in eliciting the children's statements. Finally, the transcripts are retained and available for reanalysis by others.

Against this background, all the phases of the study procedure can be assessed, and a similar overall framework can be applied in another sample of children and by other researchers. However, similar interviewer-child dynamics and individually tailored questions, and subsequently the findings, will never be completely replicable, even if the

interviews were to be conducted again by the same interviewer with the same children. It is inevitable that each of the 56 interviews conducted in the study, like all interviews, have their unique, situated, and irretrievable qualities, which contributed to the children's self-ratings and to what the children brought up in their talk throughout the interview. In this vein, it is important to remember that the aim for objectivity and control needs to be balanced by considering the individual contributions—by the individual researcher and the individual child—in qualitative research. As noted by Kvale (1996): “Though increasing the reliability of the interview findings is desirable in order to counteract haphazard subjectivity, a strong emphasis on reliability may counteract creative innovations and variability” (p. 236).

### **6.6.2 Credibility and trustworthiness of interpretations**

The underlying issue of *credibility* is whether the findings are viewed as credible or trustworthy by the people studied and to the readers (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In the present study, the central question relates to the credibility of the conclusions drawn in relation to the research questions. In the following, I discuss possible threats related to the credibility of the self-ratings and the elaborative themes as representations of the children's perceptions of being bilingual. Both the processes of retrieving data and of interpreting data contain possible threats to the quality of the conclusions (Kvale, 1996). I will first attend to possible threats to credibility during data collection (6.6.2.1) before I attend to threats to the trustworthiness of interpretations (6.6.2.2).

#### **6.6.2.1 Credibility during data retrieval**

One threat to validity in the interviews is that of possibly biased information the children share with the interviewer. The children may try to give adult-friendly and socially desirable responses or be affected by cues from adults (Punch, 2002). The interviews were conducted by outsiders who were not familiar with the children or the children's everyday lives. This might have reinforced these threats, especially considering the fact that the interviewers were ethnic Norwegians and native Norwegian-speakers and that the interviews were conducted in a Norwegian school context (Weeks & Moore, 1981). This may have led the children to emphasize their use and the importance of the Norwegian language. Related to this is the possibly biased assumptions held by the interviewers about the children's bilingualism and sense of belonging, making the researcher ask the children irrelevant questions or to question the obvious. This was specifically relevant for the fixed-choice questions and the pre-defined categories presented to the children.



In order to address these threats to the credibility of the data retrieved, several steps were taken to ensure intersubjectivity between the interviewer and the child. Davis (2007) explains that the belief that children are trustworthy sources of information must be seen together with the acknowledgement of the responsibility of the researcher to connect with children. As described in Section 6.3.2, we strove to create a trustful atmosphere throughout the interview sessions (Freeman & Mathison, 2009) through ensuring the children of the purpose and the structure of the interview, starting the interview with open-ended questions about what the child had recently done, and letting the child take the lead in telling his or her stories. We also emphasized that there were no right or wrong answers to the questions put forward. In order to counteract the fact that children may overemphasize their use of Norwegian, the fixed-choice question about language use specifically attended to the use of their heritage language (L1-use). We also explicated our curiosity about their bilingualism to the children, and emphasized that they were the experts on bilingualism, since the interviewers were not and had never been bilingual in a similar vein. To counteract the fact that children may overrate the importance of being skilled in any of their languages, the Harter-format was chosen. The way of asking questions implies that half of the kids in one's reference group view possessing fluent oral skills in a language to be important, whereas the other half view possessing fluent oral skills in a language not to be important. The type of question therefore legitimizes either choice (Harter, 1985, p. 7). Also, the fictive groups of children were presented as having a background similar to that of the interviewed child in order to create a framework of familiarity. Finally, the interviewers strove to prompt and support the children's thinking, but the children were never pushed to come up with a rating or an explanation.

Another possible threat to the credibility of the data retrieved is that the language used by the adult interviewer may be unclear to the children, which may result in potential communication difficulties and potential meaning distortions. This was especially relevant because the children were bilingual while the interviews were conducted in a monolingual Norwegian mode and also because children and adults in general do not necessarily share vocabulary and semantic references; in other words, the language dilemma is mutual (Freeman & Mathison, 2009; Punch, 2002). We strove to formulate clear and comprehensive questions. The labels used on the categories in the fixed-choice questions had all previously been applied in middle childhood samples, although in English. To confirm and adjust the clarity and appropriateness of the questions for fifth graders in

Norway and address the overall appeal of the interview content and context, the author and the co-researcher piloted the protocol on four language minority students (two Turkish-speakers and two Urdu-speakers). The ways the categories in the fixed-choice were presented to and clarified with the children are presented in Section 6.4. By presenting and discussing the categories with the children, the interviewer was able to support the children in their responses when needed and integrate the children's own ways of expressing themselves with the labels of the categories so that the child could reach a well-informed decision. Kvale (1996) describes the testing of knowledge claims in the dialogue as a sort of communicative validity (p. 244). Freeman and Mathison (2009) elaborate:

The personal nature of the interaction gives the researcher flexibility to seek more information, probe for more detail, or “follow up on vague, confusing, even contradictory information, sensitively and systematically” (Rogers, Casey, Ekert, & Holland, 2005, p. 159). It also gives freedom to interview participants to answer in their own way, using their own terms, and making their own connections to the interview topic. (p. 91)

Finally, in order to make the notions of “being mostly like a group,” and “being a little similar” or “being very similar” to a group in the Harter-format more comprehensible, the two reference groups of children were drawn on a piece of paper when a child expressed that he or she was not familiar with the way the question was being asked.

#### *6.6.2.2 Trustworthiness of interpretations*

The conclusions in the present study are not drawn in relation to whether or to what degree the perceptions brought forward in the interviews reflect one's true self or an external world. In this study, the children's accounts have their own validity in terms of being their own perceptions of the way the world appears to them, even though some of the “facts” of their accounts may be wrong, and even though they would have put it differently in another time and place (Punch, 2002, p. 328).

Regarding the children's self-ratings, conclusions are drawn about the frequency with which the children identified with the specific categories in this specific sample. Since these self-ratings were scored during the interview, the credibility issues have already been discussed in relation to data retrieval in the previous section. The scores were checked again with the transcripts during coding into SPSS, with the aim of confirming what the child had intended to identify with in the specific part of the interview conversation. The credibility of

the self-ratings is also related to the presentation of how the children reflected upon their choices in the elaborative themes, where the reader is made aware of how the children made meaning of the distinctions between the presented categories.

For the elaborative themes, conclusions are not drawn according to the prevalence of a specific perception in the material. Conclusions are drawn regarding the elaborative themes as representing perceptions of language use in parent-child communication, of language use with and among same L1-speaking peers, and of the roles of language as a skill and as a marker of belonging to ethnic heritage group inherent in the participating children's talk during the interviews. The trustworthiness of these conclusions is related to the interpretation of the meaning units extracted into the elaborative themes. Kvale (1996) suggests three contexts for interpretations: the self-understanding of the interviewed individual, the critical commonsense understanding, and the theoretical understanding (p. 213). The self-understanding context refers to when the interviewer attempts to formulate in a condensed form what the subjects themselves understand to be the meaning of their statements (p. 214). When presenting the results, natural meaning units—that is, examples—are presented in order to make the self-understandings that make up each elaborative theme transparent to the reader. I also rephrase the examples from the way I understood the subject, making my understanding of the subject accessible to the reader. In this way, the reader can also judge the validity of the presented content of the children's statements. In order to preserve the character of a statement, an English-Norwegian bilingual with experience in working with children in the Norwegian context translated the children's quotes in collaboration with the researcher (see also 6.3.3 and Appendix IV regarding the presentation of the examples).

The interpretation in the second context, the critical commonsense understanding, refers to when the interpretation may include a wider frame of understanding than that of the subjects themselves, for instance, when being critical of what is said, and may focus on either the content of the statement or the person making it (Kvale, 1996, p. 214). For instance, such an interpretation is derived from the question “What does the statement express about the phenomenon of language use in parent–child communication?” (focusing on content) or from the question “What does the statement express about the child's idea about the importance of knowing Urdu?” (focusing on person). The criterion for validity in this context is whether a consensus may be obtained that an interpretation is reasonably documented and logically coherent (Kvale, 1996, p. 217). The possible threats to the

credibility of such interpretations is that the researcher may make haphazard, undocumented interpretations. To address this threat, I engaged the co-researcher, who conducted part of the interviews, in reading and discussing preliminary presentations of my interpretations of selected excerpts and themes (see also 6.6.1). The peer debriefing of alternative interpretations and themes represented my interpretive community and is a way of exerting communicative validity (Kvale, 1996) and also contributed to my development as an interpreter of the interviews. The presentation of multiple examples attached with child number, language group, gender, and classroom labels within each theme ensures transparency and makes it possible for lay readers to judge whether the interpretations are reasonably documented and argued.

The third context of interpretation is when one or more theoretical frames for interpreting the meaning of a statement or of more statements are applied (Kvale, 1996, p. 215). Here, the validity of the interpretation will depend on whether the theory is valid for the area studied and whether the specific interpretations follow logically from the theory (p. 218). None of the independent episodes were interpreted within a theoretical framework. Rather, the perceptions inherent in the elaborative themes were discussed in relation to theory and previous studies in regard to each of the three research questions (sections 7.3, 8.3, and 9.3) and in regard to the overall research question of how language minority children in a Norwegian context perceive being bilingual (Chapter 10).

### **6.6.3 Transferability and applicability**

*Transferability* refers to the degree to which the findings are transferable to other children, other contexts, and to the literature (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 279), while *applicability* refers to whether and how the findings are accessible and can be utilized by participants and consumers (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 280).

The study contributes with knowledge about the phenomenon of language minority bilingualism in middle childhood. It is knowledge derived from the perspectives of children, co-constructed, and situated in the interview context. The knowledge derived is not directly transferable to some true meaning or to an objective world. The transferability is primarily to theory and prior research regarding language minority bilingualism in middle childhood, as discussed in relation to all research questions (7.3, 8.3, 9.3, and Chapter 10). I have been careful to draw conclusions about the frequency of children's self-ratings due to the small number of children and the single-item operationalizations of the constructs investigated. The findings from the study primarily contribute with expanded and nuanced knowledge of

the children's perspectives on bilingualism in parent–child interactions, bilingualism in multilinguistic peer contexts, and bilingual language attitudes. Though the results of the proposed study are intended to apply only to its participants, detailed descriptions of all aspects of the research have been provided to inform the reader's judgment of the transferability of the results to other samples and contexts.

Regarding applicability, the research enhances the understanding of the perspectives language minority children may hold about being bilingual. The knowledge derived from the study is hopefully consciousness-raising as well as a way of systematizing and broadening the insights that many parents, teachers, and researchers already have. The use of multiple examples makes the text more accessible to lay readers, including parents of children in multilinguistic primary schools. The descriptions are hopefully rich enough for the readers to determine the appropriateness for their own settings. In Section 10.4, I return to reflections upon how the study contributes to generating future research.

### **6.7 Ethical considerations**

The project was reported to the Norwegian Social Science Data Service (NSD) (NESH, 2010). Ethical considerations and decisions arose throughout the entire research process (Kvale, 1996). Two major issues prevailed throughout this study: the protection of the informants (the children) and the protection of third parties (those the children talked about). I illuminate these issues in the following.

According to the National Committees for Research Ethics in Norway, children who participate in research are entitled to special protection that should be commensurate with their age and needs (NESH, 2010). From the initial stages of this study, it has been of great concern to protect the participating children. From the planning of how to establish contact with the schools, families, and children, to developing the instruments and interview protocol, to conducting the data collection, and to analyzing and reporting the results, attempts have been made to do justice to the children as informants. One ethical concern is related to consent from children. The children cannot be seen as fully able to grasp the consequences of giving information to researchers (NESH, 2010, p. 17). The translation of the consent form into Turkish and Urdu was done to ensure that the consent would be properly informed and that the parents knew what the children were going to participate in and could describe it to the children. Care was taken to inform the children about the purpose of the interview, the tape recording, and the confidentiality of how we would store the tape-recorded conversations. Moreover, as already described in sections 6.3.1 and

6.6.2.1, care was also taken during the interviews to create a good atmosphere for the children's participation. Moreover, throughout the process, I have been extremely humbled to be allowed to speak on behalf of the children, and I emphasize the importance of reading the work as an outsider's qualified attempt to grasp their perceptions.

According to NESH (2010), researchers should consider and anticipate effects on third parties that are not directly included in the research, that is, parties who are drawn in by the informants (p. 16). It is further specified that the protection of third parties is especially important in qualitative investigations, as these studies often take place in small, transparent communities, and that "special consideration should be given to potential negative consequences when children are indirectly involved in the research" (p. 16). The children's talk did to a large degree contain references to others: to specific contexts, happenings, or relationships. In fact, it is in the nature of the study that other significant people in the lives of the children were mentioned and described in the children's talk. To treat third parties with concern, named people were anonymized with codes in the transcriptions. I have also been very careful to avoid presenting data in a way that could be traceable directly to the specific child and his or her relationships, classrooms, or school. Moreover, it is important to note that the descriptions of third parties are not valid as characteristics of the third parties. The data are not presented in a way that ascribes attributes to the third parties beyond being subject to the children's perceptions.

## 7 Children's perceptions of language use within the family

In this chapter, I address RQ 1: *How do the children perceive language use in communication within their families?* More specifically, I elucidate RQ 1a: *To what degree do the children perceive themselves using their L1 in communication with parents and siblings, to what degree do they perceive their parents including their L1 when talking to them, and to what degree do the children's self-ratings reflect reciprocity and unity in language use in parent-child communication?* and RQ 1b: *When engaged in talk about language use in parent-child communication, what perceptions do the children bring forward?* I first present the degree to which the children rated the L1 to be used by themselves when addressing parents and siblings, and by parents when addressing them, and look at the degree to which their self-ratings reflected reciprocity and unity in language use parent-child communication (7.1). I then present three elaborative themes regarding bilingualism in parent-child communication derived from the children's talk (7.2). The results are summarized and discussed in Section 7.3.

### 7.1 Children's ratings of of L1 use within the family

The information about the use of the L1 in parent-child communication and with siblings is based on the children's responses to fixed-choice questions in the interviews about how often they used Turkish/Urdu when addressing their parents and their siblings and how often their mother and father used Turkish/Urdu (Urdu sometimes in combination with Punjabi) when addressing them. The children were introduced and responded to five categories of degree of L1 use: *Never*, *A little*, *Half the time*, *Mostly*, and *Always* (see 6.4.1). The categories *Never* and *Always* referred to a more monolingual communication pattern in one of the languages, the categories *A little* and *Mostly* indicated a bilingual pattern of language use dominated by one of the languages, and the category *Half the time* referred to a more balanced bilingual language use pattern. The number and percentage of children who identified with each category were calculated in SPSS and are presented in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1

Children's self-ratings of mothers' and fathers' L1 use when addressing the child and of their own L1 use when addressing mother, father, and siblings: Number and percentage of children.

Scale	Degree of L1 use							
	Total N		Never	A little	Half the time	Mostly	Always	Missing
Mother addresses child	56 <i>100</i>	n %	- -	3 <i>5.4</i>	14 <i>25.0</i>	14 <i>25.0</i>	22 <i>39.3</i>	3 <i>5.4</i>
Father addresses child	56 <i>100</i>	n %	- -	5 <i>8.9</i>	17 <i>30.4</i>	12 <i>21.4</i>	20 <i>35.7</i>	2 <i>3.6</i>
Child addresses mother	56 <i>100</i>	n %	- -	7 <i>12.5</i>	18 <i>32.1</i>	15 <i>26.8</i>	14 <i>25.0</i>	2 <i>3.6</i>
Child addresses father	56 <i>100</i>	n %	- -	10 <i>17.9</i>	20 <i>35.7</i>	16 <i>28.6</i>	9 <i>16.1</i>	1 <i>1.8</i>
Child addresses siblings	56 <i>100</i>	n %	6 <i>10.7</i>	29 <i>51.8</i>	10 <i>17.9</i>	10 <i>17.9</i>	- -	1 <i>1.8</i>

The children typically held one out of three perceptions of their mothers' and fathers' use of the L1: that a parent used the L1 *Always* (39.3% mothers and 35.7% fathers), *Mostly* (25.0% mothers and 21.4% fathers), or *Half the time* (25% mothers and 30.4% fathers). There was also a smaller proportion of the children who had the perception that a parent was using the L1 only *A little* when addressing the child (5.4% mothers, 8.9% fathers). In this way, the children held a variety of perceptions of their parents' language use, but no child perceived that a parent totally excluded the L1 when addressing the child. Moreover, the majority of the children perceived their parents to have a bilingual language use pattern, although the L1-monolingual language use pattern constituted more than one-third of the reports of both mothers' and fathers' L1 use. It can be noted that among the parents who were perceived to use only *A little* L1 (n=8), only two of them were born in Norway (one mother and one father). Thus, the reports of low L1 use by parents could not be accounted for by parental birthplace.

When it comes to children's perceptions of their own use of the L1 when addressing their parents, partly similar patterns were found. The children typically perceived using the



L1 *Always* (25% with mothers, 16.1% with fathers), *Mostly* (26.8% with mothers, 28.6% with fathers), or *Half the time* (32.1% with mothers, 35.7% with fathers) when addressing a parent. No children reported excluding the L1 in communication with a parent, but the category *A little* was reported by 12.5% with mothers and 17.9% with fathers. That is, the majority of the children perceived themselves as bilingual communicators when addressing mothers and fathers, while one-quarter of the children reported a L1-monolingual language use pattern when addressing their mother and around one-sixth of the sample when addressing their father.

In terms of children's use of the L1 when addressing their siblings, a different pattern emerged. As seen in Table 7.1, approximately half the sample (51.8%) perceived that they used their L1 *A little* when addressing their siblings—that is, an L2-dominant language use pattern. The vast majority of the children also perceived themselves as bilingual communicators when addressing their siblings. However, in contrast to the communication with parents, there were no children who perceived that they *Always* used their L1 when addressing their siblings; that is, no child reported a L1-monolingual language use pattern with their siblings. There was instead a small proportion of children who stated that they *Never* used their L1 with their siblings (10.7%), indicating a perception of an L2-monolingual language use pattern.

It can also be noted that 11 children (19.7%) in the sample reported their own L1 use similarly when addressing their mother, father, and sibling(s). The remaining children, that is, the vast majority, responded in ways that imply perceptions of nuances in their own language use dependent on the interlocutor. I was interested in the degree to which the children's self-ratings reflected reciprocity (e.g., overlap) in parent–child communication and unity in their own L1 use when the child addressed the two parents. I compared the children's self-ratings under three conditions: 1) the child's L1 use with the mother and the mother's L1 use with the child (*mother and child address each other*), 2) the child's L1 use with the father and the father's L1 use with the child (*father and child address each other*), and 3) the child's L1 use with the mother and the child's L1 use with the father (*child addresses mother and father*). Under each condition, each child received a score for either overlap (0) or difference (1) in language use. Table 7.2 illustrates the distribution of overlap and difference.

Table 7.2

Overlap and difference in compared L1 use when mother and child address each other, father and child address each other, and child addresses mother and father: Number and percentage of children.

Scale	Compared L1 use				
	Total N		Overlap	Difference	Missing
Mother and child address each other	56	n	36	17	3
	100	%	64.3	30.4	5.4
Father and child address each other	56	n	37	17	2
	100	%	66.1	30.4	3.6
Child addresses mother and father	56	n	39	15	2
	100	%	69.6	26.8	3.6

Regarding parent–child communication, the majority reported mother–child communication (64.3%, n=36) and father–child communication (66.1%, n=37) to overlap—that is, to be reciprocal (Table 7.2). The preliminary comparison revealed that out of these, 13 child–mother dyads and 9 child–father dyads were reported to be monolingual in terms of *Always* using the L1, while the remaining 51 parent–child dyads shared a bilingual pattern. On the other hand, almost one-third of the children perceived parent–child communication to diverge—that is, to be of a non-reciprocal character (30.4% of mother–child dyads (n=17) and 30.4% of father–child dyads (n=17) (Table 7.2). Preliminary comparisons of the differences showed that in all but two child–mother dyads, the child perceived to use less L1 than the parent did when the child and parent address each other. That is, in this sample, of the reported 107 parent–child dyads, communication was most often perceived as reciprocal bilingual (n= 51 dyads), followed by a non-reciprocal pattern where the child used less L1 than the parent (n = 32 dyads) and a reciprocal L1-monolingual pattern (n= 22 dyads). Two dyads displayed a divergent pattern of a parent using more L1 than the child.

In terms of the children’s perceptions of unity in their L1 use with their mother and father, respectively, the majority of the children perceived having an overlapping communication pattern when addressing their two parents (69.6%), while approximately a

quarter of the children (26.8%) perceived having a different communication pattern when addressing their mother and father, respectively (Table 7.2).

To sum up, the children's reports imply that the majority of the children in the sample perceived their parents' language use when addressing the child and their own language use with parents and siblings to be of a bilingual character—either L1-dominated, balanced, or L2-dominated (Table 7.1). However, the children more often identified with the language use categories including a larger degree of the L1 in their communication with their parents than in their communication with their siblings (Table 7.1). Moreover, there were children who perceived to be L1-monolingual in communication with their parents, while no child perceived to be L1-monolingual in communication with their siblings (Table 7.1) Vice versa, there were children who perceived themselves as being L2-monolingual in communication with their siblings, while no child perceived themselves as being L2-monolingual in communication with their parents (Table 7.1). Furthermore, it was far more common for the children to have perceptions of nuances in their language use rather than of a coherent pattern of L1 inclusion when addressing people within the family. The children most often evaluated the language use by themselves and a parent to be reciprocal and their own language use with both their parents to be unitary (Table 7.2). The reciprocal pattern was most often bilingual, but there were also children who reported a reciprocal L1-dominant parent–child pattern. Furthermore, just above one-quarter of the parent–child dyads were reported to be non-reciprocal (Table 7.2), with the parent using more L1 than the child. Moreover, approximately a quarter of the children perceived having a different communication pattern when addressing their mother and father, respectively (Table 7.2).

In the following section, I look further into how the children's talk elaborated on nuances in family language use, paying particular attention to parent–child communication.

## **7.2 Children's talk about language use in parent–child communication**

In this section, I present perspectives derived from the children's talk about nuances in language use between family members. Based on the analytical approach described in 6.5.1 and 6.5.2, I identified three elaborative themes in the children's talk regarding bilingualism in parent–child communication: an awareness of parental language skills (7.3.1), an awareness of bilingual communication around school-related tasks (7.3.2), and an awareness of negotiations of language learning (7.3.3).

### 7.2.1 Awareness of parental language skills

The interviewers seldom addressed parental language skills directly. Still, the children's talk about language use in parent–child communication often revolved around the topic of parental language skills. One way in which the awareness of parental language skills emerged in the children's talk was in relation to their parents' limited proficiency in Norwegian. The children could, for instance, state that they “had to” use their L1 with one or both parents, because the parent had limited skills in Norwegian. The examples also illustrate that this reason for using the L1 with a parent was brought up by children who reported different patterns of L1 use when addressing their parents (Section 7.1), as illustrated in the following four examples:

Example 7.1, Child 32 (T/B/Classroom 11):

INT: how often do you speak Turkish to your mom or dad?

CHI: I have to speak Turkish to Mommy because she doesn't know Norwegian.

INT: so you always speak Turkish at home?

CHI: yes, Turkish at home. with Mommy and Daddy, but not with my sister.

INT: hvor ofte bruker du tyrkisk når du snakker med mammaen eller pappaen din?

BAR: jeg må snakke tyrkisk med mamma fordi mamma ikke vet norsk

INT: ja. så snakker du hele tiden tyrkisk hjemme da?

BAR: tyrkisk hjemme ja. med henne og med pappa, men ikke med søsteren min.

Example 7.2, Child 49 (U/B/Classroom 12):

INT: when you speak with your dad, how often do you use Urdu then?

CHI: then I use only a quarter of Norwegian. then I use a lot of Urdu.

INT: a quarter of Norwegian and a lot of Urdu. that's with your dad?

CHI: yes. because he doesn't understand a lot [of Norwegian].

INT: når du snakker med pappen din da, hvor ofte bruker du urdu da?

BAR: da bruker jeg kvart norsk bare. da bruker jeg masse urdu.

INT: kvart norsk og mye urdu. det er til pappaen din?

BAR: ja. fordi han forstår ikke så masse [norsk] da.

Example 7.3, Child 14 (U/G/Classroom 5):

INT: but when you speak with your parents # how often do you think you use Urdu?

CHI: half the time actually. (...). I mix a little.

INT: ok. you mix a little. do you think you mix within a sentence as well?

CHI: yes.uh. 'cause there are some words my mom doesn't know. then I have to explain in Urdu and yeah.

INT: men når du snakker med foreldrene dine, hvor ofte bruker du urdu da tror du?

BAR: halvparten av tiden faktisk. (...). jeg blander litt.

INT: du blander litt ja. blander du i en setning også eller tror du?

BAR: ja. ehh. fordi det er noen ord moren min ikke skjønner. da må jeg forklare det på urdu og litt sånn.

Example 7.4, Child 20 (U/G/Classroom 7):

CHI: when I speak with Mommy and there are words she doesn't really understand, that's when, then I can't really be bothered to explain it [in Norwegian], so I speak Urdu.

BAR: da jeg skal snakke med mamma og det er noen ord hun ikke skjønner helt, da er det, da orker jeg ikke å forklare det [på norsk] og da snakker jeg urdu.

In Example 7.1, the boy brought up that he has to speak Turkish with his mother, because she does not know Norwegian, and he confirmed that he speaks Turkish at home

with his parents all the time. He also brought up that he does not use Turkish all the time with his sister, emphasizing that there is a contrast in his language use with his parents and his sister. The second example illustrates how another child explained that he uses only “*a quarter of Norwegian*” and a lot of Urdu with his father, because the father does not understand a lot of Norwegian. In Example 7.3, the girl perceived herself as using her first language half the time with her parents, and when asked more about this mixing, she referred to her mother not knowing all the words in Norwegian, so she has to explain in Urdu. In the final example, the girl spoke of how she turns to Urdu when there are words in Norwegian her mother does not understand completely. All the examples illustrate how the children brought up parental limitation in Norwegian as their reason for using their first language in their communication with their parents, either as the only language or in combination with Norwegian. While the children in examples 7.1 and 7.2 referred to a more extensive use of their L1 and to their parents’ overall lack of Norwegian skills, the children in examples 7.3 and 7.4 referred to a shift towards Urdu taking place within the communication due to the parents not knowing all the words in Norwegian. Nevertheless, the shift towards the heritage language may indicate that the children did not perceive their parents as having sufficient language skills in Norwegian in order for them to continue speaking Norwegian. Rather, these children spoke of themselves as dependent, either fully or partly, on the first language in order to communicate sufficiently with their parent.

Despite the children bringing up their parents’ lack of Norwegian skills as an explanation for their use of the L1 with their parents, few children explicitly described the lack of parental language skills in Norwegian as strenuous. The girl in Example 7.4 only hinted at such a perception when she said, “*then I can’t really be bothered to explain it [in Norwegian], so I speak Urdu.*” However, when the children referred to their own limited L1 skills, notions of possible challenges were found more implicitly in their talk. An example is the talk of one of the children who reported the deviant non-reciprocal pattern of a parent using less L1 than the child (Section 7.1). The girl in the example explained that she *Always* spoke in Urdu to her mother, because her mother was less skilled in Norwegian but said that her mother used *Mostly* Urdu and a little Norwegian and explained this nuance in her mother’s language use in the following way:

Example 7.5, Child 53 (U/G/Classroom 12):

CHI: when she [the mother] is bored, she speaks [Norwegian]. because the homework she has done, I'm the one who helps her because she doesn't understand a lot. so my sister does some of it, when she doesn't have time I'll help her. 'cause she doesn't really get difficult tasks.

[...]

INT: but then when you speak to your sister and brothers, how often do you use Urdu, when you speak to them?

CHI: I don't speak Urdu with them. I speak Norwegian. because I speak Norwegian. I think it's difficult, the Norwegian words are difficult to explain in Urdu, so I speak Norwegian with them.

BAR: da hun [moren] kjeder seg snakker hun [norsk]. fordi leksene hun har som hun har gjort, det er jeg som hjelper henne med det fordi hun forstår ikke så mye. så søstera mi gjør noe, når hun har ikke tid da hjelper jeg henne. for hun får heller ikke så vanskelige lekser.

[...]

INT: men når du snakker med søsteren din og brødrene dine, hvor ofte bruker du urdu da, når du snakker til dem?

BAR: jeg snakker ikke urdu med dem. jeg snakker norsk. fordi jeg snakker norsk. jeg synes det er vanskelig, de ordene som er på norsk er vanskelig å forklare på urdu så jeg snakker norsk med dem.

In this excerpt, the girl explained that her mother spoke Norwegian when she was “*bored*” and when she was doing her homework, referring to her mother’s attempts to learn Norwegian. When later asked about her language use with her siblings, the girl said that she does not speak Urdu with them, because she finds it difficult to “*explain*” the Norwegian words in Urdu. She seemed to say that it was harder for her to express herself in Urdu, which is the language she earlier said she always uses with her mother. Although not explicated by the girl, her descriptions of her mother’s limited Norwegian skills and her own limitations in Urdu suggest that her communication with her mother may present challenges for them both.

The way the children in the examples above described that they adjust to their parents’ limited Norwegian skills highlights how the children took responsibility for the joint comprehension in parent–child communication. In the following example, a boy is explicating how his mother’s lack of Norwegian skills and the children’s adjustment to this lack of language skills is a prevalent issue in his family:

Example 7.6, Child 1 (T/B/Classroom 1):

CHI: but at home I have to speak Turkish. well I don't have to but I want to. well, I want to speak so Mommy understands.

[...]

CHI: Mommy says *speak Turkish*, I just, or, *it's very difficult to understand what you're talking about now*. and things like that(...). and when we speak Norwegian Mommy says *you have to speak Turkish* because she, too, wants to, or, not like that but I don't know why she wants us to speak Turkish, but uh, then I speak Turkish. but my little sister doesn't listen when she says that. she speaks Norwegian.

BAR: men hjemme må jeg snakke tyrkisk. eller jeg må ikke, men jeg vil. eller, jeg har lyst til å snakke at mamma forstår.

[...]

BAR: mamma sier *snakk tyrkisk*, jeg bare, eller, *det er veldig vanskelig å forstå hva dere snakker om og sånt nå*. (...). også da vi snakker norsk så sier mamma *du må snakke tyrkisk* fordi hun vil også, eller, ikke noe sånt, men, jeg vet ikke hvorfor hun vil at vi skal snakke tyrkisk, men ehh, jeg snakker tyrkisk da. men lillesøsteren min hører ikke når hun sier. hun snakker norsk.

In the first line, the boy spoke of his use of Turkish at home to the interviewer. He started by saying that he has to speak Turkish at home. Then he continued to say that he does not have to, he wants to (speak Turkish). Then again, he changed it into that he feels like speaking Turkish so his mother understands. Furthermore, he talked about how his mother urges the children to speak Turkish; she says that it is hard to understand what the children are talking about when they speak Norwegian. The boy's talk implies that he is a bit ambiguous about or maybe unfamiliar with how to talk about his mother urging them to speak Turkish, trying to make meaning as he talked; *"because she, too, wants to, or, not like that but I don't know why she wants us to speak Turkish, but uh."* It is also interesting to note from the talk that while the boy adjusts to his mother's request, according to him, his younger sister (who is 8 years old) does not. The sister speaks Norwegian despite the mother requesting that they speak Turkish. The experience of the boy in Example 7.6 underscores the possible sensitivity related to differences in language skills between generations in language minority families. It also underscores how children may react differently to the fact that they have parents who have limited skills in the language they prefer to speak.

The awareness of parental language skills can also be illustrated by how some children spoke of the differences between their mother and father in language skills. As revealed in the children's self-ratings of L1 inclusion, around one-quarter of the children (n = 15) reported using their languages differently with their two parents (Table 7.2). In children's more elaborative talk, it turned out that this difference often was determined by the parents' language skills. Moreover, the relevance of such differences particularly appeared in relation to parent-child communication around school-related tasks, as illustrated in the following two examples:

Example 7.7, Child 13 (U/G/Classroom 5):

INT: do you speak Urdu at home?

CHI: yes. sometimes 'cause when I ask about my homework then I ask in Norwegian. but then I normally ask Daddy because he is, he is totally fluent in Norwegian. then I ask in Norwegian, he answers back and explains.

INT: snakker dere noe urdu hjemme?

BAR: ja. av og til fordi når jeg skal spørre om leksene mine så spør jeg det på norsk. men da spør jeg mest pappa fordi han er, han kan helt flytende norsk. da spør jeg på norsk, da svarer han tilbake og forklarer.

Example 7.8, Child 48 (T/B/Classroom 12):

INT: who normally helps you [with homework], is it Mommy or Daddy?

CHI: mostly Daddy. Mommy can't, Mommy doesn't know much Norwegian.

INT: hvem er det som pleier å hjelpe deg da [med lesker], er det mamma eller pappa?

BAR: pappa mest. mamma vet ikke, mamma vet litt norsk.

The descriptions in examples 7.7 and 7.8 imply that the children communicate about school-related tasks with the parent who is more skilled in Norwegian. In Example 7.7, the girl herself spontaneously brought up this preference when asked openly about whether they spoke any Urdu at home. She emphasized that when she is asking about homework, she asks in Norwegian, and she asks her dad, because he knows Norwegian fluently. She also stated that her father answers back and explains. The talk implies that she perceived the response she receives as helpful. In Example 7.8, the boy was asked directly about who helps him with his homework, and he said that he mostly asks his dad, because his mother knows little Norwegian. The two examples illustrate how a parent who lacks skills in Norwegian may be more or less excluded from the homework situation. That is, the children may perceive the support as more accessible from the parent who is more skilled in Norwegian. Such a pattern may further reflect that the families perceive the Norwegian language as preferable in relation to school-related tasks. To underscore this tendency, there were also children who referred to their siblings as the ones who would support them with their homework in Norwegian due to parental lack of sufficient Norwegian skills.

Moreover, some children made parental language skills in Norwegian relevant in their talk about their parents beyond how it affected their own interaction with their parents, as illustrated in the following three excerpts:

Example 7.9, Child 52 (U/B/Classroom 12):

CHI: my dad owns a restaurant. (...) he manages in Norwegian so he has loads of customers.

BAR: faren min eier restaurant. (...) han greier norsk så han har masse kunder.

Example 7.10, Child 13 (U/G/Classroom 5):

CHI: because Daddy was born in Pakistan, but when he was two years old he moved to Norway. and Mommy have lived there for a long time. she moved here when my big sister was born, so she's not very good [at Norwegian], because she didn't go to a Norwegian school or anything. but now she's got a job and now she speaks a little better Norwegian than before. now that she's got a new job it will be better for her. she's learning a bit.

BAR: pappa ble født i Pakistan, men når han var to år så ble han flyttet hit til Norge. og mamma har bodd der kjempe lenge. hun flyttet hit når storesøstera mi ble født, og da er hun ikke særlig flink [på norsk] for hun har ikke fått gått på norsk skole og sånn. men så har hun fått jobb nå, og nå snakker hun litt bedre norsk enn før. nå har hun fått sånn ny jobb så da blir det bedre for henne. hun lærer litt.

Example 7.11, Child 6 (U/B/Classroom 4):

CHI: Mommy doesn't understand much Norwegian so she is going to a Norwegian course. (...) she had a test last week. there were one hundred and twenty-five words. she got, she came third. (...) and the best one was also an Urdu. she got one hundred and seventeen out of one hundred and twenty-five.

BAR: mamma kan ikke så mye norsk så derfor går hun på norsk kurs. (...) hun hadde prøve i forrige uke. det var hundreogtjuefem ord. hun hadde, hun kom på tredje plass (...). og den beste var også en urdu. hun hadde hundreogstyten av hundreogtjuefem.



In Example 7.9, Child 52 drew a line between his father's mastery of the Norwegian language and his father's success in running his restaurant; because the father knows Norwegian, he has many customers. In the next example, Child 13 was asked a follow-up question about why she thought her father was more skilled in Norwegian than her mother was. In her explanation, she referred to her parents' different immigrant histories, the consequences of her mother being home with her children instead of being out working, and the importance of her mother possessing a job in order for her to learn Norwegian. She added that this is better for her mother. In Example 7.11, Child 6 said that his mother attends a Norwegian course and that she scored high on a Norwegian test at the course—she ended up in third place. He added that the best student in the course was also an Urdu-speaker. This story reveals how his mother learning Norwegian has been a subject in his family. The sharing of his mother's achievement may reflect an awareness of the fundamental importance of learning Norwegian and an acknowledgement of his mother's attempt—and success—in doing so. Together, the preceding three examples illustrate how the children have observed their parents' status as immigrants and second language learners. Through these different observations, the children demonstrate an understanding of and sensitivity towards central aspects of their parents'—and hence, their own—language minority bilingual situation. I return to this topic in Section 9.2.2 and discuss it further in Chapter 10.

To sum up, the examples presented above illustrate how the children made parental language skills in Norwegian relevant in their talk. The relevance was brought up in relation to their language use and communication with their parents (examples 7.1–7.8) and in relation to their observations of their parents' experiences as language minority bilinguals and second language learners (examples 7.9–7.11). Many children related their inclusion of the L1 with their parents, either exclusively or in combination with Norwegian, with parental lack of skills in Norwegian. However, few voices in the sample explicated parental lack of Norwegian language skills as strenuous in parent–child communication. Rather, the children stated that they adjusted to the language skills and proficiencies of their interlocutors. However, there were children whose talk implied that differences in language skills between parents and children is a sensitive topic, both in regular parent–child communication (examples 7.4 and 7.6) and in domain-specific talk about school-related tasks (examples 7.7 and 7.8). Furthermore, alongside bringing up the dependency on the L1

in parent–child communication, the children’s talk carried a simultaneous implication of the importance for their parents to learn the Norwegian language (examples 7.9–7.11).

### 7.2.2 Awareness of bilingual communication around school-related tasks

A second elaborative theme derived from the children’s talk was the awareness about bilingual communication around school-related tasks. As illustrated in the previous section, Norwegian was given a superior status as the school language in the children’s talk. Examples 7.7 and 7.8 above suggested how the parent most fluent in Norwegian was the one who was perceived as supportive when children needed help with Norwegian homework. At the same time, the children’s talk revolving around the homework situation revealed that the children conveyed alternative conceptions of the role of the first language in communication with their parents around school-related tasks at home. In this section, I will highlight how the children saw the use of the L1 as both a challenge and a resource in communication with their parents around school-related tasks.

The first two examples illustrate a perception of using the first language to talk about what has been or is to be learned in Norwegian as challenging. In Example 7.12, Child 14 had just stated that she found it easier to speak about science in Norwegian than in Urdu, and the interviewer asked why that was:

Example 7.12, Child 14 (U/G/Classroom 5):

CHI: uh, it’s a bit weird, but I can’t figure out what most of the words are [in Urdu]. I just can’t find them, and it gets so difficult. (...) when my grandma was here it was really difficult to explain it to her ’cause she was always asking what I was doing in my homework.

BAR: ehh, det er litt rart da, men de fleste ord klarer jeg ikke å finne hva det er [på urdu]. jeg klarer ikke å finne de også blir det så vanskelig. (...) når farmoren min var her så var det så vanskelig å forklare det for henne for hun spurte alltid hva jeg drev på med lekser.

When the girl was to explain why she found it difficult to speak about science in Urdu, she said that she cannot find the words and that it becomes difficult. She referred to her experience with trying to explain her homework to her grandmother who was visiting from Pakistan (and spoke only Urdu) and was always asking what the girl was doing in her homework. In the next example, a boy describes how his father helps him with his homework. The interviewer asked specifically about math and whether his father explains in Turkish or if they only use Norwegian:

Example 7.13, Child 1 (T/B/Classroom 1):

CHI: Daddy says it in Turkish then I tell *him I don't understand what you say* in Turkish. then he says it in Norwegian, or, he tries to say it in Norwegian. if he can't he draws it or something like that.

BAR: pappa sier det på tyrkisk så sier jeg *jeg forstår ikke hva du sier* på tyrkisk da. så sier han det på norsk, eller, han prøver å si det på norsk. om han ikke kan det så tegner han det eller noe sånt.

In this example, Child 1 said that he tells his father that he does not understand when the father explains mathematics in Turkish. The father would then try to explain in Norwegian. This seemed not always to be supportive for the boy, so the father would turn to communicating through drawing. The two preceding examples illustrate that when the child finds it difficult to understand the L1 and the interlocutor has limited skills in Norwegian, building bridges between languages may not be a straight forward process, both when reconstructing what has been learned (Example 7.12) and in communication about what is to be learned (Example 7.13). As a solution, the boy in Example 7.13 described the creative use of drawing, which may help build a bridge over the language barriers.

Other children indicated that parental use of the L1 was perceived more supportively when engaged in their homework. The following four examples demonstrate different ways in which the children perceived receiving homework support with the inclusion of the first language:

Example 7.14, Child 17 (T/B/Classroom 6):

CHI: if I don't understand [the homework] and I get help from Mommy, then it is in Turkish. (...) it's me that reads it, and then I translate it.

BAR: hvis jeg ikke skjønner [leksene] og får hjelp av mamma, da blir det på tyrkisk. (...) det er jeg som leser og så oversetter jeg.

Example 7.15, Child 16 (U/G/Classroom 5):

CHI: if it is Norwegian homework, we use Norwegian. (...) if there are some tricky words, then Mommy explains in Urdu.

BAR: hvis det er norske lekser så snakker vi norsk. (...) hvis det er noen ord som er vanskelig så forklarer mamma det på urdu.

Example 7.16, Child 53 (U/G/Classroom 12):

CHI: right, for example, if I need help in Norwegian, she [Mommy] says it in Urdu so I understand a bit. and if I don't understand it, then I ask Daddy, and he answers in Norwegian. then I understand it in both.

BAR: ikke sant, for eksempel, hvis jeg trenger hjelp på norsk, så sier hun [mamma] det på urdu så forstår jeg litt. og hvis ikke jeg forstår det så spør jeg pappa så svarer han det på norsk. da forstår jeg det litt fra begge.

Example 7.17, Child 26 (T/G/Classroom 10):

CHI: uh, my mother and, uh, my brother and my sister help me with the science and social science. Daddy helps with math.

BAR: ehh, på naturfag og samfunnsfag hjelper mamma og, ehh, broren min og søstera mi. pappa hjelper med matte.

In Example 7.14, the boy explained how his mother helps him in Turkish and that he translates from Norwegian textbooks for his mother in order for her to be able to help him in Turkish. The girl in Example 7.15 spoke of how her mother uses mainly Norwegian during homework, but uses Urdu to explain “*tricky words*,” implying that Urdu is a resource in their communication about homework. In Example 7.16, the girl explained how she receives support from one of her parents in Urdu, and if she does not understand completely, she asks the other parent, who explains in Norwegian. In this way, she said she understands a little from both. Finally, the girl in Example 7.17 said that her parents help with different subjects. The mother (who was described as more skilled in Norwegian) or her siblings help with science and social science, while her father (who she said could not speak Norwegian well, but who is a teacher in math) helps her with math. Seen together, the children brought up several varieties of bilingual communication around homework: the complete use of the L1 by a parent who gets the task translated from Norwegian (Example 7.14), the use of both languages in combination by a parent (Example 7.15), the combination of one parent using one language and the other parent using the other language to explain similar task (Example 7.16), and one parent using one language to explain one task, while the other parent uses the other language to explain another task (Example 7.17). None of the four children expressed that they found these practices challenging. This may suggest that they were sufficiently skilled in their heritage language to utilize the support in the heritage language, optionally in combination with Norwegian language support.

In order to underscore how the children’s talk more implicitly suggested that involvement by parents who exposed their children extensively to the heritage language appeared to be supportive of the children’s learning, I included an excerpt from the interview with Child 32. He referred frequently to his mother throughout the interview. He spoke of his mother as possessing limited Norwegian skills and said he only communicated with her in Turkish (cf. Example 7.1). The boy also referred to his mother as very knowledgeable, as someone who discussed books with him, and as someone corrected his understanding of subject matter issues. He underscored that he himself knew both languages but that he found it easier to speak in Norwegian. At one point in the interview, he described contemporary certain legal, political, and social issues of Turkey thoroughly to the interviewer and demonstrated knowledge and a breadth of vocabulary in Norwegian related to these topics. When he finished his small lecture, he said:

Example 7.18, Child 32 (T/B/Classroom 11):

CHI: My Mommy taught me that.

BAR: det der har jeg lært av mamma'n min.

This example implies how a Turkish-speaking parent who was perceived as limited in her Norwegian skills simultaneously was perceived as an important communicative partner and a source for gaining knowledge. The boy obviously received a lot of support in Turkish from his mother and was able to comprehend and learn from this support.

To sum up, the examples in the present section served to demonstrate how some children perceived communication around school work in their L1 to be challenging (examples 7.12–7.13), while others spoke of different ways in which the L1 was integrated by their parents during homework (examples 7.14–7.18). The examples brought to the foreground how language minority families relate differently to the task of building bridges between two languages and finding ways to communicate bilingually. In this way, the examples underscored how parental resources were perceived as important to the children, regardless of their parents' level of skills in Norwegian.

### 7.2.3 Awareness of negotiations of language learning

A third elaborative theme derived from the children's talk concerned the way families integrate negotiations of language learning in their communication. The children frequently referred to their parents' concerns for their children's language learning. While some children emphasized expectations of learning and maintaining the heritage language, others emphasized their parents' concerns about their children learning the Norwegian language. Child 32 from examples 7.1 and 7.18 was one of the children who spoke of his parents as strongly urging him to use and learn more of his heritage language, Turkish. The boy said that he already knows how to speak and read Turkish and persistently proclaimed his greater interest in Norwegian, as illustrated in the following example:

Example 7.19, Child 32 (T/B/Classroom 11):

CHI: Mommy tries to get me to read Turkish books, but I am not interested in them. I'm only interested in Norwegian.

BAR: mamma prøver i alle fall å gjøre meg til å lese tyrkiske bøker, men jeg er ikke interessert i det. jeg er bare interessert i norsk.

The boy here explained that his mother tries to make him read Turkish books, but he is not interested; he is only interested in Norwegian. In a similar vein, another girl talked about her parents' encouragement of her and her siblings' use of their first language, Urdu:

Example 7.20, Child 13 (U/G/Classroom 5):

CHI: they [the parents] speak [Urdu] with each other, because they just want us to learn Urdu.

INT: they just want you to learn Urdu?

CHI: yes. because the people that live on our street speak too much [Norwegian]. they speak too much, and my parents don't really like that. they want us to speak Urdu the whole time. but we do it. and we speak Norwegian too sometimes.

BAR: de [foreldrene] snakker [urdu] med hverandre, fordi de vil at vi skal bare lære urdu.

INT: de vil at dere bare skal lære urdu?

BAR: ja. fordi de som bor i gaten vår de snakker for mye [norsk]. de snakker for mye og det liker liksom ikke mine foreldre. de vil at vi skal snakke urdu hele tiden. men vi gjør det. så snakker vi norsk også iblant.

The girl in the example described her surrounding neighborhood as consisting of several Urdu-speaking families. Thus, she has had the opportunity to maintain her L1 on a daily basis, even beyond communication with her closest family, but her parents' seem to perceive that the children use too much Norwegian with their same L1-speaking peers. The girl said that her parents speak Urdu with each other in order for their children to learn Urdu, and that the parents urge their children to use Urdu themselves. She said that her parents want their children to learn only Urdu and that the parents do not like the fact that the children in the street speak Norwegian. In this way, the girl implied that the parents and the children in the family negotiate the children's language use. From the girl's talk, one gets the impression that she would sometimes stick to the parental policy, while other times not (*"but we do it. and we speak Norwegian too sometimes."*).

In the next example, the child first stated that her parents use both Norwegian and Urdu when talking with her, before saying that *"when I'm with my family I like to speak Norwegian. I don't like speaking Urdu with them."* A little later in the interview, she again brought up in the conversation her dislike for speaking Urdu when talking about her language use with her younger brother. The interviewer kept questioning her about her dislike for speaking Urdu:

Example 7.21, Child 56 (U/G/Classroom 12):

CHI: we [she and her brother] don't like speaking Urdu together.

INT: you don't? why do you think that is?

CHI: we just like Norwegian better.

INT: yes. is it easier for you to speak Norwegian than Urdu or is there no difference?

CHI: there is no difference, we just like Norwegian.

BAR: vi [hun og broren] liker ikke å snakke urdu med hverandre.

INT: dere gjør ikke det? hvorfor ikke det tror du?

BAR: bare vi liker norsk bedre.

INT: ja. er det lettere å snakke norsk enn urdu også eller spiller ikke det noen rolle for deg?

BAR: det spiller ingen rolle da, men vi bare liker norsk.

In this example, the girl explicitly claimed her and her brothers' choice of the Norwegian language to be simply a matter of preference and not a matter of lack of L1 skills; they just prefer to speak Norwegian. The example displays how the siblings take a joint stance in negotiating their own bilingualism.

The three preceding examples suggest that despite the children having reached a certain level of L1 skills, the parents may meet resistance when encouraging their children's continued use of the first language due to the children's preference for the majority language. The three children are obviously in a position to choose which language to use and express their greater interest in (Example 7.19), superior skills in (Example 7.20), and their preference for speaking (Example 7.21) the language as their reason for using Norwegian.

In contrast to the examples above, other voices in the material indicated that meeting the expectations of family to continue learning the first language was hard. In the first forthcoming example, a boy said that he uses Norwegian with his parents because it is hard to speak Urdu and that he prefers to use Norwegian with his older sister. Despite his preference, at times, his sister forces him to use Urdu. The boy is obviously struggling with his Urdu, contrary to his sister:

Example 7.22, Child 12 (U/B/Classroom 5):

CHI: sometimes she [the older sister] forces me [to speak Urdu].

INT: why do you think she forces you?

CHI: because she says I have to learn it, and I can't stand it, so sometimes I don't bother.

BAR: noen ganger tvinger hun [storesøster] meg [til å snakke urdu].

INT: hvorfor tvinger hun deg til det da tror du?

BAR: siden hun sier at jeg må lære det også orker jeg ikke, og noen ganger gidder jeg ikke.

When asked why his sister would force him to speak urdu, he said that his sister says he has to learn it. The sister has obviously taken the responsibility to help, or force, him to use and learn the language. It is not clear from the conversation whether this situation referred to a friendly teasing among siblings or to the sister's more serious attempts to teach or encourage her brother. In any case, he is confronted with his lack of skills in Urdu.

In a similar vein, another boy who also spoke of himself as less skilled in his L1 brought up how he was confronted with his lack of Urdu skills by his family:

Example 7.23, Child 29 (U/B/Classroom 10):

CHI: everyone in my family says I can't speak Urdu, so I don't bother speaking much.

[...]

CHI: it would have been a bit cooler if I could speak Urdu better. then I could speak with more of my family.

BAR: alle i familien min sier at jeg ikke klarer urdu, så jeg driver ikke å snakker så mye.

[...]

BAR: det hadde vært litt kulere hvis jeg hadde snakket litt bedre urdu. da kunne jeg ha snakka med flere i familien.

Seen in relation to the voices in examples 7.19, 7.20, and 7.21, the boys in examples 7.22 and 7.23 did not display a similar degree of choice in their language use. Rather, they presented themselves as being assigned the identity of struggling learners of their first language within their families. The boy in Example 7.22 did not explicate a wish to be able

to know more of his L1; he rather explained that he resists his sister's attempts to make him speak Urdu and said that he sometimes does not bother. The boy in Example 7.23 put it somewhat differently; he seemed to see his reluctance to speak his L1 to be due to his family telling him that he is not able to do it. He also said that it would have been “*cooler*” if he had known more Urdu so that he could have spoken with more people in his family. This suggest that being the one in the family who struggles with heritage language learning and being confronted with this by family members may evoke different emotions in children.

On other occasions, the children brought up parental concerns about their children's learning of Norwegian. One of them was the second child in the sample who reported a non-reciprocal language use pattern, where she rated her mother as using more Norwegian than she did (Section 7.1). The girl reported that her mother used Turkish *Half the time* while she herself as using mostly Turkish when addressing her mother (and her siblings). This girl explained that her father was not proficient in Norwegian (see Example 7.17). When the girl was asked to describe her mother's more frequent use of Norwegian, she said that her mother urged the family to speak more Norwegian, while the girl insisted on replying mostly in Turkish, in which she was more skilled. Another Turkish-speaking girl brought up a similar concern expressed by her mother. This girl also described herself as more competent in Turkish. She talked about her language use with her siblings and said that she speaks mostly Turkish with her sister, who is in Grade 4, but not her little brother, who is in kindergarten:

Example 7.24, Child 28 (T/G/Classroom 10):

CHI: yes. but not [Turkish] with my little brother, because he must learn to speak Norwegian. we [she and her younger brother] speak Norwegian and Mommy always says *you must speak Norwegian right*.

INT: she says you must speak Norwegian? right.

CHI: to my brother as well. *speak Norwegian to him, too*.

[...]

CHI: we have to teach them Norwegian. not Turkish, because they know Turkish.

BAR: ja. men ikke [tyrkisk] med lillebror for han må lære å snakke norsk. vi [hun og lillebroren] snakker norsk og mamma sier hele tida *dere må snakke norsk* ikke sant.

INT: hun sier dere må snakke norsk? akkurat.

BAR: til broren min og. *snakk norsk til han også*. [...]

BAR: vi må lære norsk til dem. ikke tyrkisk, fordi dem vet tyrkisk.

The girl here spoke of how her mother encourages her children to speak Norwegian, especially with their younger brother. The example underscored that the girl perceived her mother to be insistent and consistent about her language policy (“*Mommy always says you must speak Norwegian right.*”). That is, she perceived that her mother regularly confronts



her and her siblings with notions regarding their language use. In the latter line in the example (“*we have to teach them Norwegian. not Turkish because, they know Turkish.*”), the girl was responding to a question later in the interview about whether she had ever tried to teach someone Turkish. The girl here seemed to relate the strong emphasis on the learning of Norwegian to the children’s superior skills in the heritage language. The strong concern of the mothers of the two Turkish-speaking girls about their children’s learning of Norwegian can be seen in relation to their extensive use of Turkish (i.e., *Mostly*) reported by the girls with their siblings. That is, they were two of the 10 children in the sample who reported such an extensive use of the heritage language with their siblings (Table 7.1).

In concluding this elaborative theme, I will illustrate two more nuances regarding family negotiations of bilingual language learning. The first example illustrates how language learning was seen in relation to joint comprehension within the family. Like in the previous example, the girl in the example talked about her family’s attempts to make the youngest child in the family (four years old) learn Norwegian. The girl described the intention of her family members to teach the youngest brother Norwegian, while at the same time saying that they speak mostly Urdu with him in order to make him understand:

Example 7.25, Child 45 (U/G/Classroom 11):

CHI: he [the little brother] speaks Urdu but, we are trying to get him to learn Norwegian.

INT: ok. who is trying to teach him Norwegian then?

CHI: everyone. because he only wants to speak Urdu.

INT: but how often do you use Norwegian when you are speaking to your little brother then? do you use more Urdu or more Norwegian?

CHI: mostly Urdu. to get him to understand.

BAR: han [lillebroren] snakker urdu, men vi prøver å få han til å lære norsk.

INT: ja ok. hvem er det som prøver å lære ham norsk da?

BAR: alle. for han vil bare snakke urdu.

INT: men hvor mye bruker dere norsk når dere snakker med lillebroren din da? er det mest urdu eller mest norsk?

BAR: mest urdu. det var for å få han til å forstå.

In the latter line of the example, the girl spoke of the extensive use of Urdu, despite the intention of teaching the brother Norwegian, with the need to make the brother understand: “*mostly Urdu. to get him to understand.*” The second example contains a perspective in relation to the child’s and the parent’s differing needs of learning separate languages; the girl needs to learn, and thus to be exposed to, Urdu, while the mother needs to learn, and thus to speak, Norwegian:

Example 7.26, Child 25 (U/G/Classroom 9):

CHI: It's kind of hard for me to speak real Urdu. there are some words I don't really know that Mommy says *you have to practice*.

[...]

CHI: my dad thinks I should speak, says *if you are at home then you should speak Urdu, if you are out at school or other places, then you should speak Norwegian. but at home you should speak Urdu*.

[...]

INT: do your parents ever speak Norwegian to you?

CHI: uh yes. there are times, because Daddy is completely always Urdu. and Mommy, she also speaks a little Urdu, but she also has to practice Norwegian with us.

BAR: jeg har vanskelig å snakke ordentlig urdu på en måte. det er noen ord som jeg ikke greier helt som mamma sier *du må øve på*.

[...]

BAR: faren min syns jeg skal snakke, sier *hvis du er hjemme, så skal du snakke urdu, hvis du er med i skolen eller noen andre steder, skal du snakke norsk. hjemme skal du snakke urdu*.

[...]

INT: hender det at foreldrene dine snakker norsk til deg?

BAR: ehh ja. det er noen ganger, fordi pappa er alltid helt helt urdu. og mamma'n min, hun også sier litt urdu, men hun må også øve seg å snakke norsk med oss.

In this example, Child 25 first brought up how she meets expectations from her mother to improve her skills in Urdu and expectations from her father to use only Urdu at home. At the same time, the girl said that her mother needs to practice her Norwegian skills in communication with her children. This description illustrates the joint project of language learning shared by parents and children and how they alter between the roles as the skilled and the unskilled—between being the teacher and being the learner—and how different considerations are at stake.

To sum up, this elaborative theme shed light on negotiations of language use and language learning within families. In some of the examples, we saw children who were encouraged to speak their heritage language more. While some of them described themselves as skilled in their L1 (examples 7.19, 7.20, and 7.21), others presented themselves as struggling with their L1 maintenance (examples 7.22 and 7.23). In either case, but for different reasons, the children partly or fully resisted the expectations of speaking their heritage language more. Other children spoke of the need of the children (some or all) in the family to learn more Norwegian, and thus, how parents encouraged a more extensive use of Norwegian within the family (examples 7.24 and 7.25). What is common in all the examples is that the children described a situation where they perceive expectations from their parents of a continued bilingual development, which involves changes in their current language use. The examples further imply that change of language use can be challenging when one is encouraged to use a language that one is less in command of (examples 7.22, 7.24, and 7.25). In addition, using a language with someone who is not sufficiently skilled in that language can be a strenuous task when it comes to achieving joint comprehension (Example 7.24). It may take more effort not to switch to the language the other person is more in command of. This was already touched upon in

Section 7.2.1, where in Example 7.4 a girl expressed that it was strenuous to speak Norwegian with her mother if the mother did not understand all the words and thus turned to the first language, and in examples 7.5 and 7.6, wherein a mother urges her children to speak the L1 in order for the mother to understand. In a similar vein, Example 7.25 here points to the possible dilemma of language minority parents when they are to integrate the exposure of one language to their children while simultaneously learning another.

### 7.3 Summary and discussion

In this chapter, I have addressed how the children perceived language use in communication within their families (RQ 1). I first presented how children perceived using their L1 when addressing their parents and siblings, the degree to which they perceived their parents using their L1 when addressing them, and the degree to which the children's self-ratings reflected reciprocity and unity in language use in parent-child communication (RQ 1a) before I presented three elaborative themes regarding language use in parent-child communication (RQ 1b). I will now summarize and discuss the results.

When applying categories of language use describing the frequency of one's own L1 use, which encompasses both the monolingual versus bilingual aspects and the dominant versus balanced aspects of language use, to the present sample, all categories—from *Never* to *Always*—applied to the children with a certain frequency (Table 7.1). The results underscored the great variability in how children this age perceive themselves and their parents as bilingual language users within the family. Furthermore, it was far more common for the children to have perceptions of nuances in their own language use with different family members than to have perceptions of a coherent pattern of language use when addressing people within the family. This finding underscores that most of the children saw their own bilingualism within the family as relational and dynamic in nature rather than as a global and static quality.

There were, however, some patterns in the variations. One pattern was that the majority of the children rated both their own and parental language use to be of a bilingual character—either balanced or dominated by one of the languages (Table 7.1). This finding underscores that language minority families primarily are perceived as bilingual environments of communication by the children, where the use of two languages is at stake—also in communication with their parents. However, the children more often identified with language use categories with a larger degree of L1 inclusion in relation to communication with parents than in relation to communication with siblings (Table 7.1).

There were even children who presented themselves as L1-monolingual communicators with a parent and children who presented themselves as L2-monolingual communicators with siblings, but there were no incidents of reverse reports. That is, the study confirmed the associations of more L1 use with older family members (parents) and more L2 use with younger family members (siblings) identified in studies of language minority children in the US (Feinauer, 2006) and in Canada (Jean, 2011) as well as patterns reported by parents in studies of language minority samples in Norway by Aarsæther (2004), Karlsen and Lykkenborg (2012) and Svendsen (2004).

Another pattern was that the children typically evaluated language use in parent–child dyads to be reciprocal (Table 7.2). This is in accordance with the high degree of reciprocity found in the Hurtado and Vega study (2004), where individual respondents (children and their parents) were found to perceive an overlap in their own and the other’s language use. However, the findings are in contrast with how Oller et al. (2011) suggested that children who turn the majority language into the dominant language also speak the L2 more at home than their parents do. Moreover, the majority of the reciprocal parent–child dyads were reported as bilingual. This may suggest the conception of a joint adjustment by the adult and the child towards the inclusion of two languages in their communication. The remaining reciprocal parent–child dyads (i.e., 22 parent–child dyads) were reported as L1-monolingual. An identification with monolingual categories may reflect a perception of a contrast in language use experience rather than communication actually excluding the majority language. However, it is important to acknowledge that some children may associate their parent–child interactions as being L1-monolingual. Furthermore, just above one-quarter of the parent–child dyads were reported to be non-reciprocal, with the parent including more L1 than the child when addressing each other ( $n = 32$  parent–child dyads). A final pattern revealed from the self-ratings was that the majority of the sample reported their own language use with their two parents to be unitary, while approximately a quarter of the children perceived using their languages differently when addressing their mother and father (Table 7.2).

The self-rating categories revealed nuances in the children’s perceptions of parent–child communication in terms of sharing or not sharing language use patterns with their parents, and in terms of perceiving their mother and father as equal or different recipients in terms of the way the children use their languages when addressing them. The children may to varying degrees have parents who comprehend Norwegian well enough for the children

to adjust less towards the use of the first language, while the children may to varying degrees know the first language well enough to comprehend their parents more elaborated use of the heritage language. The subsequent qualitative analysis of the children's talk adhered specifically to talk that revolved around how bilingual characteristics of language use between family members were made relevant in relation to parent-child communication.

The first elaborative theme—*awareness of parental language skills*—illustrated the different ways in which the children made parental language skills in Norwegian relevant to them. One way was how children explained their use of the L1 with their parents, either exclusively or in a bilingual combination with Norwegian, with parental lack of sufficient Norwegian skills. The adjustment by children to the language skills of their interlocutors is in line with how the children in the previous research by Hakuta and Pease-Alvarez (1994) and Thomas et al. (2014) have reported their language use. Furthermore, the children's emphasis on parental lack of skills implies that the children do not perceive their parents to comprehend Norwegian well enough for them to speak Norwegian and suggests a dependency on the children's L1 skills in order to achieve sufficient communication with their parents. In this way, the findings underscore the important role of children's ability to speak and comprehend the heritage language, and support the importance of the children's level of proficiency in the heritage language as a key factor in parent-child communication as highlighted by Oh and Fuligni (2010) and Portes and Hao (2002) in studies of adolescent-parent relationships in language minority families.

Moreover, few voices explicated parental lack of Norwegian language skills or own lack of heritage language skills as strenuous in relation to parent-child communication. This may be due to most parents and children possessing sufficient skills in the two languages, receptively and/or expressively, to alternate between their languages fluently. The fact that the majority of the children in the sample reported language use in parent-child communication to be of a bilingual character, and that few children spoke of linguistic challenges within parent-child communication, suggest that language alternation practices within the family context are sufficiently facilitative of mutual comprehension. The ability to draw upon vocabularies from two languages may serve as a protection against experiencing struggle in communication. Moreover, the fact that talk regarding linguistic challenges in parent-child communication was not prominent in relation to non-reciprocal language parent-child language use patterns may suggest that parents and children had

sufficient receptive vocabularies in the two languages, as underscored by Hurtado and Vega (2004). In the present study, talk supportive of a fluency in bilingual parent-child communication was also found within the second theme—*awareness of bilingual communication around school-related tasks*; the examples illustrated different ways in which the children spoke of combining their L1 and their L2 when talking about or working with different subjects at home. The theme brought to the foreground the way language minority families possess different strategies of building bridges between two languages and finding ways to communicate bilingually about school-related tasks.

Furthermore, the lack of examples of talk implying that parental lack of Norwegian skills represent a challenge in parent-child communication is in line with how children in other studies have reported language brokering practices at home to be a common practice and a less significant part of children's contribution at home, and thus may not be associated with any particular feelings, as suggested by Villeneuve and Buriel (2010). The finding can also be understood in light of previous studies where children have highlighted their positive feelings towards taking on the role of family translator, for instance by Feinauer (2006) and Pease-Alvarez (1993), implying that children hold positive attitudes towards their role in facilitating parental comprehension.

However, there were also examples of children whose talk suggested that differences in language skills between parents and children is a delicate topic. This issue was raised implicitly as expressions, on one hand, of that one must use the heritage language all the time with the parent, while simultaneously, on the other hand, saying that it is hard to speak their heritage language. The issue was also raised explicitly with references to how parents may urge their children's use of the heritage language in order to be able to comprehend their children, and how children within a family may adjust differently to their parents' needs. Moreover, there was talk suggesting that differences in language skills between a parent and a child affect parental involvement in the children's homework: some children explained that the parent most fluent in Norwegian was the one who was involved when children needed help with Norwegian homework. In addition, there were examples of children who perceived the inclusion of the L1 in communication around schoolwork—either by themselves or by parents—to be challenging. Against this background, this study suggests that differences in language skills between parents and children can have consequences for how parents and children engage in academic communication, as suggested by Portes and Hao (2002). The findings also strengthen the notion of the

importance ascribed to the majority language in relation to children's school related learning.

Moreover, the third theme—*awareness of negotiations of language learning*—illustrated aspects of how children perceive their families to be juggling changes of language use patterns. The findings suggest that language learning and language use patterns are subject to continuous negotiations within language minority families. The children were aware of the expectations from their parents of a continued bilingual development and were encouraged to change their current language use, either towards more use of the L1 or towards more use of Norwegian. However, the resistance towards change inherent in the children's talk pointed to the fact that changing an established pattern of language use can be challenging. The resistance was found to be due to the difficulty of speaking a language in which one is less skilled, due to preferences for one of the languages, and due to a lack of motivation to develop one's skills in a language (most often the heritage language) further. In this way, the study adds to the notion of bilingual children adjusting to their environments and their parental language policies by highlighting the role of the children's individual preferences within their continued bilingual development. At the same time, the theme also highlighted how families balance the facilitation of language change by family members—parents as well as children—towards the need for fluent communication and joint comprehension within the family. Not switching to the language that oneself or the other person is more in command of involves accepting the disruption of fluent communication and instant comprehension. In this way, the children's talk underscored how they were involved in a joint project of language learning, where parents and children alter between the roles as the skilled and unskilled—between being the teacher and being the learner. Within the notion of families as a language learning context, the children revealed an awareness of both possibilities and insecurities inherent in bilingual family communication.

To conclude regarding RQ 1—*How do the children perceive language use in communication within their families?*—the results revealed that the children possess various perceptions of language use within their families, but they first and foremost present communication between generations in the family as bilingual. The findings further suggest that children adjust to differences in language use and language skills within the family in ways implying that language alternation and non-reciprocal language use patterns are fluent practices in parent-child communication. At the same time, the children also displayed an

awareness of the complex issues related to parent-child negotiations of language use, language learning, and mutual comprehension, and shed light on the notion that parents and children share status as language learners. The talk also revealed how parental lack of skills in Norwegian particularly affected parent-child communication revolving around school- and homework. Against this background, the children revealed an awareness of both possibilities and insecurities inherent in bilingual family communication.



## 8 Children's perceptions of language use in peer communication

In this chapter, I address the second research question (RQ 2): *How do the children perceive language use in communication with and among same L1-speaking peers?* More specifically, I elucidate RQ 2a: *To what degree do the children perceive themselves using their L1 in communication with same L1-speaking peers at school and during leisure time?* and RQ 2b: *When engaged in talk about language use with and among peers, what perceptions do the children bring forward?* I first present the degree to which the children perceived themselves using the L1 when communicating with their same L1-speaking peers at school and during leisure time (8.1). I then present five elaborative themes related to peer language use derived from the children's talk (8.2). The results are summarized and discussed in Section 8.3.

### 8.1 Children's ratings of L1 use with same L1-speaking peers

Information about the use of the L1 in peer communication stems from the children's self-ratings on the fixed-choice questions in the interviews addressing how often the children used their L1 with their same L1-speaking friends at school and during leisure time (see Section 6.4.1). The children were asked to rate their degree of L1 use when speaking with their same L1-speaking friends at school and during leisure time along five categories: *Never, A little, Half the time, Mostly, or Always*. Table 8.1 presents the frequency of the children who identified with each category.

Table 8.1

Children's self-ratings of L1 use with same L1-speaking peers: child addresses same L1-speaking friends in L1 at school and during leisure time: Number and percentage of children.

Scale	Degree of L1 use							
	Total N		Never	A little	Half	Mostly	Always	Missing
Child addresses same L1peers in L1 at school	56	n	10	26	14	4	2	-
	100	%	17.9	46.4	25.0	7.1	3.6	-
Child addresses same L1 peers in L1 during leisure time	56	N	4	15	18	10	5	4
	100	%	7.1	26.8	32.1	17.9	8.9	7.1

Regarding peer communication at school, the most typical perception among the children was that they used their L1 *A little* when addressing their same L1-speaking friends at school (46.4%). In addition, 17.9% of the children (n= 10) rated as *Never* using their L1 when addressing their same L1-speaking friends at school. That is, the majority of the children (64.5%) considered their same L1-peer language use as either L2-monolingual or L2-dominant at school. On the other hand, the first language was rated as being used by a considerable number of children *Half the time* (25.0%), *Mostly* (7.1%), or even *Always* (3.6%) when at school. The vast majority (78.5%) rated themselves as bilingual communicators in interaction with same L1-speaking peers when at school.

When it comes to use of L1 in communication with same L1-speaking peers during leisure time, the reports were somewhat different. A similar proportion of children (76.8%) perceived themselves as bilinguals in same L1-peer communication in this context. However, the proportion of the children who rated as *Never* using their L1 or as using *A little* L1 was less (33.9%), while more children rated as using their L1 *Half the time* (32.1%), *Mostly* (17.9%), or *Always* (8.9%) when addressing same L1-speaking friends during leisure time.

That is, in both contexts, the majority of the children perceived themselves to be bilingual in their communication with peers. In terms of a balanced or a dominant bilingualism, almost half the children perceived themselves to be L2-dominant in Norwegian when at school, during leisure time, the numbers of children who perceived their

language use as L2-dominant, balanced, and L1-dominant were more equal. This pattern suggests that the school is viewed as a different contextual framework from that of leisure time and that there were different mechanisms involved in the way they presented themselves in the school context. Such mechanisms can include both differences in linguistic norms (i.e., clearer expectations of the use of Norwegian at school) and differences in peer contacts in the two contexts. As described in 6.4.1, some children brought up nuances in their language use that were not originally accounted for in the question, for instance, reporting their L1 use to be dependent on context, such as when in the classroom or during recess, or dependent on specific L1-speakers. In this way, the measure of the children's perceptions of their L1 inclusion with same L1-speaking peers at school and during leisure time embraces a specter of sub-contexts and does not capture the relational and contextual dimension of peer language use in the two contexts. It also turned out that it was of relevance that the children were asked particularly to rate their L1 use with same L1-speaking "friends" at school. Out of the 10 children who reported being L2-monolingual communicators with same L1-peers at school, four did not have any other same L1-speakers in their classroom, while the remaining six children had access to other same L1-speaking children in their class. There were also two more children in the sample who did not have same L1-speakers in their classroom but who still reported using their L1 with other same L1-speakers at school, including non-classmates as their "friends." Against this background, access alone cannot account for the differences in language use at school. The variation in reports implies that same L1-speaking children make different choices of language use when communicating with each other. The elaborative themes presented in the subsequent section display the children's perspectives on how bilingualism was made relevant—by the children themselves or by others—in multilinguistic peer contexts.

## **8.2 Children's talk about language use with and among peers**

In this section, based on the analytical approach described in 6.5.1 and 6.5.3, I present five elaborative themes about how bilingualism was made relevant—by the children themselves or by others—in multilinguistic peer contexts, with particular emphasis on the school context: the awareness of a monolingual school norm (8.2.1), the awareness of the importance of peers in language learning (8.2.2), the awareness of the role of language alternation in communication and learning (8.2.3), the awareness of the intriguing role of L1 as a secret language (8.2.4), and the awareness of classroom belonging and gender belonging (8.2.5).

### 8.2.1 Awareness of a monolingual school norm

An explicated norm of speaking Norwegian at school in order to become more proficient in Norwegian emerged in some of the children's talk. Children from two schools in the sample (Classroom 3 and Classroom 12) expressed that they were not allowed by their teachers to speak their L1 with their friends at school due to their need to become more proficient in Norwegian. One girl talked about her language use with her friends at school when she referred to this rule:

Example 8.1, Child 54 (U/G/Classroom 12):

CHI: uh, we aren't allowed to speak our mother tongue here. I only speak at lunch break, break time sometimes. normally we speak Norwegian.

INT: but why do you think it's not allowed?

CHI: because our teacher wants us to get better at Norwegian. and understand all the words and stuff. that's why we're not allowed to speak as much mother tongue as we actually speak at home.

BAR: ehh, vi har ikke lov til å snakke vår egen morsmål her da. jeg snakker bare i matpause, friminutt noen ganger. ellers snakker vi norsk.

INT: men hvorfor tror du at det ikke er lov?

BAR: fordi læreren vår vil at vi skal bli bedre på norsk. og forstå alle ord og sånt. derfor får vi ikke lov til å snakke så mye morsmål vi egentlig snakker hjemme og sånt.

Here, Child 54 referred to the fact that they are not allowed to “*speak our own mother tongue*” at school, and therefore they only use Urdu sometimes during recess, otherwise they use Norwegian. A little later, the interviewer urged her to explain why the school has this rule, and she explained that it is because the teacher wants them (“*we*”) to become more proficient in Norwegian, and that is why they are not allowed to use their L1 in class. This example illustrates how the girl refers to herself as a part of a group of children who share the need to learn more Norwegian and who are met with a restriction on communicating bilingually when at school. The girl's statement “*as we actually speak at home*” implies how the rule is presented and/or perceived by her as a contrast to her and other language minority children's actual way of communicating and speaking. The girl may be referring to her own idea of her language use at home or to the teacher's anticipation of her and other language minority students' language use at home. The girl may also be more or less dependent on her skills in L1. Either way, the restriction is imposing on her and her peers a monolingual norm of language use, which excludes her bilingual communication as a proper way of communicating when at school.

In a similar vein, a Turkish-speaking boy in the same classroom referred to the norm in the following excerpt:

Example 8.2, Child 47 (T/B/Classroom 12):

CHI: I speak, I'm not allowed to speak [Turkish] at school.

INT: you're not?

CHI: I speak a little, a tiny little bit at school and mostly in leisure time.

INT: yes. mostly in the leisure time. so if I ask you how often you speak Turkish with other people that can speak Turkish at school, I mean your Turkish-speaking friends at school, how often do you do it? never? a little? half the time? a lot? or all the time?

CHI: not all the time. but a lot. because there are five Turkish children in my class.

BAR: jeg snakker, jeg får ikke lov til å snakke [tyrkisk] i skolen.

INT: gjør du ikke det?

BAR: jeg snakker sånn lite, litte grann på skolen og fritiden mest.

INT: ja. mest på fritiden. så hvis jeg spør deg hvor ofte bruker du tyrkisk med de som kan snakke tyrkisk på skolen, altså tyrkisk talende venner av deg på skolen, hvor ofte gjør du det? aldri? litt? halvparten av tiden? mye? eller hele tiden?

BAR: ikke hele tiden. men mye. fordi det er fem tyrkiske barn i klassen min.

The boy here first stated that he is not allowed to speak Turkish at school, so he speaks just a little Turkish at school, and more during leisure time. When asked again to state more specifically how much Turkish he uses at school and presented with the five alternative categories, he said that it is not all the time, but a lot. He then added “*because there are five Turkish children in my class.*” This example suggests that the monolingual norm introduced at the school is difficult to implement when there is access to other same L1-speakers in the classroom. The boy sees himself in a position where not speaking Turkish does not really “fit” with his surroundings, and according to himself, he still speaks mostly Turkish with his many Turkish-speaking classmates.

In the next example, Child 52 from the same classroom described the following:

Example 8.3, Child 52 (U/G/Classroom 12):

INT: I know now that you are in a class with many who speak Urdu.

CHI: I don't speak Urdu.

INT: no? you don't speak Urdu here at school?

CHI: never.

INT: never? what about in the break?

CHI: yes, in the breaks. but not in classes and stuff.

INT: not in classes.

CHI: the teacher doesn't allow it.

INT: why do you think that is?

CHI: don't know.

INT: men nå vet jeg at du går sammen med mange i klassen som snakker urdu her.

BAR: jeg snakker ikke urdu.

INT: nei? snakker du ikke urdu her på skolen?

BAR: aldri.

INT: aldri? i friminuttene da?

BAR: jo, i friminuttet. men ikke i timene og sånt.

INT: ikke timene nei.

BAR: vi får ikke lov av læreren.

INT: hvorfor ikke det tror du?

BAR: vet ikke.

As opposed to her classmates, this girl said she did not know why the school does not allow them to speak Urdu. She was clear about the fact that she never speaks Urdu at school, at least not during classes, because the teacher does not allow it. She presented herself as adjusting to the rule and does not bring up any considerations around it. Her talk implies that there is a distinction between classes and recess in how she use her languages. The child in the next example attended to a similar distinction between classes and recess, and the interviewer inquired further into language use during task work in class:

Example 8.4, Child 55 (U/G/Classroom 12):

INT: you have others in your class who can speak Urdu. do you sometimes speak Urdu at school?

CHI: a little. but then we get into trouble.

INT: you get into trouble? why do you think that is?

CHI: because we are not allowed to speak Urdu in class.

INT: is that a rule?

CHI: yes. *Norwegian school* our teacher says.

INT: so really you have to speak Norwegian. but when do you speak Urdu then?

CHI: on the break.

INT: (...).but, if you are in class and are helping each other with assignments and things?

CHI: the girl that sits beside me can't speak Norwegian, so I translate to Urdu.

INT: so you help her by translating. but is that ok with the teacher?

CHI: yes.

INT: du har jo flere i klassen din som kan snakke urdu. hender det at dere snakker noe urdu på skolen?

BAR: litt. men da får vi kjeft.

INT: da får dere kjeft? hvorfor det tror du?

BAR: for det ikke er lov til å snakke urdu i klassen.

INT: er det en regel?

BAR: ja. *norsk skole* sier læreren vår.

INT: så da må dere egentlig snakke norsk. men når er det dere snakker urdu da?

BAR: i friminuttet.

INT: (...). men du, i timen da hvis dere skal hjelpe hverandre med oppgaver og sånn?

BAR: hun som sitter ved siden av meg kan ikke norsk så jeg oversetter på urdu

INT: så hun hjelper du med å oversette. men er det greit da for læreren?

BAR: ja.

In this example, it again became evident that despite the teacher proclaiming that the school is Norwegian (and thus only Norwegian should be spoken), there are bilingual realities within the classroom: The children who share an L1 have bilingual resources available and can utilize these amongst themselves within the Norwegian norm of classroom instruction and activities. When asked if the teacher was okay with this bilingual practice, the girl confirmed that it was. This may imply that the actual implications of what the girl referred to as a “*Norwegian school*” may not be univocal for either students or teachers. It may also imply that the norm inside the classroom is nuanced regarding whether students’ talk is task-related or social.

In the final example, a boy from another classroom and school described how the use of Turkish, because of the monolingual norm, became an activity hidden from the teachers. This boy did not have any other Turkish-speakers in his class (Classroom 3), but there are several at his school:

Example 8.5, Child 4 (T/B/Classroom 3):

INT: but the times you speak Turkish, do you do it at school for example?

CHI: no. It’s not allowed to speak Turkish at school.

INT: ok it’s not allowed? why do you think that is?

CHI: because we need to learn mostly Norwegian. (...). we speak Turkish there [at school], when the teacher comes closer we switch over to Norwegian, when the teacher goes away, we switch back to Turkish.

INT: men de gangene du snakker tyrkisk, gjør du det på skolen for eksempel?

BAR: nei. det er ikke lov å snakke tyrkisk på skolen.

INT: er det ikke lov nei? hvorfor ikke det tror du?

BAR: fordi at vi må lære mest norsk. (...). vi snakker tyrkisk der [på skolen], når læreren kommer sånn nærmere vi tar til norsk, også når læreren går bort, vi tar til tyrkisk.

When asked about his Turkish use at school, the boy here first brought up the norm of not allowing the use of Turkish at school and explained that it is because they have to learn mostly Norwegian. Like the girl in Example 8.1, he referred to the need for “we” to learn mostly Norwegian, including himself in a larger group of equals. He then described how he and his Turkish-speaking friends at school deliberately use Turkish but switch to Norwegian when the teacher approaches, before switching back to Turkish when the teacher moves away. Later, the boy stated that when they are not at school they use Turkish all the time.

The five examples presented here illustrate how the children from two different classrooms related to the monolingual norm they encountered at their schools. All the examples display an awareness of moving between contexts with different linguistic norms and expectations of language use. Examples 8.1 and 8.5 illustrate how the children defined themselves within a larger group of equals when responding to questions about their own language use and referring to the norm. Examples 8.2, 8.4, and 8.5 illustrate how some children used their L1 despite their teachers’ instruction for the children to speak Norwegian only. The boy in Example 8.5 describes how the use of the first language, as a consequence of the norm, becomes a hidden activity vis-à-vis their teacher, while in Example 8.4 the bilingual language use may have been authorized by the teacher. The examples point to the contrast between the monolingual norm of speaking only Norwegian and the bilingual reality of the children—as individuals and as a peer group of same L1-speakers.

Interestingly, the two schools referred to here were among the schools in the sample that offered the most extensive L1 support to their students at the time of data collection. In Section 8.2.3 I return to a discussion of how students from classrooms 3 and 12 described their use of both their languages to be supportive of their learning.

### **8.2.2 Awareness of the importance of peers in language learning**

As illustrated in the previous section, the children explained the reason for the monolingual norm instituted by the teachers being due to their need to become more proficient in Norwegian. The learning of Norwegian was indeed of great concern for the children, and some of them displayed an awareness of the role of their peers in their learning of the language. One child who was talking about learning of Norwegian and how going to school could help you learn the language described the peer mechanisms in the following way:

Example 8.6, Child 14 (U/G/Classroom 5):

CHI: when you hear other people speaking it [Norwegian] you just really want to like speak it yourself. then you learn other words from the other students. and then, for example, if that person didn't understand, then you could go to that person who taught him and ask what it means and then he would have learned a new word.

BAR: når man ser at andre snakker det [Norwegian] så blir man litt sånn der at man skal snakke det selv ass. og da lærer man andre ord av de andre elevene. og så for eksempel hvis den personen ikke skjønnte, så kunne du komme til den personen som lærte han det og spurt hva betyr det, og da ville han ha lært et nytt ord.

Here, Child 14 described how seeing other students speak Norwegian strengthens her own eagerness to speak Norwegian; *“you just really want to like speak it yourself,”* in this way implying a motivational aspect of being among peers who speak Norwegian. It is not clear from the talk whether the girl had in mind children with a language minority background or native Norwegian-speakers, but she attended a classroom with children of diverse linguistic backgrounds. In the latter part of her talk, she also described how children can actively engage in their own and others' language learning through asking for the meaning of words they don't understand, referring to a notion of other students as a source for and support in learning new words.

In the next example, the boy was asked which language he felt more skilled in:

Example 8.7, Child 1 (T/B/Classroom 1):

CHI: I think I'm better at Norwegian.  
INT: you think so? maybe it's not so easy to know?  
CHI: no it's not very easy. (...). I'm out a lot with friends and stuff and then I have to speak Norwegian

BAR: jeg tror jeg er flinkere på norsk.  
INT: du tror det ja? det er ikke så lett å vite kanskje?  
BAR: nei ikke så veldig. (...). jeg er veldig mye ute med venner og sånt og da må jeg snakke norsk.

The boy first said that he thinks he is better in Norwegian and continued by reflecting upon the fact that he spends a lot of time out with friends, and then he has to speak Norwegian. In this way, he seemed to relate his skills in Norwegian to his extensive use of the Norwegian language with friends. The boy spoke about his friends at school and during leisure time as having a variety of linguistic backgrounds, including native Norwegian-speakers.

The two previous examples illustrate the perception of becoming better in Norwegian by using the Norwegian language among peers. In light of how the children may ascribe the learning of Norwegian to their peer interactions, it was interesting to note that there were children in the study who did not perceive that they had good enough opportunities to practice Norwegian with peers at school. In the next example, we return to



the boy from Example 8.5, who stated that he was not allowed to use Turkish at school but who still displayed an extensive use of Turkish with his friends at school (i.e., according to him, *Half the time*). Later in the interview, he talked about his learning of Norwegian:

Example 8.8, Child 4 (T/B/Classroom 3):

CHI: I think I got good at Norwegian when I started going to football practice, when I was in fourth, no, third grade I think.

INT: right. so you think you learned Norwegian when you started there? why do you think that is the case?

CHI: because there were lots of kids there.

INT: you sort of speak more Norwegian there?

CHI: yes. for example, at school, we sometimes talk Turkish with each other. but there [at football practice] we speak mostly Norwegian.

BAR: jeg tror jeg er blitt god på norsk når jeg begynte på fotballtreningen, når jeg gikk i fjerde, nei, tredje klasse tror jeg.

INT: akkurat. du syns at du har lært litt norsk når du begynte der? hvorfor det tror du?

BAR: for at det er mange barn der og sånn.

INT: du snakker mer norsk på en måte?

BAR: ja. i skolen for eksempel, vi snakker noen ganger tyrkisk med hverandre litt. men der [på fotballen] snakker vi ofte norsk.

In this passage, the boy said that he believes he became good in Norwegian when he joined a football team some years ago. When asked why he believed that, he said that there are many children there. The interviewer then asked if he speaks more Norwegian there. He confirmed and said that at school, they do speak Turkish sometimes, but at football practice, they often speak Norwegian. This passage appears to reflect that the boy does not feel very proficient in Norwegian and that he relates this to a lack of Norwegian speaking contexts and to his extended use of Turkish at school—despite being the only Turkish-speaker in his classroom.

One of the children who attended a classroom with only one native Norwegian-speaking student also referred to limited access to native Norwegian-speakers:

Example 8.9, Child 30 (T/B/Classroom 11):

CHI: for example, now I tell myself that I don't know much Norwegian. then I tell myself *I have to practice practice practice*. so I have to find myself some Norwegian friends, too. but no one in our class is Norwegian, so I can't. for example, now I am friends with [urdu-speaking boy]. he knows a lot of Norwegian, so I learn a little from him, and he learns a little from me.

BAR: for eksempel, nå sier jeg til meg selv jeg kan ikke så mye norsk. så jeg sier at *jeg må øve det øve det øve det*. så jeg må finne noen norske venner også. men ingen i klassen vår er norsk så jeg kan ikke. for eksempel, nå er jeg venn med [urdu-talende gutt]. han kan mye norsk så jeg lærer litt av han og han lærer litt av meg.

The boy stated that he does not know Norwegian very well and needs to “*practice practice practice*.” He then said he needs to find some Norwegian friends too. However, there are no “*Norwegians*” in his class, so he cannot. He then continued to say that he has found an Urdu-speaking friend who is good in Norwegian, and they learn from each other. Like in the other children’s talk presented here, this boy perceived that the learning of Norwegian involves using Norwegian, and he wanted to practice with native Norwegian-speaking peers. However, he said he did not have access to native Norwegian-speaking

peers in his classroom. The obvious consequence is that he has to learn from and with other L2-speakers of Norwegian. In this way, the boy demonstrated a willingness to practice the Norwegian language in order to learn more and spoke of how his classmates can help him with this. It can also be noted that the boy referred to the classroom context when talking about his peer environment. I will return to the significance of class as a marker of belonging in Section 8.2.5.

In a final example, a perspective regarding the acquisition of heritage language skills also sheds light on the perception of the role of peers in language learning. Child 27 was talking about her language use with her brother, who was a few years older than she, when she stated:

Example 8.10: Child 27 (T/G/Classroom 10):

CHI: my brother (older brother) doesn't know much Turkish.

INT: he doesn't know much Turkish? no. why do you think that is?

CHI: he hasn't got any Turkish friends. and he doesn't want any either.

BAR: broren min [storebroren] kan ikke tyrkisk veldig.

INT: han kan ikke så godt tyrkisk? nei.hvorfor ikke det tror du?

BAR: han har ikke ingen tyrkiske venner. og han vil ikke ha det heller.

The girl first stated that her brother was not very good at Turkish. When asked why she believed he was not, she reasoned it being due to her brother not having any Turkish friends. She also added that her brother did not want any Turkish friends, implying that her brother had made the choice himself. It can be noted that this was in contrast to the girl herself, who spoke of an extensive use of Turkish within Turkish-speaking friendships. Her talk supports the notion of the children seeing their peers as important to their language learning.

To sum up, these examples have illuminated the ways the children see their peers as important in their practice and learning of the Norwegian language. Peers may have a motivating impact and a directly supportive impact on their language learning (Example 8.6) or just have the role of competent language users with whom one can practice one's skills (examples 8.7, 8.8, and 8.9). Some children seemed to perceive that they lacked opportunities to practice their Norwegian (examples 8.8 and 8.9). The boy in Example 8.9 described himself (and was described by his classmates) as being more proficient in Turkish than in Norwegian. The boy in Example 8.8 also claimed to be more skilled in Turkish than in Norwegian. The two boys might therefore be specifically concerned with the lack of Norwegian speaking contexts. Furthermore, the fact that the boy in the latter example attended a class with only one native Norwegian-speaker might also have contributed to his

sensitivity towards the topic. On the other hand, the girl in Example 8.6, who attended a class with a mixed linguistic environment including native Norwegian-speakers, displayed how language learning may be explicated and motivated in linguistically diverse environments.

### 8.2.3 Awareness of the role of language alternation in communication and learning

In contrast to the focus on the speaking and learning of Norwegian highlighted in the two previous themes, the children's talk also displayed an awareness of their language alternation in communication and learning. As already presented in Table 8.1, several children reported using both their languages *Half the time*, and the majority reported a bilingual language use with their same L1-speaking peers. When children brought up their use of both languages in combination, we urged them to describe their way of mixing and alternating between their languages. An Urdu-speaking girl, who attended a classroom with several other Urdu-speakers and lived close by to her Urdu-speaking extended family members, expressed how speaking Urdu and Norwegian "mixed" was the common linguistic practice amongst her peers:

Example 8.11, Child 15 (U/G/Classroom 5):

CHI: nearly all my cousins that live here and my sisters and brothers and everyone I know speak Urdu and Norwegian mixed. (...). first I, if I can't manage to say it in Urdu, I say it in Norwegian. and if I can't say it in Norwegian, I say it in Urdu.

BAR: nesten alle kusunene mine som bor her og søsknene mine og alle jeg kjenner snakker urdu og norsk blandet. (...). først pleier jeg, hvis jeg ikke kan si det på urdu, så sier jeg det på norsk. og hvis jeg ikke kan si det på norsk så sier jeg på urdu.

As seen in the example, when elaborating further on her mixing, the girl said that when she cannot manage to say something in Urdu, she says it in Norwegian, and vice versa. Others had similar descriptions:

Example 8.12, Child 56 (U/G/Classroom 12):

CHI: I speak sometimes with those in my class. it's just them I speak Urdu with on the break. or, I'm to tell about something and don't know what word to use in Norwegian, then I speak Urdu, or sometimes I just mix.

BAR: jeg snakker noen ganger med de som er i klassen min. det er bare de som jeg liksom snakker urdu med i friminuttet. eller, jeg skal fortelle noe liksom og jeg ikke vet hvilket ord jeg skal bruke på norsk så snakker jeg urdu, eller noen ganger blander jeg bare.

Example 8.13, Child 34 (T/G/Classroom 11):

CHI: because sometimes when we [she and her bestfriend] speak Turkish, we are used to it. sometimes the Turkish words just come up. and when we can't understand or can't explain it fully in Norwegian, we speak, we just put the words in Turkish, and translate it to Norwegian, and that mixes them.

BAR: fordi da noen ganger når vi [hun og bestevenninnen] snakker tyrkisk så er vi vant til det. noen ganger så kommer det bare tyrkiske ord. og når vi ikke forstår og kan ikke forklare det helt på norsk, så snakker, så stapper vi bare ord på tyrkisk, så bare oversetter vi det på norsk også sånn blander inn mellom<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> This particular example has also been illuminated and discussed in Rydland and Kucherenko (2013).

Example 8.14, Child 13 (U/G/Classroom 5):

INT: are there any special reasons why you do that [how she mixes the languages]?

CHI: no. we just say it. it's not like we say now let's speak, but we just speak. I don't know how.

INT: vet du om det er noen spesiell grunn til det [hvordan hun blander språkene]?

BAR: nei. vi bare sier det liksom. vi sier ikke nå skal vi snakke, men vi bare sier det. jeg vet ikke hvordan.

In one way, these examples illustrate how language mixing was related to using vocabulary from one language to complement the other. Like the girl in Example 8.11, the children in examples 8.12 and 8.13 both hinted to their mixing being due to lack of complete vocabulary in one language: *“I'm to tell about something and don't know what word to use in Norwegian, then I speak Urdu”* (Example 8.12), *“when we can't understand or can't explain it fully in Norwegian”* (Example 13). This can imply that a complete vocabulary may not have been easily accessible to them in one language. What is also prominent in all the examples is how the children do not describe this compensation as an obstacle in their conversations. Rather, the children referred to their language mixing as a fluent linguistic practice, something they are used to, something that “just happens” and constitutes a complete way of communicating among them: *“or sometimes I just mix.”* (Example 8.12), *“we are used to it, sometimes the Turkish words just come up.”* (Example 8.13), *“we just say it.”* (Example 8.14). Moreover, Example 8.13 demonstrates how the speakers do not explicitly decide upon which language to use in their communication: *“it's not like we say now let's speak, but we just speak. I don't know how.”* In this way, the talk implies a conception of the relationship between languages as dynamic and fluent rather than as fixed and with clear boundaries.

This informal way of talking about the language mixing practice was also reflected in the talk by another Turkish-speaking girl. The girl spoke about how she and her best friend mock each other in a friendly manner about the linguistic practice they share:

Example 8.15, Child 22 (T/G/Classroom 9):

CHI: when I speak, when it is like a Norwegian sentence and I say a word in Turkish, she says *you better look it up in a Turkish dictionary*. and then one day, when she mixes, too, I say *you better look it up in a Turkish dictionary*. (...). just for fun right. because we mix with Turkish and Norwegian.

BAR: når jeg snakker så prater, når det er sånn norsk setning så sier jeg sånn et ord på tyrkisk og så sier hun en gang *det er best at du slår opp på tyrkisk ordbok*. også en dag når også hun blander så sier jeg *det er best at du slår opp på tyrkisk ordbok*. (...). liksom bare for å tulle liksom. for vi blander med tyrkisk og norsk.

In addition, some children spoke of their alternation between languages in relation to learning. We saw in Example 8.4 an instance of how same L1-speaking classmates translate

for each other in classes. The three following examples illustrate the children's own perceptions of their bilingual task work. In the first example, the boy described how his L1 teacher translates subject matter texts from the schoolbook into Turkish and reads and talks about the Turkish texts in Turkish and Norwegian with the students before the children attend their regular class (in Norwegian). In the extract, the boy described his experience in the classroom after receiving the bilingual support:

Example 8.16, Child 4 (T/B/Classroom 3):

CHI: so when we talk Norwegian downstairs [in the classroom], then we understand, so that we don't ask. and so the teacher asks afterwards, but then it is in Norwegian, and then it's a little better, and it's the same.

INT: after you discuss it in your mother tongue, then you can answer? how funny. so you go through the same things you have in class?

CHI: yes. then we understand more (xxx). but, for example, we do it in our heads in Turkish, but when we speak, we do it in Norwegian.

BAR: også når vi snakker norsk nede [i klasserommet], da skjønner vi sånn at vi ikke spør. og så læreren spør etterpå, men da er det på norsk og det er litt bedre og så er det likt.

INT: etter at dere diskuterte det på morsmål da kan du svare? så morsomt. så dere går igjennom det samme som dere har i klassen?

BAR: ja. da skjønner vi mer (xxx). men for eksempel vi tar det i hodet på tyrkisk, men når vi snakker, vi tar det norsk.

The boy here described how he alternates and builds bridges between his two languages, referring to their thinking being in Turkish while their speaking is in Norwegian. He perceived this preliminary work in Turkish to be supportive of his understanding of the topic and his ability to talk about it in Norwegian inside his regular classroom: *“then it's a little better, and it's the same.”* The next two examples describe how the children use their peers to support them in their first language when they are to comprehend what is said or to read in Norwegian:

Example 8.17, Child 33 (T/B/Classroom 11):

CHI: sometimes if I don't understand what the teacher says in Norwegian, I ask to [Child 30] in Turkish what it means. if he knows it.

BAR: noen ganger hvis jeg ikke forstår på norsk det læreren sier, spør jeg til [Child 30] på tyrkisk hva betyr det. om han vet det.

Example 8.18, Child 54 (U/G/Classroom 12):

CHI: when I read Norwegian books, my brother speaks to me in Urdu to explain the words to me. then I use those Urdu words to answer in Norwegian. so when the teacher asks, I manage, I know what it means. or my friends ask, then it's easy for me to explain it.

BAR: da jeg leser norske bøker, så leser, snakker broren min med meg urdu for å forklare meg ord. så bruker jeg de urdu ordene for å skrive det på norsk. så læreren spør så klarer jeg, vet jeg hva det betyr. eller vennene spør, så er det lett for meg å forklare det.

Together, these examples illustrate how the children receive peer support in their first language, either from a classmate or from a sibling, and how this support is helpful for

them. It is also notable how the children, especially in examples 8.16 and 8.18, emphasize the importance of being able to respond when they are approached by their teacher or by other students: “*then we understand, so that we don’t ask*” (Example 8.16), “*so when the teacher asks I manage, I know what it means. or my friends ask, then it’s easy for me to explain it.*” (Example 8.18). The examples illustrate the children’s willingness to comprehend and participate in their own learning and how the support they receive in their first language—from preparatory work with a teacher in L1, from a classmate in the classroom, or when doing homework at home—helps them become more active and more secure students in the classroom. It can also be noted that the Turkish-speaking classmate in Example 8.17, Child 30, is the boy from Example 8.9, who was concerned about his lack of native Norwegian classmates to improve his Norwegian skills. Here, his well-developed Turkish skills are perceived by his classmate as a resource in the classroom. In a similar vein, Child 54 in Example 8.18 said that when she has understood something, it is easy for her to explain if her friends ask her, again underscoring a perception of peer support taking place amongst them.

As a third aspect of language alternation, I demonstrate how some children, despite describing the use of both their languages, also ascribed different qualities to their two languages. The child in the next example is an Urdu-speaking boy who spoke of himself as a user of both Urdu and Norwegian during the interview. He used Urdu with his parents, Norwegian with his older brother, and both languages with his friends. He also said that he knows how to read in Urdu. Thus, from his description of his language use and skills, he used both languages extensively. However, later in the interview, he described how he perceived his ability to express himself to be different in the two languages. The boy was asked whether he sometimes mixes the two languages. He first refused (saying “no no”), perhaps interpreting the question as whether he confuses the two languages, or perhaps believing that mixing is something that should be avoided. He then started to elaborate on his language competency:

Example 8.19, Child 52 (U/B/Classroom 12):

CHI: I’m not very good at Urdu. I can speak Urdu, but I don’t know all the speaking, everything in the language, the whole language. so I say other things in Norwegian. I say what I mean in Norwegian.

BAR: jeg er ikke så god på urdu da. jeg snakker urdu, men jeg greier ikke alle talene, alt i språket, hele språket. så jeg sier noe annet på norsk. jeg sier det jeg mener på norsk.

In this talk, the boy implied that despite reporting an extensive use of Urdu and being literate in Urdu, he perceived that his ability to express himself sufficiently, to say

what he means, was more difficult for him in his first language than in Norwegian. In the next example, Child 37 described how she perceived herself to be able to comprehend more in Turkish:

Example 8.20, Child 37 (T/G/Classroom 11):

INT: when you're in class and work with tasks, what language do you think you use with your Turkish friends?

CHI: a little Norwegian and a little Turkish. since if we speak Turkish, I get to concentrate and stuff and understand what I do and stuff.

INT: yes.

CHI: and sometimes I speak Norwegian.

INT: yes. right. so when you, uh, speak Turkish [...] you get to concentrate?

CHI: yes. I understand what I do and stuff a little more.

INT: når dere er inne i klassen da og jobber med oppgaver, hva slags språk tenker du at du bruker da når du snakker med de tyrkiske jentene?

BAR: litt norsk og litt tyrkisk. siden hvis vi snakker tyrkisk, så pleier jeg å konsentrere meg og sånt, og skjønn hva jeg gjør og sånt.

INT: ja.

BAR: så noen ganger snakker jeg norsk.

INT: ja. akkurat. så når du, ehh, snakker tyrkisk så (...) pleier du å konsentrere deg?

BAR: ja. jeg skjønner hva jeg gjør og sånt litt mer.

In response to the question regarding what language she uses when she is working with her Turkish-speaking friends in class, Child 37 here first responded that she uses both her languages: She uses a little Norwegian and a little Turkish. She then elaborated and said that if they speak Turkish, she is able to concentrate and understand what she is doing, before repeating that she sometimes speaks Norwegian. When the interviewer asked her if she meant that she concentrates when she speaks Turkish, she confirmed that she understands better what she is doing when she uses her L1. In this way, examples 8.19 and 8.20 illustrate talk that implies that parallel to alternating languages as a fluent practice, the children can have a preference for one of their languages as their more proficient language and ascribe qualities specific to each of their languages.

To sum up, the children spoke of their language alternation in terms of completing their talk with words from both languages (examples 8.11, 8.12, and 8.13). The examples also pointed to how language mixing was perceived as a shared and fluent linguistic practice (8.12 and 8.13) rather than an explicated practice. Furthermore, the children also spoke of using their L1 supportively with peers when they are to learn in and from Norwegian instruction (examples 8.16, 8.17, and 8.18). These examples illustrated the importance of not being someone who does not comprehend and imply that the inclusion of the L1 is supportive of their comprehension and opportunities to engage in learning. At the same time, there were children who had strong preference for the language in which they expressed themselves or comprehended sufficiently, displaying stronger language-specific preferences (examples 8.19 and 8.20).

### 8.2.4 Awareness of the intriguing role of L1 as a secret language

When children spoke of their language use with same L1-speaking peers, an awareness of interlocutors who were not speakers of their L1 was regularly referred to. Children from all classrooms involved in the study brought up the social norm that one should not speak one's L1 as long as there are others present who do not know the language. In the following, I will elaborate on how the children positioned themselves in relation to this norm in their talk.

In the first example, a girl referred to this norm in a typical way. She is attending a class with several minority languages represented, including several other Urdu-speakers. She has just said that she likes to spend time with her friend, who is the only other Urdu-speaking *girl* in the class, and elaborates on their use of Urdu at school:

Example 8.21, Child 45 (U/G/Classroom 11):

CHI: it's only me and her that can speak Urdu here, so if there are others about, we aren't allowed to speak Urdu, because they suspect we are talking about them.

INT: yes. is that a rule the school has or did you make it up yourselves?

CHI: uh, I think we just made it up ourselves. there isn't anyone else in the class that do it. the teacher did only say it once, in first grade.

INT: ok. did someone speak Urdu then?

CHI: uh, then it was just, then me and her talked Urdu even though there were lots of others nearby. but there are still some people in the class that do it though. the Turkish girls for example.

BAR: det er bare jeg og henne som kan urdu her, så hvis det er andre i nærheten så har ikke vi lov til å snakke urdu for da blir vi mistenkt for at vi snakker om dem.

INT: ja. er det en regel dere har på skolen, eller er det noe dere har bestemt selv?

BAR: ehh, jeg tror det bare er sånn vi har bestemt selv. det er ikke noen andre i klassen som gjør det. læreren bare kom med det en gang, i første klasse var det.

INT: ok. snakka noen urdu da eller?

BAR: ehh, da var det bare, da snakket jeg og henne urdu selv om mange andre var i nærheten. men det er fortsatt noen i klassen som gjør det. for eksempel noen tyrkiske jenter.

Child 45 first stated that they are not allowed to speak in Urdu when others who do not speak Urdu are nearby, because then the others might suspect that they are being talked about. The interviewer then asked whether this is a rule or whether they decided upon it themselves. She first stated that she thinks it was something they decided themselves. She then referred to the teacher once saying something about it in first grade. When the interviewer asked whether the teacher said this because there was someone speaking Urdu, she said that she and her friend did speak Urdu at that time even though there were others nearby. Thus, even though the teacher may not have communicated this frequently over the years, the children received and internalized the norm communicated at the onset of school as correct behavior.

The same awareness of interlocutors was also spoken of as guiding language use in social contexts outside of the school, when children were out playing. A Turkish-speaking



girl was talking about how she and her younger sister are aware of how they put others in a disadvantageous position if they use their L1:

Example 8.22, Child 10 (T/G/Classroom 5):

CHI: outside I speak Norwegian, but inside I speak mostly Turkish.

INT: yes. why do you think that is?

BAR: because sometimes outside, uh, my friends come, and they won't understand what we say. and sometimes they think we talk about them. that's why we speak Norwegian.

BAR: ute snakker jeg norsk, men inne snakker jeg mest tyrkisk.

INT: ja. hvorfor det tror du?

BAR: fordi ute noen ganger, så ehh, kommer vennene mine, og da skjønner ikke de hva vi sier. og noen ganger så tror de at vi snakker om dem. så det er derfor vi snakker norsk.

The girl here described how she uses Norwegian with her sister when they are “*outside*”, probably referring to being in public, and mostly Turkish with her sister when they are “*inside*,” probably referring to being home. She then said that this choice of Norwegian is related to avoiding a situation where her friends, who are obviously not speakers of Turkish, would not understand and possibly believe that she and her sister were talking about them. To be talked about is obviously something negative, implying slander and exclusion.

The two examples illustrate how the children demonstrated sensitivity towards their interlocutors who were not same L1-speakers by taking the perspective of how “the others” might suspect that they are being spoken of and hence adjusted their language use. At the same time, the use of the L1 is taking place in their peer surroundings. In the final line in Example 8.20, the girl stated that there are some girls in class who do still speak their L1 (“*but there are still some people in the class that do it though. the Turkish girls for example.*”). The reference to the Turkish-speaking girls made by the Urdu-speaking girl can imply that the topic is sensitive between the different groups of L1-speakers. In fact, several of the Turkish-speaking girls in Classroom 11 and parallel classrooms at the school (classrooms 9 and 10) reported an extensive use of Turkish amongst them at school. When interviewed, one girl (Child 27) said about her friends’ language use: “*when she doesn’t want others to understand what we are talking about, she speaks Turkish.*” / “*når hun ikke vil at andre skal forstå det vi snakker om, så snakker hun tyrkisk,*” referring to one of her Turkish-speaking classmates. Thus, the girl implied that the L1 was used intentionally to prevent others from understanding. In a similar vein, the next example demonstrates how bilingualism allows children to purposefully use their L1 to confuse others and play with others’ inability to comprehend:

Example 8.23, Child 20 (U/G/Classroom 7):

CHI: we speak it if we want to trick someone, then we talk, and there are some Norwegians or Somalis, we talk, we say that we do this and that, and then we do it and they don't understand anything.

INT: then they don't understand anything?

CHI: no. they say *what does it mean?* then we say, then we joke. we tell them, for example, that we are going to jump and stuff.

INT: and it doesn't really mean that?

CHI: no.

BAR: da pleier vi å snakke hvis vi skal lure noen, også da snakker vi, og det er noen norske eller somaliere, så pleier vi å snakke, så sier vi at vi gjør det og det også gjør vi det også skjønner de ingenting.

INT: da skjønner de ingenting?

BAR: nei. da sier de *hva betyr det?*. også sier vi, også tuller vi. vi sier for eksempel at vi skal hoppe og sånt.

INT: også betyr det egentlig ikke det?

BAR: nei.

The girl described how she and her Urdu-speaking friends speak in their L1 and that they are aware of the others not understanding. When the others—who may be Norwegian or Somali—ask what they are saying, the girls joke and tell them a different meaning than what they are really saying. The example does not clarify whether the episode referred to is part of friendly teasing across language groups and peers or part of a more severe inclusion and exclusion practice among the peers. Either way, the girls' talk demonstrates the power of a shared language in peer interactions and in building alliances as well as how others, regardless of minority or majority background, jointly become the out-group in the interaction.

A similar power negotiation could be found inherently in how several children referred to the need to tell secrets to each other and described their L1 as a means to do this (e.g., Child 20 from the previous example also said, "*when we are talking about other things, secret things, and there are other people about, then we speak Urdu.*" / "*også når vi skal snakke om andre ting, hemmelige ting, og det står noen i nærheten, så da snakker vi urdu.*"). In the following example, the friend and classmate of Child 45 in Classroom 11 from Example 8.21 exclaimed:

Example 8.24, Child 44 (U/G/Classroom 11):

CHI: uh, others don't like it if we have secrets, so then they get grumpy. they think we are speaking about them even if we aren't.

INT: you aren't?

CHI: no. when we speak in Urdu about something secret they just think we are talking about them.

BAR: ehh, de andre liker ikke at hvis vi har noen hemmeligheter, så da blir de sure. de tror at vi snakker om dem, men det gjør vi ikke heller.

INT: det gjør dere ikke?

BAR: nei. når vi snakker på urdu noe hemmelig, så tror de at vi snakker om dem.

In this excerpt, Child 44 referred to how others might believe that they are being talked about, while she herself says that they are just having secrets, implying that the others should not feel offended by her speaking in Urdu.

Seen together, the examples presented here clearly point to the intriguing role of the L1 in peer interactions and children's awareness of how bilingualism represents a tool in peer group communication. The children are aware of the position of their interlocutors who do not speak a language they have mastered themselves. Being aware of this, they negotiate between paying attention to the needs of their interlocutors in order not to make them feel uneasy (Example 8.22) and using their first language to share secrets with close friends (Example 8.24) or to use their L1 deliberately in positioning themselves vis-à-vis non-L1-speakers (Example 8.23).

### **8.2.5 Awareness of classroom belonging and gender belonging**

As a final elaborative theme regarding being bilingual in peer contexts inherent in children's talk, I identified an awareness of different markers of belonging across those sharing the same L1. Thus far, the topics illuminated have been related to language use in peer communication and have in different ways attended to the children's bilingual status. This final theme emerged partly from the talk of the 10 children who reported themselves as L2-monolinguals in their same L1 peer communication when responding to the fixed-choice questions (i.e., the category *Never* in Table 8.1 displaying the children's degree of L1 inclusion with same L1-speaking peers at school). As already commented upon in Section 8.1, there were different mechanisms involved in the way these children presented their language use in the school context. While some of them had access to same L1-speakers in their own classroom, others had access to other same L1-speakers in other classes at school. The fact that they still presented themselves as never using their L1 with friends at school caused me to look further into their explanations for their language use, which led me to see the importance of the term "friends" and to see how class and gender emerged as relevant aspects of same L1 relationships and important markers of belonging.

Among the children who presented themselves as never using their L1 at school were two Urdu-speaking girls from two different schools. They both had Urdu-speakers in their classroom, and they both referred to their best friends as Urdu-speakers in their class. These girls did not say that they were not allowed to speak their L1 at school but insisted on not speaking Urdu at school:

Example 8.25, Child 24 (U/G/Classroom 9):

INT: when do you speak Urdu with friends? only at school, only during leisure time, that is after school, or is it both here at school and during leisure time?

CHI: I don't speak Urdu. we speak Norwegian. we speak Norwegian, also when we play, you know. I have never spoken Urdu with them.

INT: at school? no?

CHI: no. nothing.

INT: but are there any children you could have spoken to? is there anyone who understands it here?

CHI: yes, they understand. but I don't speak [Urdu] here.

INT: når snakker du urdu med venner? er det bare på skolen, bare på fritiden, altså etter skolen, eller er det både her på skolen og på fritiden?

BAR: jeg prater ikke urdu. vi prater norsk. vi prater norsk og når vi leker og. ikke sant, jeg har aldri pratet urdu med dem.

INT: på skolen? nei?

BAR: nei. ingenting.

INT: men er det noen barn som du kunne snakket urdu med? er det noen andre som forstår det her?

BAR: ja, de forstår det. men jeg prater ikke [urdu] her.

Example 8.26, Child 14 (U/G/Classroom 5):

INT: when you are at school, do you have any other friends here who speak Urdu?

CHI: yes. three others in our class.

INT: ok. there are three others. (...). do you speak Urdu together?

CHI: no.

INT: no? are there times you would speak Urdu with your friends?

CHI: yes. when they don't really understand what I mean.

INT: is that only during leisure time or also at school?

CHI: only leisure time, not at school.

INT: når du er på skolen, er det noen andre venner du har her som snakker urdu?

BAR: ja. tre andre her i klassen vår.

INT: det er tre andre ja. (...). snakker dere urdu sammen, eller?

BAR: nei.

INT: nei? hender det at du noen ganger snakker urdu med vennene dine?

BAR: ja. når de ikke helt skjønner hva jeg mener.

INT: er det bare på fritiden, eller også på skolen?

BAR: bare på fritiden, ikke på skolen.

The two girls here consistently communicated that they do not use Urdu at school. The girl in the first example said *"I don't speak Urdu. we speak Norwegian."* and *"I have never spoken Urdu with them."* and kept insisting on this when the interviewer asked if there are others who speak Urdu: *"yes. they understand. but I don't speak [Urdu] here.,"* underscoring the strong notion of preference in her choice. In a similar vein, the girl in the second example presented herself as not using Urdu with her Urdu-speaking classmates, but when asked if she ever uses Urdu with her friends, she said that she uses Urdu *"when they don't really understand what I mean."* but continued to claim that this is only during leisure time, not at school. In these examples, despite positioning themselves as good friends of their same L1-speaking classmates, the girls consistently presented themselves as not using their shared L1 as a part of their interaction when at school.

Another child who rated himself as L2-monolingual at school and having other same L1-speakers in his classroom was a Turkish-speaking boy who had only one other Turkish-speaking boy in his class:

Example 8.27, Child 17 (T/B/Classroom 6):

INT: when do you speak Turkish with your friends? is it just at school, or just during leisure time, or both at school and during leisure time?

CHI: I never speak Turkish at school.

INT: never? there are other children at school who know Turkish, aren't there?

CHI: yes.

INT: is there anyone in your class?

CHI: yes. [name of classmate]

INT: yes. do you ever speak Turkish with him?

CHI: no. I don't play with him a lot.

INT: når er det du snakker tyrkisk med vennene dine? er det bare på skolen, eller er det bare på fritiden, eller er det både på skolen og fritiden?

BAR: jeg snakker aldri tyrkisk på skolen.

INT: aldri, nei? det er andre barn her på skolen som kan snakke tyrkisk er det ikke det?

BAR: jo.

INT: er det noen i klassen din?

BAR: ja. [navn på klassekamerat]

INT: ja. snakker du tyrkisk med han av og til?

BAR: nei. han leker jeg ikke så ofte med.

In this example, the boy said that he never speaks Turkish at school. When asked specifically if he ever speaks Turkish with the other Turkish-speaking boy in class, he said that he does not play a lot with him. This example illustrates that despite sharing similar linguistic and ethnic backgrounds and attending the same class, the two boys seem to have a less significant relationship; they did not seem to consider each other as close friends.

Another Turkish-speaking girl in the sample, who attended a classroom with one other Turkish-speaker, also said she does not speak Turkish at school. Her classmate was a Turkish-speaking boy, whom she did not (implicitly) include as a “friend” she would talk Turkish with at school (see also further down regarding gender). In the extract, she talked about her best friend. They attended the same school but were now in parallel classrooms after being classmates for several years:

Example 8.28, Child 10 (T/G/Classroom 5):

CHI: I only have one friend that speaks Turkish.

[...] she is in 5A and is called Fatma. she's my best friend in the whole world.

[...]

INT: do you speak Turkish with anyone at school too? with Fatma maybe?

CHI: uh, no, because I don't speak Turkish here in school because, we don't see each other so much. the classes are not the same either.

INT: no. so the breaktime, do you spend time together with Fatma then?

CHI: no. only sometimes.

INT: who do you prefer spending your time with at school?

CHI: uh, that's difficult to say.

INT: is there someone you spend most of your time with?

CHI: before I was best friends with Fatma. and we were in the same class from first grade to fourth. (...). but we want to change class.

INT: you want to change? do you want her to start in your class?

CHI: yes. but I noticed before it was like this. but now I play with her and her. and with Fatma.

BAR: jeg har bare en venninne som kan snakke tyrkisk. (...) hun går i 5A og heter Fatma. vi er verdens beste venner.

[...]

INT: snakker du tyrkisk med noen på skolen også? med Fatma kanskje?

BAR: ehh, nei fordi, nei jeg snakker ikke tyrkisk her i skolen, fordi vi møtes ikke så mye. klassene er jo ikke like heller.

INT: nei. så i friminuttene, er du sammen med Fatma da?

BAR: nei. det er bare noen ganger.

INT: hvem vil du helst være sammen med på skolen da?

BAR: ehh, det blir litt vanskelig å si.

INT: er det noen du er mest sammen med?

BAR: før jeg var bestevenn med Fatma. og vi gikk i samme klasse fra første til fjerde. (...) men vi vil bytte klasse.

INT: dere vil bytte? har du lyst til det? at hun skal begynne i din klasse?

BAR: ja. men jeg merket før var det sånn. men nå leker jeg mest med hun og hun. og med Fatma.

In this exchange, the girl talked about how the change of classrooms also changed the conditions for her and her best friend to be together. She said that they do not see each other that much now. This may be due to structural differences in the school schedule of the different classes, which hinders meeting points across parallel classrooms (*“the classes are not the same either.”*). Her talk underscores how the change of classroom composition changed her social interactions: *“but I noticed before it was like this. but now I play with her and her. and with Fatma.”*

The examples thus far illustrate how having access to other same L1-speakers in your class does not necessarily mean that you use your L1. Among the children who did not have other same L1-speakers in the class, two of them included other same L1-speakers in parallel classrooms among their friends and said that they spoke Turkish at school. Others said that they did not spend time with other same L1-speakers from parallel classrooms at school. One of them was a Turkish-speaking girl who, like the girl in Example 8.28, had her best friend and cousin at the same school, but in a parallel classroom, and was also asked if they spend time together at school, during school breaks. She then said that she does not spend time with her best friend at school, nor with other Turkish-speakers in parallel classrooms; she plays with her classmates:

Example 8.29, Child 22 (T/G/Classroom 9):

CHI: not really during break time, because I play with some of the others in my class and [bestfriend] plays with people in her class. (...) since I'm the only one who is Turkish in class. and there are a few in A-class, and some from C-class. but I play with someone from B, I dont play with any of them.

BAR: egentlig ikke i friminuttene, for da leker jeg med de, ehh, noen i klassen min. og [bestevenn] med noen i klassen sin. (...) siden det er bare meg som er tyrkisk i klassen. også er det noen få i a-klassen og noen fra c- klassen. men jeg leker med noen fra b, jeg leker ikke med noen av de.

The other was an Urdu-speaking boy who had several other Urdu-speaking boys and girls in parallel classrooms. He stated that he does have Urdu-speaking friends at school, but he does not spend a lot of time with them. However, he spoke Urdu with them when in the mosque, only during leisure time:

Example 8.30, Child 29 (U/B/Classroom 10):

INT: have you any friends at school that also speak Urdu?

CHI: uh yes. but I don't spend much time with them.

INT: (...). but do you speak Urdu with your friends then? do you sometimes?

CHI: uh when I am at the mosque. only in my spare time.

INT: har du noe venner på skolen som også snakker urdu?

BAR: ehh ja. men jeg er ikke så mye med dem.

INT: (...). men snakker du urdu med vennene dine da? gjør du det noen gang?

BAR: ehh ja, når jeg er på moskée. bare på fritiden.

In this way, the two children pointed to the significance of classroom belonging. Talk about “the class” or “my class” also emerged in relation to topics other than language use. The following three examples underscore the significance of classroom belonging:

Example 8.31, Child 24 (U/G/Classroom 9):

CHI: and when I am supposed to be sleeping, Mommy doesn't know that I am really reading books. in the whole class, we said that when we read books, so our Mommy's don't know.

INT: no?

CHI: when we are alone, you know. so when Mommy comes, right, we have the light on. and she doesn't understand why it is on, right, the whole class, right. it happens to everyone. we have to hide our books.

BAR: også når jeg skal sove, så ikke mamma vet at jeg leser bok. i hele klassen så sa vi det. når vi leser bok, så mammaen vår vet det ikke.

INT: nei?

BAR: når vi er alene og sånn. og så når mamma kommer, inn sant, så har vi på lyset. så vet ikke hun hvorfor vi har på, ikke sant. hele klassen, ikke sant. det skjer med alle. også vi må gjemme bøkene.

Example 8.32, Child 7 (T/B/Classroom 4):

INT: have you ever thought about it? that you've been happy about understanding German?

CHI: yes. because there are lots of people that want to learn German. but I am the only one who, in the class who knows it.

INT : har du tenkt på det noen gang? at du har vært glad at du kan tysk?

BAR: ja. fordi det er mange som vil lære tysk. det er bare jeg som, i klassen min som kan [tysk].

Example 8.33, Child 54 (U/G/Classroom 12):

CHI: I work with [Turkish boy in the class] who was just here. we work together most of the time in math. the two of us are best in math in our class.

BAR: ellers så jobber jeg med [tyrkisk gutt i klassen] som var her nettopp. vi jobber mest sammen i matte da. vi to er lengst i klassen på matte.

The child in Example 8.31 spoke about the concept of hiding her books, reading at night, from her mom as an activity shared by “*the whole class,*” it “*happens to everyone.*” She spoke about how they share the experience: “*when we read the books, so our Mommy's don't know.*” In this way, the concept of secret reading at night seems to be meaningful to her, in part because it is a unifying activity she shares with her classmates. The child in Example 8.32 referred to his class when he was talking about his skills in German (a language he learned after having lived in Germany for several years). He had just said that he wanted to study German as a foreign language in high school. The example illustrates how he makes his proficiency in German a desirable skill by referring to how this skill is viewed by his classmates (“*there are lots of people that want to learn German.*”) and that he is the only one in his class who possesses this skill. In a similar vein, the child in Example 8.33 talked about her collaboration with her peers in class when engaged in academic work. The child positioned herself and her classmate vis-à-vis the rest of the class in terms of academic achievement by ascribing to herself and her classmate the status of

those who have achieved most in math in class. Another aspect of her talk is how the identity of academic achievement that distinguishes the Urdu-speaking girl and her Turkish-speaking, male classmate from the rest of the group crosses the different linguistic backgrounds and genders of the two children and unites them.

Furthermore, the children also brought up class belonging as a marker of belonging vis-à-vis other groups at school, as was demonstrated by Child 20's talk about her activities during school breaks:

Example 8.34, Child 20 (U/G/Classroom 7):

INT: do you always spend time with the same people during break time or do you change the people you are with from time to time?

CHI: no. I am not together with the same people because we, uh, the girls in my class are usually together. because the girls in D-class can't be bothered being together with us, because they think we are nerds. and you know my friend, we, me and Sara got to hang out with them. and we didn't think it was cool that it was only us that got to be together with them and not the others, so we can't be bothered being with them.

INT: so you don't want to be with them at all?

CHI: no. because when we played with them, we asked if the others could join in, and they said no.

INT: yes okay. why do you think they did that?

CHI: hmm I don't know. because they think Sara and I are the coolest girls in the class.

INT: er du sammen med de samme hvert friminutt eller bytter du på litt?

BAR: nei. jeg er ikke sammen med de samme, fordi vi, ehh jentene i klassen min pleier å være sammen. fordi de jentene i d- klassen og sånn de gidder ikke å være sammen med oss, fordi de synes vi er nerder. og du vet venninna mi, vi, jeg og Sara fikk bare være med dem. og vi synes ikke det var noe kult at bare vi fikk være med og ikke dem, så da gadd vi ikke å være med.

INT: så da ville dere ikke være med de i det hele tatt?

BAR: nei. fordi vi lekte med dem, også spurte vi dem om dem kunne være med også sa de nei.

INT: ja ok. hvorfor det tror du?

BAR: hmm jeg vet ikke jeg. fordi ehh de synes jeg og Sara er de kuleste av jentene i klassen.

The girl here brought up the distinction between her own class and the parallel class (the D-class) and how they ascribe labels to each other across classrooms (nerds). At the same time, she and her friend and classmate had been invited to join a group of girls from another classroom due to their status as "*the coolest girls in the class*," in this way having a quality ascribed to them that distinguishes them from the rest of the girls in their class. However, the girl and her friend rejected the invitation to switch groups, because the other girls in their class were not allowed to join, in this way showing solidarity with their classmates when negotiating their belonging.

The examples above illustrate how the class and being a classmate constitute a marker of belonging with which children identify and position themselves. In a similar vein, gender appeared as a significant marker of belonging, crossing the ethnic and linguistic backgrounds of the children. As already seen in some of the examples, the children implicitly brought up gender as a relevant category. In Example 8.34, the girl specified that it is the girls in her class she plays with during the school break. Going back to Example 8.28, the girl did not include the Turkish-speaking boy when she spoke of her use of



Turkish with friends at school. In fact, it also turned out that the Turkish-speaking boy in the class did not refer to her when asked about his use of Turkish at school. Similar mechanisms were observed in the talk by the girl in Example 8.21. She stated in her talk about her use of L1 at school that she and her female friend were the only ones “*here*” who knew Urdu, despite there being six Urdu-speaking boys in their class. In this way, she excluded the boys when referring to speakers of her heritage language in her class.

There were also children who explicated gender as significant to their social interactions. One of them was an Urdu-speaking girl, who said that she only speaks with the girls, not with “*the others*,” that is, the Urdu-speaking boys:

Example 8.35, Child 16 (U/G/Classroom 5):

INT: is there anyone else in your class who speaks Urdu? I know there is.

CHI: there are eight people.

INT: there are eight yes. do you eight ever get together at school? and do you speak Urdu when you are together at school?

CHI: no. but I only speak with the girls. not with the others.

INT: er det noen i klassen din som også kan snakke urdu? jeg vet jo det er.

BAR: det er åtte stykker.

INT: det er åtte stykker, ja. hender det at dere åtte er sammen? og snakker dere urdu når dere er sammen på skolen?

BAR: nei. men jeg snakker med jenter bare. men ikke med de andre.

In this talk, it is evident that when the interviewer investigated the girl’s language use with the other Urdu-speaking classmates, the girl made gender more relevant than her language use by bringing into the conversation that she only speaks with the girls. Another boy made gender significant in a similar way. He is the only Urdu-speaking boy in his class:

Example 8.36, Child 23 (U/B/Classroom 9):

INT: who do you prefer to play with when you are at school?

CHI: the boys.

INT: the boys. are there any special boys you join more?

CHI: or I play football. those who join come.

INT: (...). are there any of them that can also speak Urdu?

CHI: I am the only boy.

INT: you are the only boy? ok. are you the only boy in the class?

CHI: who speaks Urdu. the only boy. but there are some girls that speak Urdu.

INT: do you speak Urdu with any of the other boys here at school that you spend time with?

CHI: it happens. but I normally play with those from my class.

INT: når du er på skolen hvem er det du liker best å være sammen med da?

BAR: guttene.

INT: guttene ja. er det noen spesielle gutter som du er mest sammen med?

BAR: eller jeg spiller fotball. de som er med kommer.

INT: (...). er det noen av de du er med da som kan snakke urdu også?

BAR: jeg er den eneste gutten.

INT: du er den eneste gutten? ok, er du den eneste gutten i klassen?

BAR: som snakker Urdu. bare en gutt. men det er noen jenter som snakker urdu.

INT: ja. er det noen andre gutter på skolen her da, som du er sammen med som du snakker urdu med?

CHI: det hender. men jeg pleier å leke med de i klassen min.

When asked who he preferred to play with at school, the boy made gender relevant by answering “*the boys.*” When asked if there was anyone who joins in playing football that also speaks Urdu, he brought up the fact that he is the only boy who speaks Urdu in his class, and made gender relevant in relation to his language background.

There were also other incidents where the children brought up gender, as illustrated in the following three final examples:

Example 8.37, Child 4 (T/B/Classroom 3):

INT: do you ever speak about books you've been reading with others or when you read together with others?

CHI: uh, not really. no. boys don't normally do that kind of thing.

INT: boys don't normally do that kind of thing?

CHI: no. girls normally do that. but not boys. I listen to the girls and they talk about lots of books.

INT: hender det at du snakker om bøker med andre når du har lest eller når du leser sammen med andre?

BAR: ehh, nei, ikke egentlig. nei. gutter pleier ikke å gjøre sånn.

INT: gutter pleier ikke å gjøre sånn?

BAR: nei. det pleier jenter. men ikke gutter. jeg hører jenter som snakker om mange bøker.

Example 8.38, Child 45 (U/G/Classroom 11):

INT: you have told me lots of things. but do you think there is anything I have forgotten to ask about? (...)?

CHI: I think boys are stupid.

INT: you think boys are stupid. wow. all boys?

CHI: yes. they nearly don't understand anything in science. (...). it's lucky there aren't any [boys] sitting at my desk.

INT: ja du har jo fortalt masse. synes du det er noe jeg har glemt å spørre om kanskje? (...)?

BAR: jeg synes gutter er teite.

INT: du synes at gutter er teite. oi. alle gutter eller?

BAR: ja. de forstår nesten ingenting av naturfag. (...). flaks at det ikke er noen [gutter] på bordet mitt.

Example 8.39, Child 54 (U/G/Classroom 12):

INT: do you ever spend time with others that can't speak Urdu?

CHI: yes. one that speaks Turkish, [name], and one that has left called [name]. also nearly all the girls in our class. we are friends with girls and boys.

INT: hender det at dere er sammen med noen som ikke snakker urdu?

BAR: ja. en som snakker tyrkisk, [name], og en som har sluttet som heter [name]. også er det nesten alle jentene i klassen vår. vi er venner jenter og gutter.

The three examples illustrate how the children themselves brought up gender as a relevant social category in relation to a neutral prompt. In the first example, the boy made gender relevant in relation to the discussion of reading of books, while in the second example, the girl made gender relevant when she was asked whether the interviewer forgot to ask her something. The two examples illustrate biased descriptions of the opposite gender. The third example, on the other hand, stemming from the girl in Example 8.33, made a point out of the girls and the boys in her class being friends, signaling that breaking gender boundaries is of significance.

In this elaborative theme, I have illuminated an awareness of same L1-speaking friendships in relation to classroom belonging and gender belonging. We first saw how children with other same L1-speakers in their class might prefer to speak only Norwegian,

whether they include the same L1-speakers as their friends (examples 8.25 and 8.26) or not (Example 8.27), while children who do not have same L1-speakers in their class differed in whether they included same L1-speakers in parallel fifth grade classrooms as their friends. When at school, class and gender were salient markers of belonging in themselves but also crossed the marker of a shared L1. The children's experiences may become meaningful when shared with their in-group (the class), as we saw in Example 8.31. Children may also create or be assigned different sub-identities vis-à-vis each other within the class, for instance, related to possessing a specific skill (examples 8.32 and 8.33) or as "*the coolest girls in class*" (Example 8.34). Finally, class belonging was made relevant vis-à-vis other groups (e.g., other classes), which was seen in Example 8.34. Furthermore, the children brought up gender as a significant category in their responses to neutral prompts (examples 8.34, 8.37, and 8.38) and made gender relevant in terms of who they spend time with (examples 8.35 and 8.36). Children were both descriptive in their talk about gender (examples 8.34, 8.35, and 8.36) and also displayed biased perceptions in terms of activities and assumptions about the others as a group (8.37 and 8.38). There were also examples of children bringing up the breaking of gender boundaries as a relevant aspect of their social relations in the classroom ("*we are friends with girls and boys.*" in Example 8.39).

### 8.3 Summary and discussion

In this chapter, I addressed how the children perceived language use in communication with and among peers (RQ 2). I first presented how the children rated their use of the L1 when addressing their same L1-speaking peers at school and during leisure time (RQ 2a) before I presented five elaborative themes related to peer language use in multilingual peer contexts, with particular emphasis on the school context (RQ 2b). I will now summarize and discuss the results.

When rating their language use with same L1-speaking friends, the children identified with all the categories of L1 use, ranging from *Never* to *Always*. The most frequent language use pattern at school was that of an L2-dominant language use, followed by a balanced language use pattern, and an L2-monolingual pattern (Table 8.1). The L2-dominance resembles how the children in the studies by Jean (2011) in the Canadian context, Feinauer (2006) and Oller et al. (2011) in the US context, and Thomas et al. (2014) in the UK context reported their language use with friends at school and underscores how children to a large degree use the majority language in communication with same L1-speaking friends at school. During leisure time, the proportion of children who rated

themselves as being L2-monolingual or L2-dominant was smaller, while more children rated themselves as being balanced or L1-dominant when addressing same L1-speaking peers during leisure time (Table 8.1). This pattern of differences between the two contexts is similar to the pattern reported by the children in the Feinauer (2006) study and suggests that school and leisure time represent distinct contextual frameworks for children's bilingualism.

While the L2-dominance in language use at school appeared as a pattern, the findings also suggest that in both contexts, the majority of the children perceived themselves as being bilingual in their communication with peers (Table 8.1). There were also children who presented themselves as L1-dominant or L1-monolingual in same L1-peer communication. This is a relatively extensive use of L1 reported by the children compared to how the fifth graders in the Jean (2011) study and Feinauer (2006) study reported their language use with friends. This may be because the present study specifically addressed communication with other same L1-speakers rather than the whole group of "friends" or "peers." Moreover, the present sample included children with extensive access to same L1-speakers at their schools. However, as discussed in Section 8.1, access alone could not account for the differences in language use at school. As discussed in the following, the elaborative themes expanded on the role of such proximal features previously identified in observational studies of classroom interactions and in studies of children's perspectives on their own language use.

The first elaborative theme—*awareness of a monolingual school norm*—highlighted how the children related to the monolingual norm they encountered at their schools, reflecting the reports in the study by Wong-Fillmore (2000). The examples displayed an awareness among the children of moving between contexts with different linguistic norms and expectations of language use. These expectations were described as being instituted by their teacher. Such descriptions reflect the reports from multilingual and multiethnic primary classrooms by Cekaite and Evaldsson (2008), where teachers held the monolingual norm as the prevailing norm in the classroom by explicitly and implicitly invoking Swedish as the dominant classroom language as a response to children's use of their L1 in conversations. Cekaite and Evaldsson (2008) further observed how some children were assigned an identity as "bilingual trouble makers" and others as "monolingual speakers" depending on how they appropriated, exploited, or challenged the monolingual norm when they spoke, while Thomas and colleagues (2014) found that the children in their study brought up the fact that someone would tell on them if they spoke the majority language in

their minority instruction class. The present study suggests that student identifications in relation to the norm become relevant in the peer group and vis-à-vis the teacher.

The examples within this theme further pointed to the contrast between the monolingual norm of speaking only Norwegian and the bilingual reality of the children. There were examples illustrating that the use of the first language, because of the norm, becomes a hidden activity vis-à-vis their teacher. Such use of the L1 as a “side activity” hidden from the teachers resembles the observations of student behavior in multilingual classrooms by Creese et al. (2006), Evaldsson (2005), and Svendsen (2004) and was reported by the children in the study by Thomas et al. (2014). That is, the children have both an official teacher–student communication and an “unofficial” communication between students. The contrast between such a norm and actual or preferred language use may be stronger for children who are more dependent on their L1 or who identify more strongly as a user of the L1 than to children who are skilled in and prefer the majority language.

The second elaborative theme—*awareness of the importance of peers in language learning*—illuminated how the children see their peers as important in their practice and learning of the Norwegian language. The awareness of the role of peer language exposure and language use in peer contexts in language development was also found among the children in the Jean study (2011), who pointed to the influence of the school (teachers and friends) on their English skills. The identified awareness also harks back to how the parents in the case study by Rydland and Kucherenko (2013) pointed to their reliance on the peer environment for their children to develop their skills in Norwegian. The present study revealed that the children believe that peers may have a motivating impact and a directly supportive impact on the children’s language learning or simply have a role as competent language users with whom one can practice one’s skills. The theme also brought up the fact that while some children see linguistically diverse environments as an opportunity to explicate and motivate majority language learning, other children focused on the issue that they lacked opportunities to practice their Norwegian in an environment with few native Norwegian speakers. As suggested more recently, for instance, by Blum-Kulka and Gorbat (2014) and Rydland, Grøver, and Lawrence (2014b), regarding learning a second language in peer interactions, children exhibit high skillfulness in peer teaching but there are also constraints of peer interaction for L2 learning (see the further discussion in Chapter 10).

Moreover, the third elaborative theme—*awareness of the role of language alternation in communication and learning*—demonstrated the children’s emphasis on the

use of both languages in relation to subject matter learning. That is, some children spoke of using their L1 supportively with peers or teachers when they are to learn in and from Norwegian instruction. These examples also carried in them a perceived importance of not being someone who does not comprehend in the classroom. Such a concern resembles the concern expressed by the children in the Jean (2011) study regarding group membership and negative affects related to speak a language one is not in command of among speakers who are in greater command of the language, and points to a vulnerability related to being a second language learner. The notion of how limitations in L2 skills affect one's social acceptance among peers was identified in observations of peer interactions among younger children (aged 3–7) by Blum-Kulka and Gorbat (2014). The present study suggests that language minority children as second language learners in Grade 5 may doubt their ability to participate in the learning discourse in the classroom and implies that for some children, the inclusion of their L1 is supportive of their comprehension and facilitates their opportunities to engage in class.

Furthermore, when describing their language alternation in general, the children spoke of their language alternation in terms of completing their talk with words from both languages, resembling how the children and youths in the Mills (2001) study described their code-switching as a result of lack of fluency in, in their case, the heritage language. The examples also pointed to how language mixing was perceived as a shared and fluent linguistic practice among same L1-speakers. This finding also underscores the observations in Rydland and Kucherenko (2013), suggesting that in Grade 5, children do not explicate their language choices.

The fourth elaborative theme—*awareness of the intriguing role of L1 as a secret language*—pointed to how bilingualism represents a social tool in peer group communication. “Secrets” were a complex topic among the children—specifically, the girls in the sample—and the different minority languages available to the peers added to the complexity of this phenomenon in the crossing of private and social spheres. The principle of the notion that all people involved in a particular speech event should understand what is happening was highlighted by the children. They demonstrated a sensitivity towards the position of their interlocutors who did not speak the same L1 and were very much aware of the including and excluding functions of their language choice, similar to what Dirim and Hieronymus (2003) found among adolescents. Being aware of this, the children seemed to negotiate between paying attention to the needs of their interlocutors in order not to make

them feel uneasy and using their first language to share secrets with close friends or to use their L1 deliberately in positioning themselves vis-à-vis non-L1-speakers. Furthermore, the youths in the Dirim and Hieronymus (2003) study described the choice of speaking the majority language amongst themselves as a strategy of submission. Similar voices could be found in the preadolescents talk in the present study when they stated that they were prevented from using their L1 to share secrets with friends. The findings of an awareness of language as having socially exclusive or inclusive functions underscores the children's awareness of how linguistic categories are made emotionally and socially relevant in demonstrating group affiliations when power relations are at stake, as has been identified in observational studies by, for instance, Aarsæther (2004) and Rydland and Kucherenko (2013). However, as noted by Svendsen (2004), linguistic categories were also spoken of in more friendly terms—as a way of playing with each other across languages. The present study of children's perspectives supports the notion that children exert multicompetence (Wei, 2013) in their juggling of languages in socially appropriate ways.

The final elaborative theme—*awareness of classroom belonging and gender belonging*—illustrated how gender and class as markers of group membership and the significance of friendship appeared in children's talk. The talk illustrated how children's experiences may become meaningful when shared with their in-group (the class). The talk also illustrated how children may also create or be assigned different sub-identities vis-à-vis each other within the class, for instance, related to possessing a specific skill or in being considered “the coolest girls in class.” Finally, class belonging was made relevant vis-à-vis other groups (e.g., other classes). Furthermore, the children brought up gender as a significant category in their responses to neutral prompts and indicated gender as relevant in terms of who they spend time with. The children were both descriptive in their talk about gender and displayed biased perceptions in terms of activities and assumptions about the others as a group. There were also examples of children bringing up the breaking of gender boundaries as a relevant aspect of their social relations in the classroom (“*we are friends with girls and boys.*”). The examples underscore the important role of peers in the classroom and the class as a social category within which children develop and negotiate their sense of belonging. This finding is discussed further in section 10.3.

To conclude regarding RQ 2—*How do the children perceive language use in communication with and among same L1-speaking peers?*—this study broadens the understanding of how several aspects of bilingualism in multilingual peer contexts central in

the literature are perceived and made relevant by children in middle childhood. Overall, the children reported less use of their L1 with same L1-speaking peers at school than during leisure time, suggesting that they perceive school and leisure time to represent distinct contextual frameworks for their bilingualism. Moreover, the L2-dominance in language use at school appeared as a pattern, but findings also suggest that in both contexts, the majority of the children perceived themselves as using both their languages with same L1-speaking peers, underscoring the prominence of bilingual communication also among the peer generation. The current study further adds to the understanding of how being language minority bilingual in multilinguistic peer and school contexts in Norway contains awareness of norms of language use and of the emphasis on the learning of the Norwegian language, while simultaneously being aware of one's own language choice vis-à-vis interlocutors as socially and emotionally relevant in peer interactions. Furthermore, children's talk contained a strong notion of how multiple markers of peer group belongings and sub-identities (gender belonging, classroom belonging, academic achievement and social position in the peer group) are made relevant across language backgrounds of children. The children's talk also remind us of how multiple heritage languages add to the complexity of peer group mechanisms, as further discussed in Chapter 10.



## 9 Children's perceptions of the importance of their languages

In this chapter, I look into how children perceived being bilingual by addressing the third research question (RQ 3): *How do the children perceive the importance of their two languages?* More specifically, I elucidate RQ 3a: *To what degree do the children find it important to be able to speak well in their two languages?* and RQ 3b: *When engaged in talk about language attitudes and sense of belonging to their ethnic heritage group, what perceptions of the roles of language as a skill and language as a marker of belonging do the children bring forward?* I first present the children's self-ratings of the importance of being able to speak Turkish/ Urdu and Norwegian well (9.1) before I present five elaborative themes derived from children's talk regarding the roles of language as a skill and as a marker of belonging (9.2). The results are summarized and discussed in Section 9.3.

### 9.1 Children's ratings of the importance of being able to speak well

In this section, I present the degree to which the children perceived being able to speak Turkish or Urdu and Norwegian well as important to them. Information about the importance of possessing good skills in the two languages was retrieved through questions put forward in the Harter-format described in Section 6.4.2. A child was first to identify with an imaginary group of children who either found it important or not important to be able to speak Turkish or Urdu well and second to evaluate whether he or she was *a little similar* or *very similar* to this group of children. A similar question was asked regarding Norwegian. In this way, four categories were obtained for the perceived importance of speaking each language well: 1 = strong identification with speaking a language well *not* to be important, 2 = weak identification with speaking a language well *not* to be important, 3 = weak identification with speaking a language well to be important, and 4 = strong identification with speaking a language well to be important. The children's responses are presented in Table 9.1.

Table 9.1

Children's self-ratings of the importance of knowing how to speak Urdu or Turkish and Norwegian well: Number and percentage of children.

Scale	Degree of importance						
	Total N	Not important			Important		Missing
		Strong	Weak	Weak	Strong		
Knowing how to speak Turkish/Urdu well	56 <i>100</i> n <i>%</i>	1 <i>1.8</i>	10 <i>17.9</i>	16 <i>28.6</i>	28 <i>50.0</i>	1 <i>1.8</i>	
Knowing how to speak Norwegian well	56 <i>100</i> n <i>%</i>	- <i>-</i>	1 <i>1.8</i>	8 <i>14.3</i>	45 <i>80.4</i>	2 <i>3.6</i>	

As shown in Table 9.1, children's perceptions of the importance of being able to speak Norwegian well was quite unitary; all but one child responded that knowing how to speak Norwegian well was important, and the vast majority ( $n = 45$ , 80.4%) identified strongly with this perception. Likewise, in terms of Turkish and Urdu, the majority of the children responded that knowing how to speak Turkish/Urdu well was important. However, fewer children identified strongly with this perception ( $n = 28$ , 50.0%), and more children ( $n = 11$ , 19.7%) responded that they did not find being able to speak Turkish or Urdu well to be important.

The elaborative themes presented in the subsequent section shed further light on considerations the children took into account when they reflected upon their need of language skills in the two languages as well as the role of language as a marker of belonging. The analysis of children's talk shed light on how children evaluated the importance of each language as well as on how they weighed the importance of their two languages against each other. As will also become evident, the distinctions between the categories presented to the children in the Harter-format was not necessarily reflected in their provided reasons for why they would need to know a language. For instance, a child who evaluated being able to speak the L1 well as *a little* important could provide a reason to need her L1 (e.g., "*to speak with my family*") similar to that of a child who reported being able to speak in L1 as *very important* (e.g., "*because then I can speak with Mommy*"). That is, what was a less frequent response to the presented categories would not necessarily

reflect a substantially different perception in the material. Vice versa, a child with a typical report pattern could provide a less typical idea about the importance of a language in his or her elaborative talk.

## 9.2 Children’s talk about language as a skill and as a marker of belonging

In this section, I present five elaborative themes derived from the children’s talk that shed light on the considerations children take into account when they reflect upon language as competence and language as a marker of belonging: the awareness of the need for good Norwegian skills to succeed—in Norway (9.2.1), the awareness of the need for Turkish or Urdu in education and employment (9.2.2), the awareness of a close connection between language and ethnic heritage group (9.2.3), the awareness of a distance from heritage country and from peers living there (9.2.4), and the awareness of being “bilanguagers” (9.2.5). As presented in Section 6.5.4, the children’s responses to the fixed-choice questions in Section 3, Part 8 of the interview regarding language attitudes and ethnic identity constitute the data from which the elaborative themes were derived. In addition, examples from other parts of the children’s talk were included when found to add a perspective to the elaborative themes.

### 9.2.1 Awareness of the need for good Norwegian skills to succeed—in Norway

The first elaborative theme revolves around how children displayed an awareness of their need for skills in Norwegian to succeed—if and when in Norway. The children frequently referred to their need for possessing Norwegian language skills in relation to mastery of school-related tasks and succeeding in education. They referred, for instance, to being able to pass a test at school, being able to read what the teacher tells you to read, or being able to study at a university. The three following examples illustrate talk where such ideas were brought forward:

Example 9.1, Child 34 (T/G/Classroom 11):

CHI: it is important. because when I have education here it’s more important than speaking Turkish, so it is important. (...). very. because you have to know Norwegian to go further in school.

BAR: det er viktig. fordi jeg når jeg har undervisning her og det er mer viktigere enn å snakke tyrkisk. så det er viktig. (...). veldig. fordi man må kunne norsk for å gå videre i skole.

Example 9.2, Child 14 (U/G/Classroom 5):

CHI: because when I live in Norway, if I am going to learn from what the others are talking about, then I need to understand it instead of sitting in a corner not understanding what the others say.

BAR: fordi at når jeg bor i Norge, hvis jeg skal lære av det de andre prater, så må jeg skjønne det istedenfor at jeg skal måtte sitte i en krok å ikke skjønne hva noen av de andre sier.

Example 9.3, Child 54 (U/G/Classroom 12):

CHI: if I'm going to work here. and teach my family. if I want to be something I have to, in Norway I have to know Norwegian more than any other language.

BAR: hvis jeg skal jobbe her. og lære videre til familien min. hvis jeg vil bli noe, så måtte jeg, i Norge må jeg kunne norsk mer enn andre språk og sånt.

The three children pointed to their strong need for knowing and understanding Norwegian. Child 34 in Example 9.1 referred to the greater importance of knowing Norwegian compared to Turkish in order to be able to continue her education. Child 14 in Example 9.2 said that if she is living in Norway, and if she is to learn something from others, she has to be able to understand what they are saying, instead of being someone who sits in a corner without understanding the people around her. In the third example, Child 54 put forth an idea about the importance of Norwegian if she is to work in Norway and if she is to teach Norwegian further to her family—possibly referring to her future role as a parent who will be responsible for teaching her children one day. She also referred to the greater importance of Norwegian in relation to other languages by saying that if she wants to “*be something*” in Norway, she has to know Norwegian more than any other languages.

The children's notions of not sitting in a corner but rather to be something demonstrate a sensitivity towards the social vulnerability inherent in being someone who does not know the language of the society in which they live. In this way, the children's talk about the importance of knowing Norwegian contained an idea about inclusion and a desire to be included in the Norwegian society. In addition to inclusion, there was also talk that implied a concern about achieving independence. In the next example, a girl exemplified how she, without sufficient knowledge in Norwegian, could end up in a situation, at her future work, where she says yes to something she has not really understood:

Example 9.4, Child 53 (U/G/Classroom 12):

CHI: when I work, and they use tricky words I'll understand. and those words, if I'm not good at knowing the Norwegian words that they ask, so I'll understand, so I'll just say *yes*, and after that something happens and they say *what happens*, and they say *you've already said yes to it*, right.

BAR: da jeg skal jobbe, da de skal si noen vanskelige ord så forstår jeg. og de ordene, hvis ikke jeg klarer norsk de ordene som de spør, så forstår jeg, så sier jeg bare *ja*, også etter det skjer det noe også sier de *hva skjer*, også sier de *du har jo sagt ja til det*, ikke sant.

In this excerpt, the girl described a possible future scenario where she misunderstands and is misunderstood if she does not know difficult words in Norwegian. She may approve of something that later leads to an incident where she is confronted with her approval, which was based on her misunderstanding. Her references to the comprehension of “*tricky words*” and that if she does not understand “*the Norwegian*

*words that they ask*” may reflect an awareness based on experiences —hers or others—of lacking a complete vocabulary in a language and underscore an idea about the level of language skills needed in order to be able to communicate sufficiently. Another child was more explicit about his wish to be someone who can manage in Norwegian without help:

Example 9.5, Child 46 (T/B/Classroom 12):

INT: but do you think it is important to be able to speak Norwegian well?

CHI: yes yes. very important.

INT: you think it is very important. ok. why?

CHI: because I'm going to live here for a long time.

I need to manage without getting help. in

Norwegian.

INT: men syns du det er viktig å kunne snakke godt norsk?

BAR: ja ja. veldig viktig.

INT: du syns det er veldig viktig. ja. hvorfor det da?

BAR: fordi jeg skal være her i mange år. jeg må greie meg uten å få hjelp. på norsk.

When asked about why he found it very important to be able to speak Norwegian well, Child 46 stated that he is going to live here (in Norway) for a long time and that he has to manage in Norwegian without getting help. His reasoning contained a notion of that permanence—or his everyday life—should contain (“*I have to*”) independence: an ability to cope on his own. A similar idea was found in the next example, where Child 32 described a more concrete incident where he found it important to be able to communicate sufficiently in Norwegian:

Example 9.6, Child 32 (T/B/Classroom 11):

CHI: very important if you live here. when you have to, for example, speak to doctors and if you can't speak Norwegian, then you can't tell the doctors what your illness is and stuff.

INT: is it important to be good at Norwegian then, to speak Norwegian very well? is that more important than being very good at Turkish here in Norway?

CHI: yes. because in Turkey I don't normally go to the hospital. I normally just get blood tests there.

BAR: veldig viktig hvis du bor her. da du må sy, for eksempel, og snakke til doktorene, og hvis du ikke kan norsk, da kan du ikke svare til doktorene hva sykdommen din er og sånn.

INT: er det viktig å kunne norsk bra da, å snakke norsk veldig bra? er det viktigere enn å kunne tyrkisk veldig bra her i Norge?

BAR: ja. fordi i Tyrkia pleier jeg ikke å gå til sykehuset. jeg pleier bare å ta blodprøver der.

The boy emphasized the importance of Norwegian in relation to “*if you live here*” in the first line of the example. He then exemplified how important sufficient Norwegian language skills are if you have to go to the doctor and talk about your disease or injury. The interviewer then asked whether being skilled in Norwegian was more important in Norway than being skilled in Turkish, and the boy concluded that being skilled in Norwegian is more important than being skilled in Turkish, because “*in Turkey I don't normally go to the hospital. I normally just get blood tests there.*” His story may display a perception that the most salient incidents of his everyday life take place in Norway—his country of residence. Hence, his communicative competence in Norwegian appeared to be more important to him.

The notions of inclusion and independence inherent in the children's talk can partly be seen in relation to the concern about the learning of the Norwegian language displayed by some of the children in previous examples. The children in examples 9.2, 9.4, and 9.6 all brought up a consciousness about their parents' language skills in other parts of their talk (see examples 7.3, 7.5, and 7.1, respectively). Hence, the talk presented here suggests that the children have had experiences early in life that have provided them with an enforced awareness of the importance of possessing good skills in Norwegian. Child 54 from Example 9.3 explicated such a sensitivity. When asked whether she believed that there would be times in the future where it would be nice to know both her languages, she referred to her observations of her parents in the following way:

Example 9.7, Child 54 (U/G/Classroom 12):

CHI: when my dad and mom speak, I often think about my mom who not, isn't so good at Norwegian, and I want to be someone who knows both [languages], because it isn't so embarrassing for the kids. there's lots of people who think it's embarrassing when their parents don't speak Norwegian and Urdu well.

INT: are there many who think that?

CHI: yes. but my mom doesn't normally go out so much to meetings. my dad does most of that. so I don't worry.

BAR: da faren min og moren min snakker så tenker jeg ofte på moren min som ikke, kan ikke så bra norsk, og jeg vil bli en som kan begge [språkene], for det er ikke så flaut for barna. det er mange som synes det er flaut når foreldrene ikke kan bra norsk og urdu.

INT: er det mange som synes det?

BAR: ja. men moren min pleier ikke å gå så mye ut på møter. faren min er mest. så jeg synes ikke.

Child 54 here said that when listening to her parents talk, she often think about her mother, who does not know Norwegian very well, and she herself wants to become someone who knows how to speak both languages, so that it is not so embarrassing for the children. She also referred to the fact that many children are embarrassed when their parents are not skilled in Norwegian and Urdu. When the interviewer followed up on that (*"are there many who think that?"*), she said that her mother does not go that often to meetings; it is her father who does that, implying that she does not often have that embarrassing experience. The girl here demonstrated how she has observed her mothers' experience of not being skilled in Norwegian, and how this lack of skills affects her mother and herself. She has seen how her mother is excluded, or excludes herself, from participation in parental meetings at school, and she is aware of the embarrassment of having a parent who shows up but cannot speak Norwegian. She is also aware of the fact that other children share her experience and perceptions. Moreover, this is not the first time the girl has given this thought; in fact, she says that she often reflects upon her mother's situation. What is also inherent in the girl's talk is the notion of how she turns her mother's experience into a

motivation so as not to end up in the same situation herself. She wants change, for herself and her children; she wants to become “*someone who knows both*” languages.

A final example can serve to illustrate an implicit connection in the child’s meaning making of her future need for Norwegian and her experience as a child in the present. In Example 7.26, Child 25 talked about her mother’s need to practice her Norwegian skills in communication with her children. In the following example, the girl’s talk revolved around her future need of Norwegian, which she related to learning and to her ability to support her own children with homework:

Example 9.8, Child 25 (U/G/Classroom 9):

CHI: it is important to know Norwegian if you live in Norway.

INT: what do you think you’ll use Norwegian for when you grow up?

CHI: then I actually think I’ll use it to talk a lot in Norwegian. yes. and learn something from it, about, yes about, for example, if it says something, for example, I’m a grown up, and I have kids, and she has homework, and I’ll have to help her to read it, then I have to know how to read it. (...). that is, if I live in Norway.

BAR: det er viktig å kunne norsk hvis man bor i Norge.

INT: hva tror du du kommer til å bruke norsk til når du blir voksen da?

BAR: da tror jeg faktisk jeg skal bruke den til å snakke mye på norsk. ja. og så lære noe av det, om ja om, for eksempel, hvis det står noe, for eksempel, jeg blir voksen, også får jeg barn, også har hun lekser, og så må jeg hjelpe henne med å kunne lese det, da må jeg jo kunne lese dem. (...). hvis jeg bor i Norge da.

Firstly, the girl brought up the notion of Norwegian being important “*if you live in Norway.*” Furthermore, when asked what she believed she would use Norwegian for in the future, she said she would talk a lot in Norwegian and learn something from it, for instance, being able to read her children’s homework in order to be able to help her children (“*I’ll have to help her to read it.*”). Her concern about the role of her own language skills in her ability to support her own children’s competence may reflect her experience of having a mother who was herself a second language learner of Norwegian. Finally, the girl again added, “*that is, if I live in Norway.*” In this way, her talk contained two parallel voices: one idea about the importance of her Norwegian language skills in her future family life in Norway and another about the situated importance of Norwegian language skills: Norwegian is important *if* she lives in Norway.

To sum up, the children’s talk presented here illustrated the superior role of the Norwegian language in order to succeed—when in Norway. The values of inclusion and independence were inherent in the children’s talk about their need for good skills in the Norwegian language. The value of inclusion was found in the way children brought up the significance of participation in education (Example 9.1), in the labor marked (Example 9.3), and in communication taking place on a regular basis (Example 9.2). Statements implying a

need for achievement of independence referred to a need of making themselves understood and managing without help in general (examples 9.4 and 9.5 ) or in specific situations, such as when at the doctor (Example 9.6). Against this background, the children's talk about their need for Norwegian skills was strongly related to their need and desire to meet the linguistic demands across a range of areas in the larger society and underscored the children's strong awareness of the consequences of not meeting these demands in regard to their membership in Norwegian society. In line with these notions was the children's emphasis on the permanence of their life in Norway, inherent in several of the examples. Such references in one way point to the obvious nature of the importance of learning Norwegian for the children, as it is for all children growing up in Norway. The frequent references to Norwegian being important when and if in Norway may also reflect their bilingual status, where they became aware at an early age of the situated nature of the importance and need of languages. Such an early awareness could be seen in relation to how the talk about the importance of knowing Norwegian reflected the children's attention towards their parents as second language learners (examples 9.7 and 9.8). At the same time, there may also be a different connotation regarding the children's explicit emphasis of Norwegian being important if and when in Norway. In particular, the references to "if" living in Norway by the girls in examples 9.3 and 9.8 may reflect that there are uncertainties about spending their entire life in Norway. This issue is illuminated further in the next elaborative theme.

### 9.2.2 Awareness of the need for Turkish/Urdu skills in education and employment

The first elaborative theme illuminated the role of Norwegian in relation to school and work. The second elaborative theme concerns children's awareness of the need for their Turkish or Urdu skills in education and employment. There were children in the sample who saw their need to be skilled in their L1 in relation to the possibility of utilizing their first language in future jobs in Norway and to the possibility that they might move to their heritage country to go to school or work there in the future. The following three examples illustrate the children's talk about their use of their heritage language when they grew older:

Example 9.9, Child 53 (U/G/Classroom 12):

CHI: if I get married, to teach the kids. or when I start, when I'll be a teacher, then I should have a mother tongue.

BAR: hvis jeg blir gift, så lære småunga. eller da jeg skal begynne på, da jeg skal være lærer, så skal jeg ha en morsmål.



Example 9.10, Child 35 (T/G/Classroom 11):

CHI: maybe a Turkish teacher.

INT: yes. to teach Turkish at a school?

CHI: yes. (...) or be something like you, to speak to Turkish children and kids from other countries and stuff, and explain if they don't understand words in Turkish and stuff.

BAR: kanskje tyrkisk lærer.

INT: ja. å lære bort tyrkisk på en skole?

BAR: ja. (...). eller være sånn som dere, å snakke med tyrkiske barn og fra andre land og sånt, og forklare hvis de ikke skjønner ord på tyrkisk og sånt.

Example 9.11, Child 54 (U/G/Classroom 12):

CHI: uh, I can speak with my children if I have any, and I could, for example, work in the mosque or if I wanted to travel to Pakistan and work there or stay there a while, then it is important to have Urdu when you are older.

BAR: ehh, jeg kan snakke med barna mine hvis jeg får, også kan jeg jobbe i moskéen for eksempel og hvis jeg skal reise til Pakistan og jobbe der litt og være der, så er det viktig å kunne urdu når man er stor.

Firstly, the children in examples 9.9 and 9.11 both brought up that they picture themselves speaking their heritage language with their future children, if they have any. In Section 9.2.3, I return to the significant role of the heritage language as a family language. Furthermore, in all three examples, the children demonstrated ideas about using the heritage language in a future job in Norway. In examples 9.9 and 9.10, the girls referred to being teachers in their mother tongue. In Example 9.11, the girl said that she could work in the mosque. The girl in Example 9.10 also said that she could be something like “*you*” (the interviewers), someone who talk with Turkish children and children from other countries and that she could explain if the children did not understand words in Turkish. Inherent in this idea is an awareness of how some children need explanations across languages in order to understand and that she has the necessary linguistic skills to contribute, reflecting her present bilingual reality. Her reference to the interviewers may also contain an appreciation of someone talking to her about her bilingualism and about the value of her first language in particular. However, it may also be that her idea related to her lack of opportunities to get bilingual assistance during her discussion with the monolingual interviewer.

Furthermore, the girl in Example 9.11 also brought up the possibility of going to Pakistan to work there for a while. In the previous section, I suggested that the references to “*if*” living in Norway by the girls in examples 9.3 and 9.8 could reflect that the children ascribed uncertainties to their spending their entire lifetime in Norway. In the next example, Child 25 from Example 9.8 confirmed that she has thoughts about going to school in Pakistan and emphasized her need of knowing Urdu if this were to be the case:

Example 9.12, Child 25 (U/G/Classroom 9):

CHI: because if I am going to an, uh, Urdu or like in Pakistan, to school, they do speak mostly Urdu. then it's good to know.

BAR: fordi hvis jeg skal gå på en, ehh, urdu eller sånn i Pakistan, på skole, så snakker de jo mest urdu. da er det godt å kunne.

In a similar vein, Child 8 brought up the importance of her Urdu reading skills in relation to the possibility of going to school in the heritage country in the future:

Example 9.13, Child 8 (U/G/Classroom 4):

CHI: because if you get homework in Pakistan. I'll go to school, if I go there and I get homework reading I'd have to be able to know [Urdu].

INT: yes, if you go to school in Pakistan. do you think you'll ever do it?

CHI: uh, yes maybe.

BAR: fordi hvis man får lekse til å i Pakistan. jeg går i skole, hvis jeg går der også får jeg leselekker, så må jeg kunne [urdu].

INT: ja, hvis du går på skole i Pakistan. tror du at du kommer til å gjøre det noen gang?

BAR: ehh, ja kanskje.

Although reflecting the choices of a minority of the children in the sample, this elaborative theme illuminated how some children brought up the possibility of using their heritage language as a tool in future jobs in Norway, for instance, as a bilingual teacher (examples 9.9 and 9.11) or when working in the mosque (Example 9.10). These perspectives reflect the idea of how skills in their heritage language can be incorporated as a relevant competence in a multilingual Norwegian society, and they add a nuance to the children's awareness of the important role of the Norwegian language as a warranted competence in employment. A few children also brought up the possibility of going to school in their heritage country and the subsequent need for knowing their heritage language well. Against this background, the children's talk contained ideas of a future importance of heritage language skills that exceeded the role of the language in everyday communication.

In the following section, I turn to look at how the awareness of a close connection between language and a sense of belonging to an ethnic heritage group appeared in the sample.

### 9.2.3 Awareness of a close connection between language and ethnic heritage group

This elaborative theme encompasses different aspects of the close connection between language and a sense of belonging to an ethnic heritage group. Language was brought up as a content marker of belonging to their ethnic heritage group when elaborating on the fixed-choice questions targeting their ethnic identity. In a similar vein, their attachment to their heredity was brought up as a reason for why being skilled in their heritage language was important when asked to rate the importance of being skilled in their heritage language. The two first examples illustrate these cross connections:

Example 9.14, Child 40 (U/B/Classroom 11):

INT: how do you think that being Pakistani can be a part of who you are? how do you think you can notice it?

CHI: because I speak the language.

INT: hvordan tenker du at det å være pakistansk kan være en del av den du er? hvordan kan du merke det tror du?

BAR: for jeg snakker språket.

Example 9.15, Child 7 (U/G/Classroom 4):

CHI: [it is] very important to know [Urdu]. because you have to know the language of the country you are from.

BAR: [det er ]veldig viktig [å kunne urdu]. Fordi hvilket land man er fra så må man kunne språket.

In the first example, Child 40 related being Pakistani to his use of the heritage language, while in the second example, Child 7 stated that it is very important to know Urdu because you have to know the language of the country you are from. Moreover, other children related their affect towards speaking the heritage language to their sense of belonging to their ethnic heritage group:

Example 9.16, Child 28 (T/G/Classroom 10):

CHI: [I] like to be Turkish.

INT: yes. do you like being Turkish a little or do you like being Turkish a lot?

CHI: a lot.

INT: and what do you think you like about being Turkish?

CHI: uh, to be Turkish? I like to talk. and a little reading.

BAR: [jeg] liker å være tyrkisk.

INT: ja. liker du litt å være tyrkisk eller liker du mye å være tyrkisk?

BAR: mye.

INT: hva er det du liker da tror du med å være tyrkisk?

BAR: ehh, til å være tyrkisk? Jeg liker å snakke. og litt lese.

Example 9.17, Child 36 (T/G/Classroom 11):

CHI: because we have better words in Turkish and maybe reading.

BAR: fordi at vi har bedre de der ordene på tyrkisk og leser kanskje

In Example 9.16, Child 28 said that she likes to be Turkish. When asked what she likes about it, she said that she likes to speak it and that she likes a little Turkish reading. In Example 9.17, Child 36 brought up her superior skills in Turkish when asked why she liked to be Turkish. Child 28 and Child 36 were two of the children in the sample who expressed the most extended use of the Turkish language across situations and who most consistently brought up their superior Turkish skills in their talk about themselves (see Example 7.24). Here they underscore the role of their Turkish language by implying a strong affiliation with the Turkish group.

In a similar vein, a common way of elaborating on the importance of knowing the heritage language was by referring to their communication with significant others. In the

following excerpt, Child 20 summarized what many of the children expressed about the importance of knowing their first language:

Example 9.18, Child 20 (U/G/Classroom 7):

INT: when is it important to speak Urdu well?

CHI: when I am in Pakistan, and when I am speaking with my Mommy, and when other people don't understand Norwegian as well as I do and I have to talk to people that speak Urdu.

INT: når er det det er viktig å kunne snakke urdu godt da?

BAR: da jeg er i Pakistan, og da jeg skal snakke med mammaen min, og da noen ikke forstår norsk som jeg må si til dem som snakker urdu.

When asked about the importance of knowing Urdu, the girl said she finds it very important, and she explained that she needs Urdu when she is in Pakistan, when she is talking with her mother, and when she is talking with other people who do not understand Norwegian. Her talk contained the notion of the multiple contexts in which the heritage language is needed. Moreover, her reference to the heritage language being important when she is to talk with her mother underscores the significance she ascribes to the heritage language in her communication with close family. In examples 9.9 and 9.11 in the previous section, the children brought up that they pictured themselves speaking their heritage language with their future children. In a similar vein, the next three examples demonstrate the importance of the first language in the children's communication with their parents:

Example 9.19, Child 13 (U/G/Classroom 5):

CHI: uh, it is an important part [being Pakistani]. we have to sort of know that, too. (...) if my parents know it (xxx) then I want to know it, too.

BAR: ehh, det er en viktig del [being Pakistani] (...). vi må jo på en måte kunne det og[så]. (...). hvis foreldrene mine kan det (xxx), da vil jeg også kunne det.

Example 9.20, Child 35 (T/G/Classroom 11):

INT: but are there times you've been extra happy to know Turkish?

CHI: yes. I don't know really when that can be. at least when I talk to Mommy, it's nice to speak Turkish. (...) and Granny and Grandad and stuff, they know no Norwegian. we just taught them some words when they were going back with the train.

INT: men er det noen ganger du har vært ekstra (...) glad for at du kan snakke tyrkisk?

BAR: ja. jeg vet ikke helt når det kan være. jeg er i alle fall, når jeg snakker med mamma er det fint å snakke tyrkisk. (...) og mormor og morfar og sånt, de vet ingen norsk. vi har bare lært dem noen ord når de skulle gå tilbake med flyet.

Example 9.21, Child 27 (T/G/Classroom 10):

CHI: yes. and I like to learn Turkish from my Mommy and them. Mommy likes a lot to teach me Turkish.

BAR: Ja. så liker jeg å lære tyrkisk av mamma og dem. mamma liker å lære meg tyrkisk veldig.

In Example 9.19, Child 13 stated that in a way they have to know Urdu, too, and added that if her parents know the language, she also wants to know the language. In Example 9.20, the interviewer prompted the child about whether she had ever been extra

happy to know Turkish. The girl then said that she's happy when talking to her mother—that when she speaks with her mother it is nice to speak Turkish. In Example 9.21, the girl stated that she likes to learn Turkish from her mother and that her mother really likes to teach Turkish to her. In their different ways, the girls here displayed how they ascribe importance to their heritage language in relation to their connection with their parents. The heritage language was seen as a skill that is possessed and appreciated by their parents, hence becoming a desired skill to the children.

In Example 9.20, the girl also added that she was happy to speak Turkish with her grandmother and grandfather, who did not know Norwegian. It was evident from her talk that her grandparents had visited her in Norway. References to extended family were frequently incorporated in the children's talk (see interview protocol Section 1). Some children described tight relations with their close and extended family who lived far away. Many, but not all, described yearly trips to the heritage country, some having their own apartments or houses there. The children also displayed concern about what was going on in their heritage country. For instance, they referred to familial concerns discussed on the telephone or Skype, descriptions of friendships with cousins and updates on whose birthday was next, insight into schools and education in Turkey or Pakistan, and knowledge of past and present political issues in their countries. One child spoke about how they always buy books in Turkish when they are in Turkey. Another child said that she received a monthly magazine in Urdu from Pakistan, which she appreciated a lot. A boy described how his father laughs when he watches comedies from Pakistan and how his mother likes to watch love stories from Bollywood. Family reunifications were also part of the children's talk about their connectedness with family members; several children referred to attending weddings and talked about newly arrived family members in Norway. In addition, as seen in Section 9.2.2, for some of the children, there was even a possibility that they might return to the home country to study or work one day. Against this background, the children's talk contained a close and multifaceted attachment to extended family and the heritage country and displayed how contact was achieved and maintained along multiple dimensions, ranging from family affairs to culture and politics.

The closeness could also be seen in how the children referred to strong ties and frequent contact with their peers in Turkey or Pakistan. For instance, one girl spoke warmly about her family in Turkey, whom she visited every second summer. She has a cousin there who is her age, and who has birthday the same month. The two cousins have regular contact

on the phone and msn. The girl is able to write Turkish and enjoys her contact with her cousin. When asked how often they write to each other, she replied:

Example 9.22, Child 10 (T/G/Classroom 5):

CHI: me and her [the cousin] we actually hoped every day.

BAR: jeg og hun [kusina]vi håpte egentlig hver eneste dag.

In a similar vein, another child described close and regular contact between him and his somewhat older cousin in Turkey:

Example 9.23, Child 1 (T/B/Classroom 1):

CHI: (...). they are in Turkey, but we visit them every summer. and we see them on the computer.

INT: on the computer?

CHI: yes, because they have [a computer], too, and we have one of those cameras that we can speak with that I sorted, so we usually speak to them. we speak every day. we [cousin in Turkey] normally play those computer games that we can play together. we do it like this. I send him an invitation asking if he wants to play, and he accepts it, and then we play.

(He then talks about how he sometimes communicates in writing with his cousin)

CHI: he messages that it is wrong, he corrects it, or he messages to me to tell me that it is wrong and stuff. he says that *it is written like this* and then he messages that I m not very good at Turkish. but I can speak it.

BAR: (...). de er i Tyrkia, vi besøker dem hver sommer da. og så møtes vi på dataen

INT: på dataen?

BAR: ja, fordi de har også [data], så har vi sånn kamera som vi kan snakke med sånn som jeg har fiksa, så vi pleier å snakke. vi snakker hver dag. vi [fetteren i Tyrkia] pleier å spille sånne spill sammen da. vi gjør sånn, jeg sender ham sånn invitasjon om han vil være med å spille det, så aksepterer han, så spiller vi.

(han snakker om hvordan han noen ganger kommuniserer skriftlig med fetteren)

BAR: han sender meg tilbake at det er feil, han retter, eller han sender meg at det er feil og sånn, han sier *det skrives sånn her* og sånn og så sender han at jeg ikke er så veldig god på tyrkisk. men jeg greier å snakke da.

The two examples above illustrate how heritage language proficiency is important in relation to and facilitates close relationships with extended family and how such contacts can motivate and facilitate children's L1 maintenance at a literate level. The two examples also demonstrate how, despite distance, the relationships the children have with peers in their heritage country are far from merely symbolic. Rather, the contact is spoken of in terms of taking place "*every day*" and containing joint activities. In this way, extended family and peers may constitute a close and continuous part of the children's social worlds and their context of developing and demonstrating knowledge and experience, facilitated by the digital opportunities for staying in touch regularly.

Moreover, the desire to possess sufficient heritage language skills appeared in talk where children spoke of their need to understand their heritage language when visiting their heritage country:

Example 9.24, Child 17 (T/B/Classroom 6):

CHI: because when I am in Turkey, for example, when I go out, I have to be good at Turkish to be able to answer properly so he understands what I mean.

BAR: fordi når jeg er i Tyrkia sånn for eksempel når jeg går ut, jeg må jo greie bra tyrkisk for å svare ordentlig så han skjønner hva jeg mener.

Example 9.25, Child 22 (T/G/Classroom 9):

CHI: it's not as important if I live in Turkey, but it is really a little bit important since I live in Norway, too.

INT: yes, why so?

CHI: uh, since if I go to Turkey on holiday, if I want to be able to speak properly to a person and if I say it wrong, then it won't be alright.

BAR: det [å kunne tyrkisk] er ikke så viktig hvis jeg ikke bor i Tyrkia, men det er egentlig litt viktig selv om jeg bor i Norge og.

INT: ja, hvorfor det?

BAR: ehh, siden hvis jeg skal til Tyrkia i ferien, hvis jeg skal snakke sånn ordentlig med en person og hvis sier jeg feil så blir ikke det noe alright liksom.

The boy in Example 9.24 and the girl in Example 9.25 both explained that when they are in Turkey and speak with someone there, they want to be able to speak and answer “properly.” Child 17 stated that this is in order for the other person to understand what he means, while Child 22 said that if she were to say it wrong, it “*won't be alright.*” That is, the talk illustrated the notion that, when visiting their heritage country, the children ascribed importance to their Turkish language skills, because they wanted to communicate in Turkish in ways that allowed for mutual comprehension with their interlocutors.

In Example 9.25, the girl also started by saying that knowing Turkish is not that important if she does not live in Turkey, but then said that it is still a little important since she may go there on holiday. Another child had a similar reflection around where and why Turkish is important even if you live in Norway:

Example 9.26, Child 1 (T/B/Classroom 1):

CHI: it is not so very important to speak like fluent Turkish. it is not so very important to speak Turkish.

INT: no. do you think it is very or little that it is not important?

CHI: a little.

INT: yes. why do you think it isn't that important then?

CHI: when I am not in Turkey.

INT: yes. then it isn't so important for you in a way?

CHI: yes, it is important to speak Norwegian. or, there are lots of people that aren't Turkish here in Norway. but then there are lots in [Norwegian hometown] that are Turkish.

BAR: det er ikke så veldig viktig å snakke sånn flytende tyrkisk. det er ikke så veldig viktig å snakke tyrkisk da.

INT: nei. syns du er du syns du det veldig eller litt at det ikke er viktig?

BAR: litt.

INT: ja. hvorfor tenker du at det ikke er så viktig da?

BAR: når jeg ikke er i Tyrkia.

INT: ja. da er det ikke så viktig for deg på en måte?

BAR: ja, det er viktig å snakke norsk. eller, det er mange som ikke er tyrkiske her i Norge. men det er mange i [hjembyen i Norge] som er tyrkiske da.

The boy first stated that it is not that important to speak Turkish fluently. When asked why, he referred to not being in Turkey. The interviewer asked a confirmative question. He then said it is important to speak Norwegian and that not many people in Norway are Turkish before adding that there are actually many who are Turkish in his hometown. The topic was then left, and he did not conclude further on his reflections; however, his talk pointed to how the access to other same L1-speakers in one's hometown or neighborhood may affect the perceived importance of being skilled in one's heritage language. The fact that there are many same L1-speakers in Norway also made the distance to same L1-speakers other than family smaller, and maybe the skills in the language more important.

To sum up, this elaborative theme illustrated the different ways in which the children related the importance of their heritage language to their close connection with members of their ethnic heritage group. Language was brought up as a content marker of belonging to their ethnic heritage group when elaborating on the fixed-choice questions targeting their ethnic identity (e.g., examples 9.14, 9.16, and 9.17), and their attachment to their heredity was brought up as a reason for why being skilled in their heritage language was important (e.g., examples 9.15 and 9.18). The importance of language could be seen in the children's affective relation to their heritage language as part of their connection with their parents (examples 9.18, 9.19, 9.20, and 9.21). Moreover, the closeness of the heritage group was illustrated by children's frequent references to their heritage country and experiences and relationships there. Particularly, some children talked about daily contact and close friendships with peers (cousins) in their heritage country (examples 9.22 and 9.23). The examples illustrated how, despite distance, the relationships the children had with peers in their heritage country constituted a close and continuous part of the children's social worlds and their context of developing and demonstrating knowledge and experience. The children also explicitly referred to the desire to be able to communicate at a "*proper level*" when encountering same L1-speakers in their heritage country (examples 9.24 and 9.25). This underscored the closeness of the heritage country as a significant sociolinguistic context to the children and their perceived need to develop good skills in their heritage language in order to be part of it. The child in Example 9.26, who in his reflection upon the importance of knowing his heritage language concluded that there are actually a lot of Turkish-speakers close to him—despite living in Norway—also underscored how close



access to a larger group of heritage language speakers may enforce the importance of the heritage language.

The reflections about whether the heritage language is or is not important when living in Norway displayed in examples 9.25 and 9.26 can be said to contain a notion of distance from the heritage group. In the next section, I look further into how the children's talk also contained an awareness of a distance from the extended family and heritage country.

#### 9.2.4 Awareness of a distance from heritage country and from peers living there

In this elaborative theme, I highlight that there were voices in the children's talk that contained a notion of distance from their heritage country and their relations there, demonstrating that their sense of belonging to the heritage country can be more complex. One of the children who identified with being more Norwegian than Pakistani was asked if he could tell more about why he saw himself as more Norwegian:

Example 9.27, Child 29 (U/B/Classroom 10):

CHI: uh, I am not so much, I'm not very, a little like, I am a little more Norwegian if you understand. because I've nearly never been in Pakistan. only three times in my whole life. that's not a lot really.

BAR: ehh, jeg er ikke så mye, jeg er ikke så masse, litt sånn, jeg er mer litt sånn norsk, hvis du skjønner. for jeg har nesten aldri vært i Pakistan. det er bare tre ganger jeg har vært der i hele mitt liv. det er ikke så masse egentlig.

The boy first seemed to stumble a bit when he was to provide an explanation for why he saw himself as more Norwegian. His relating to the interviewer— "*if you understand*"—also suggests that he was investigating his attachment as he was talking and that he was trying to come up with a comprehensible response. He said that he is a little more Norwegian and added that this is because he has only very rarely been in Pakistan, referring to three visits to Pakistan during his whole life as not being that much. His lack of visits to his heritage country might have led to a perception of distance from his heritage country and people there. This boy was also one of the children who most consistently said that he preferred the Norwegian language and that he was not skilled in his L1. In Example 7.24 he said, "*It would have been a bit cooler if I could speak Urdu better. then I could speak with more of my family.*" In this way, his lack of Urdu skills over the years might also have been an obstacle to his establishment and maintenance of more profound relationships with family members in Pakistan from a distance.

However, there were also children who disposed a view of themselves as more regular users of the heritage language and expressed an intension of maintaining the heritage language and who still brought up a notion of distance in their talk related to the heritage country. For instance, Child 54—who in Example 9.7 said she wanted to become

someone who knows both languages, in Example 8.18 described how she received bilingual support from her brother during homework, in Example 9.11 said she wanted to teach Urdu to her family in the future, and said in Example 9.3 that Norwegian is more important than any language—here identified with being more Norwegian than Pakistani and explained why:

Example 9.28, Child 54 (U/G/Classroom 12):  
CHI: since I'm born here, I know more about Norway than about Pakistan. I don't know the names of all the cities and everything.

BAR: siden jeg er født her så vet jeg mer om Norge enn om Pakistan. jeg vet ikke hva alle byene heter og alt.

The girl here referred to a distance from her heritage country, reflecting her lack of knowledge about the country. In this way, despite relating differently to their use of and skills in their heritage language, the children in examples 9.27 and 9.28 both related their stronger identification with being Norwegian to a perceived distance from their heritage country, either as a lack of experience with (Example 9.27) or knowledge about (Example 9.28) the country.

The next example illustrates how visits to the heritage country and meeting family there can provoke thoughts related to belongingness. The girl in the example was going to a wedding and was excited to go, because she had only been to Pakistan twice before. Because of her enthusiasm, the interviewer dwelt upon talking with her about her expectations of meeting family and her heritage country. She was happy to go, but she was also a bit apprehensive, and the interviewer asked why:

Example 9.29, Child 13 (U/G/Classroom 5):

CHI: I'm dreading meeting them because they know me, because I've had lots of friends. I wonder what they are going to think of me and everything. it'll be kind of embarrassing if I come back the first day. because I come from Norway and Pakistan is a little different to Norway.

(She explains that there are no hills in Pakistan, and there is sand, and brick houses, and that it will be strange to go there.)

CHI: and I wonder what the others are going to think.

INT: yes. what do you think they are going to think about you? do you think they will think you're different?

CHI: yes.

INT: how?

CHI: because when I was little, when I was little and I went in first grade, when we traveled I was really small. so I don't think they will remember me now.

BAR: jeg gruer meg litt til å møte dem fordi de kjenner meg, fordi jeg har hatt mange venninner. jeg lurer på åssen de kommer til å tenke om meg og alt sammen. det blir på en måte litt sånn flaut hvis jeg kommer tilbake den første dagen. for jeg kommer fra Norge og Pakistan er litt annerledes enn Norge.

(hun beskriver at det ikke er noen bakker I Pakistan, at det er sand der, og mursteinshus, og at det blir rart å komme dit)

BAR: også lurer jeg på åssen de andre kommer til å tenke.

INT: ja. hva tror du de kommer å tenke om deg da? tror du de kommer til å synes du er annerledes?

BAR: ja.

INT: hvordan da?

BAR: fordi når jeg var liten, når jeg var liten når jeg gikk i første, da vi reiste så da var jeg bare kjempe liten. så da jeg tror ikke de husker meg nå så.

The excerpts in Example 9.29 illustrate how the girl was excited about going to visit her family after a long time, while simultaneously wondering what it would be like to meet them again. She seemed to have her peers in mind. She started by saying that they “*know me*” and continued by saying that she had “*had lots of friends,*” and said “*I wonder what they are going to think of me and everything.*” It could be that she intentionally started to say that they (i.e., her friends) know her, but realizing that it had been a while, she referred to the past and specified that she had *had* many friends before. She obviously wondered how they would think of her when they saw her again. She said it would be a bit embarrassing the first day she returns, because she comes from Norway, and Pakistan is different from Norway. In this way, she related her wondering about the reunion to the differences in characteristics between the country where she lives and the country where her friends live and seemed to wonder how they would perceive this difference. In the subsequent paragraph, she also touched upon the time that has passed since the last time she saw her friends. She said she was small the last time she was there and that her friends may not remember her now— “*remember*” may refer more to recognizing her, due to the time that had passed. In this way, the girl’s talk implied how time and distance can make it difficult to establish continuation in relationships with extended family (peers) in the heritage country. The girl was further asked whether she thought that people will notice that she is actually living in Norway when she goes to Pakistan. She said yes, and explained:

Example 9.30, Child 13 (U/G/Classroom 5):

CHI: because when we go to Pakistan, we don’t normally wear Pakistani clothing. or, I don’t wear it, so they look at me in a way, and the Pakistani children just go out in a way that I don’t.

INT: oh right, go out on the street you mean, or what do you mean?

CHI: they go out on the street and they have bare feet and dirty clothes. when I go out I’m clean and with hair ties, so you can say that they look at me strangely.

BAR: fordi at når vi pleier å gå til Pakistan så pleier vi ikke å ta på pakistanske klær. eller, jeg pleier ikke å gjøre det, da ser de på en måte på meg, og de pakistanske barna på en måte bare går ut og det gjør liksom ikke jeg.

INT: å ja, går ut på gata, eller hva mener du?

BAR: de går ut på gata og de har åpen fot, sånn skitne klær. når jeg går ut ren og med strikk på, da ser de noe rart på meg kan man si.

The girl here referred to some differences she had observed between herself and her peers in Pakistan. She based her comparison on concrete characteristics, such as the landscape (above), clothes, hair ties and footwear. At the same time, one can see in the examples how she refers to how “*they*” will respond to this difference, and she anticipated them to “*look at me strangely*” when she turned up with clean clothes and hair ties in her hair. In this way, her talk continued to contain references to viewing and being viewed by peers who are similar, yet different from her.

Aspects of attachment to a country other than the country in which one lives was brought up by Child 28 in her talk about travelling to Turkey. In examples 7.24 and 9.16, she identified strongly with liking being Turkish and that Turkish was an important part of her, and she mentioned speaking and reading Turkish as what she liked about being Turkish. She also found it very important to be able to speak Turkish well and related this to her use of Turkish with her mother. When talking about going to Turkey, she expressed more distance:

Example 9.31, Child 28 (T/G/Classroom 10):

CHI: I don't like travelling to Turkey, because I am afraid of the flying.

INT: (...). but when you've arrived in Turkey, do you like to be there then?

CHI: not a lot because it's so warm. (...). because, you know, it's a lot like sun and I don't like. I only like snow.

(she then describes how she plays with her cousin, and the interviewer asks if it is hard to understand everything in Turkish when they play)

CHI: she, you know, I don't know, just I don't really know all of Turkish. she speaks to me right, *what does that mean? what does that mean?* right. and I don't understand her. and I answer in Norwegian, right, and then she says *what does it mean? I don't understand Norwegian.* then I have to tell Mommy.

BAR: jeg liker ikke å reise til Tyrkia fordi jeg er redd fra flyen.

INT: (...). men når du har kommet fram til Tyrkia da, liker du å være der da?

BAR: ikke så mye fordi det er så varmt. (...). Fordi, ikke sant, det er mye sånn sol og jeg liker ikke. jeg liker bare snø.

(beskriver hvordan hun leker med kusina si og intervjueren spør om det er vanskelig å forstå alt på tyrkisk når de leker)

BAR: henne, ikke sant, jeg vet ikke, bare jeg vet ikke sånn hele tyrkisk. henne snakker til meg, ikke sant, *hva betyr det? hva betyr det?* ikke sant. og jeg skjønner ikke henne. og jeg svarer norsk, ikke sant, også sier hun *hva betyr det? jeg skjønner ikke norsk.* da må jeg si det til mamma.

This example first illustrates how long distance travelling per se may represent something children do not necessarily associate with as being pleasant; the girl mentioned that she does not like travelling to Turkey because she is afraid of flying. When the interviewer later asked her about how she felt about being in Turkey, after arrival, she said that she does not like it so much, because it is warm there; she likes the snow better. In this way, she demonstrated a lack of preference for the climate in her heritage country. Furthermore, when prompted about how she felt about speaking in Turkish during play with her peers in Turkey, her response suggested how communication is not necessarily fluent due to the differences in language skills among the children and that she needs to involve her mother in the conversation. Examples 9.30 and 9.31 also illustrate how a positive attachment to one's group may not necessarily involve identification with all the markers of belonging to that group.

The next two examples further display how the children's talk about their attachment revolved around peer relationships. The first child had just responded that he identified with

being more Norwegian, and the interviewer followed up and asked him what he liked about being Norwegian:

Example 9.32, Child 49 (U/B/Classroom 12):

CHI: being here and you know, when I go to Pakistan, I only have two or three friends there, so I have more friends here than there. so really I prefer to be here. and there. mostly here.

BAR: å være her og ikke sant når jeg går til Pakistan, så har jeg bare to eller tre venner der, så jeg har mer venner her enn der. så jeg har egentlig lyst å være her. og der. mest her.

The boy here emphasized how his friendships in Norway are of value to him, and compared his friendships in Norway with his friendships in Pakistan. The fact that he had more friends in Norway attached him to Norway, and he said that he actually preferred being in Norway—also being in Pakistan (“*there*”)—but mostly in Norway. Another child brought up a similar reflection when he talked about visiting Pakistan:

Example 9.33, Child 42 (U/B/Classroom 11):

CHI: I don't always want to go to Pakistan.

INT: oh no? but you have been there?

CHI: yes. just 2, 4, 3 times. there was one time we were supposed to go to Pakistan, but I didn't want to, so Mommy said that us two could stay at home. my brother and father went.

INT: was there a special reason you didn't want to go?

CHI: uh yes. I wanted to be with my friends here. because I was meant to start playing matches. I play cricket, and it was in Sweden. we were supposed to play matches. lots of matches.

BAR: det er ikke alltid jeg vil dra til Pakistan da.

INT: å nei? men du har vært der?

BAR: ja. bare 2, 4, 3 ganger. det var en dag vi skulle dra til Pakistan, men jeg hadde ikke lyst, så mamma sa vi to kan være hjemme. broren min og faren min gikk.

INT: var det noen spesiell grunn til at du ikke hadde lyst, eller?

BAR: ehh jo. jeg hadde lyst til å være med vennene mine her. fordi jeg skulle begynne med sånne kamper. jeg går på sånn landhockey, også det var i Sverige. vi skulle spille kamper. mange kamper.

In this passage, the boy said that he did not always want to go to Pakistan and explained that he preferred to participate in a cricket tournament with his friends in Norway instead of going to Pakistan, and that due to this request, he and his mother stayed in Norway while his brother and father went to Pakistan. The boy also said he had been to Pakistan only a few times, implying that he had had few meeting points with peers in his heritage country. Examples 9.32 and 9.33 both illustrated how children made peer friendships and peer attachments—or the lack thereof—relevant as significant markers of belonging when talking about their attachment to their heritage country.

To sum up, this elaborative theme underscored the notion of distance in the children's talk about their attachment to their heritage country. The distance was partly related to a lack of experience with (examples 9.27 and 9.29) and knowledge about (Example 9.28) the heritage country as well as perceived differences between the heritage country and their home country, Norway (Example 9.29). What was evident from the

children's talk was also the relational aspect of the children's sense of belonging. Some of the children's talk implied challenges in building continuous relationships from a distance (examples 9.27 and 9.29) and an awareness of being similar yet different from their peers in the heritage country (examples 9.30 and 9.31). In addition, the children's attachment to their activities and peers in Norway were sometimes seen as providing the children with a stronger attachment to being Norwegian than to their ethnic heritage group (examples 9.32 and 9.33). Lack of language skills might reinforce such a distance. In this way, the importance of language skills in building relationships with and hence strengthening the attachment to one's ethnic heritage group was implied. Finally, the elaborative theme highlighted that a positive attachment to one's ethnic heritage group and the importance of the heritage language may not necessarily involve an identification with all the markers of belonging to that group (examples 9.28, 9.30, and 9.31).

### 9.2.5 Awareness of being “bilanguagers”

Thus far, the themes have revolved around the importance of each language separately or in relation to the connection between the heritage language and the sense of belonging to one's ethnic heritage group. In this final elaborative theme, I illuminate how there were children who challenged this one language-one group or heritage language versus the majority language dichotomies and rather related their belonging to their ethnic heritage group to their bilingual identities, as illustrated in the two following examples:

Example 9.34, Child 5 (T/G/Classroom 4):

CHI: I think it is an important part of me [being Turkish].

INT: is it very important or just a little bit?

CHI: I think it is a very important part.

INT: very important. can you tell me why that is the case?

CHI: because, like, one knows two languages, yeah, because one knows two languages.

BAR: jeg synes det er en viktig del [å være tyrkisk].

INT: er det en veldig viktig del eller litt viktig del?

BAR: jeg synes det er veldig viktig del.

INT: veldig viktig del ja, kan du si noe om hvorfor det eller?

BAR: fordi man liksom kan to språk, ja fordi man kan to språk og vet ja.

Example 9.35, Child 56 (U/G/Classroom 12):

BAR: sometimes I like being Norwegian, other times not. it's the same with Urdu, too.

INT: (...). do you want to tell more about that, what you're thinking about?

CHI: no. I like being both, it's fun to be both. I can learn two languages. that's fun. I like to be two, to be from two countries, so I know how to speak both. and teach.

BAR: noen ganger liker jeg å være norsk, noen ganger ikke. det er det samme med urdu også.

INT: (...). er det noe mer du vil fortelle om det eller, hva du tenker da?

BAR: nei. jeg liker å være begge deler. morsomt å være begge. lære to språk kan jeg liksom. det er morsomt. jeg liker det å være to, å være fra to land så kan jeg snakke begge deler. og lære bort.

In Example 9.34, the girl said that she believed being Turkish was a very important part of her, because “*one knows two languages.*” In Example 9.35, Child 56 said she sometimes liked to be Norwegian, sometimes not, and that it was the same with Urdu. When asked if she wanted to explain more about this, she added that she likes to be both, that it is fun to be both, and that she can learn two languages: “*I like to be two, to be from two countries so I know how to speak both. and teach.*” In this way, the children both related their heritage background to being provided with an additional language and becoming bilingual. Child 56 added that she could also teach, underscoring that she perceived her bilingualism as a resource (see also Section 9.2.2 about the perceived possibility of using the heritage language for employment in the future).

Furthermore, in Example 9.32, the girl’s way of expressing herself (“*one*”) implied a more general idea of the fact that people with another ethnic and linguistic background know two languages. The following two excerpts also illustrate how the children saw their bilingualism as a distinction between them and others:

Example 9.36, Child 13 (U/G/Classroom 5):

CHI: uh, yes I think a little, uh, think in a way I’m lucky to have two languages. it’s not many who do anyway so.

BAR: ehh, ja. jeg tenker litt, ehh, tenker på at jeg er på en måte heldig som kan to språk så. det er ikke mange som kan uansett så.

Example 9.37, Child 45 (U/G, Classroom 11):

CHI: that people who have parents that are born in another country have another language, more languages than those with parents who are born in Norway.

BAR: at de som har foreldre født i et annet land de kan et annet språk, flere språk enn de som er født i Norge.

In the first example, Child 13 said that she feels lucky to know two languages and that there are not that many who know two languages. In the latter example, Child 45 stated that those who have parents born in another country know more languages than those born in Norway. In this way, the girls demonstrated how they saw their bilingualism as a constituting marker of belonging vis-à-vis others.

In a similar vein, there were also children who underscored a multilingual identity by referring to their learning of multiple languages:

Example 9.38, Child 35 (T/G/Classroom 11):

CHI: I like being Turkish.

INT: do you like it a little or a lot?

CHI: a lot. it’s pretty nice. then you know more languages. Turkish and Norwegian. and soon I’ll learn lots of English and stuff.

BAR: jeg liker å være tyrkisk.

INT: liker du det litt eller veldig?

BAR: veldig. det er litt sånn fint. da vet man mange sånn språk. tyrkisk og norsk. og snart skal jeg lære masse engelsk og sånt.

Example 9.39, Child 10 (T/G/Classroom 5):

CHI: uh, I think its good. it makes it a bit different. and then started like in different things. and here at school i learn English and together that is sort of many languages.

BAR: ehh, jeg synes det er bra. det blir litt annerledes. og da begynte litt sånn på forskjellige ting. og her på skolen så lærer jeg engelsk og det er liksom mange språk til sammen.

Example 9.40, Child 56 (U/G/Classroom 12):

CHI: it is not that important though. maybe I want to learn other languages and then I can, you know, learn those other languages. I don't need to know the language [urdu] perfectly.

BAR: det er ikke så sånn viktig da. kanskje jeg har lyst til å lære andre språk, ikke sant, og da kan jeg liksom lære dem andre språkene. jeg trenger ikke å kunne det språket [urdu] helt bra.

Again, in Example 9.39, a child brought up a positive notion of difference related to her background and referred to her learning of multiple languages, including English. In the final example, Child 56 devaluated the importance of learning her heritage language, Urdu, well against her interest in learning other languages. Hence, the example recalls how the importance of the first language is affected by the children's introduction to and opportunities to learn a third and a fourth language as they grow older.

In the examples presented thus far, bilingualism and multilingualism have been described as positive traits; as a resource, as something they are or have that others are not or do not have; something positively different. In this regard, I present a paragraph where a child introduced the term "bilanguagers" ("tospråkere") to describe himself and his kind. The example captures a way of identifying one's particular bi- or multilingualism and stems from the child's talk about the linguistic background of his friends. In his talk, he highlighted the challenging aspect of the specific linguistic position of being a bilanguager:

Example 9.41, Child 4 (T/B/Classroom 3):

CHI: they are bilanguagers. many who are bilanguagers, but not Turkish.  
[...]  
CHI: it's really quite difficultly being bilanguager.  
INT: is it?  
CHI: yes in school. a little.  
INT: why?  
CHI: because you have to learn three different languages. your own language, and Norwegian, and then English. but those that aren't bilingual, just English and Norwegian. it's easier for them.

BAR: de er tospråkere. mange som er tospråkere, men ikke tyrkiske.  
[...]  
BAR: egentlig det er litt vanskelig å være tospråker.  
INT: er det det?  
BAR: ja i skolen. litt.  
INT: hvordan da?  
BAR: fordi du må lære tre forskjellige språk. din egen språk, også norsk, også engelsk. men de som er ikke tospråkere, bare engelsk og norsk. de har det lettere.

In this example, Child 4 first broke down the distinction between children with different language backgrounds and encompassed children into a larger group of "bilanguagers" ("*many who are bilanguagers, but not Turkish.*"). With "bilanguagers," the boy referred to his friends who share the common feature of having to learn three different



languages (“*your own language, and Norwegian, and then English.*”). The use of the term “*your own*” language underscored the personal connotation ascribed to heritage languages. Furthermore, he specifically related this identity to the school context and the different learning conditions faced by the bilanguagers compared to those who are not bilanguagers. He referred to it as hard to be a bilanguager because you have to learn three different languages, while those who are not bilanguagers only need to learn two languages, which he believed is easier. It should be noted that this is the boy from Example 8.8, who seemed to experience some challenges regarding learning Norwegian. In the present example, the use of the term bilanguagers as a distinction towards others underscores his strong identity as possessing different linguistic repertoires and facing different challenges than other language learners.

There were also other children whose talk can shed light of an awareness of the realities of maintaining a heritage language. In the two final examples, the children attended to how a maintained and continued bilingual development involves effort in order to continue learning the heritage language:

Example 9.42, Child 37 (T/G/Classroom 11):

INT: she finds it important to speak Turkish very well, while she does not find it that important to speak Turkish very well. are any of them like you?  
 CHI: if i speak Turkish, I dont forget Turkish. (...). but if I do not speak Turkish, I forget some words.

INT: hun synes at det er viktig å kunne snakke tyrkisk veldig godt, mens hun synes ikke det er ikke så viktig å kunne snakke tyrkisk veldig godt. er det noen av de som ligner på deg?

BAR: hvis jeg snakker tyrkisk, så glemmer jeg ikke tyrkisk. (...). men hvis jeg ikke snakker tyrkisk, så glemmer jeg noen ord.

Example 9.43, Child 42 (U/B/Classroom 11):

CHI: if you are Pakistani, then its good for you to be able to speak Pakistani. and read and write it. right now I am trying to practice all the letters and writing.

BAR: hvis man er pakistansk, da er det litt bra at man kan pakistansk. og å lese og skrive. akkurat nå så prøver jeg å øve alle bokstavene og skrive.

The talk in the two examples brought up the notion of having to practice a language in order to retain a language. In Example 9.42, the girl displayed a perception of having to speak Turkish in order not to forget the language, or in order to be able to speak it more fully (“*if I do not speak Turkish, I forget some words.*”). In the latter example, the boy referred to his present attempt to practice the letters and the writing of Urdu, bringing in a perception of the need to make an effort to gain more skills in the language.

To sum up, the examples in this final elaborative theme displayed how the children brought up a positive attachment to their ethnic heritage group related to the group

membership providing them with an additional language and with a bilingual (examples 9.34 and 9.35) or multilingual (examples 9.38, 9.39 and 9.40) identity. Inherent in some of the children's talk was a clear distinction between themselves—the bi- or multilinguals—and others (examples 9.36, 9.37, 9.39, and 9.41). This was particularly underscored in the talk by the boy who introduced the term ‘bilanguager’ in Example 9.41. With this term, he made a clear distinction between the different learning conditions faced by the bilanguagers (those who have to learn three languages) and those who are not bilanguagers (those who just have to learn two languages). Inherent in the talk was a sense of belonging to a group that possesses specific linguistic repertoires and faces specific challenges in language acquisition and learning. Together with the two final examples (examples 9.42 and 9.43), the talk recalls how the realities of bilingualism and multilingualism may be perceived as more strenuous by some children than by others and that it involves effort to maintain and continue developing an L1–L2 bilingualism.

### 9.3 Summary and discussion

In this Chapter, I have addressed how the children perceived the importance of possessing skills in their two languages (RQ 3). I first presented how the children rated the importance of being able to speak Turkish/Urdu and Norwegian well (RQ 3a) before I presented five elaborative themes regarding the roles of language as a skill and as a marker of belonging (RQ 3b). In the following, I summarize and discuss the results.

Regarding the children's ratings of the importance of knowing how to speak their languages well (RQ 3a), all but one child rated being able to speak Norwegian well to be important, and the vast majority (80.4%) identified strongly with this idea (Table 9.1). Regarding the importance of Turkish and Urdu, the majority of the children responded that knowing how to speak Turkish/Urdu well was important, but fewer children (50.0%) identified strongly with this perception, and more children (19.7%) responded that they did not find being able to speak Turkish or Urdu well to be important (Table 9.1). That is, the children as a group were more unitary about the importance of possessing good skills in Norwegian than they were about the importance of possessing good skills in their heritage language. Such a pattern resembles the findings in the studies by Jean (2011) and Zhang (2008) in the US and Mills (2001) and Thomas et al. (2014) in the UK and supports the notion that when children who grow up as language minority bilinguals reach middle childhood, they ascribe a less questionable importance to the majority language than they do to the heritage language. The five elaborative themes illustrating the children's perceptions

of the roles of language as a skill and as a marker of belonging (RQ 3b) shed further light on this pattern in the children's choices.

The first elaborative theme—*the awareness of the need for good Norwegian skills to succeed – in Norway*—highlighted underlying ideas about the great importance of the Norwegian language in comparison to the heritage language. Overall, the talk contained the notion of a desire to succeed in Norwegian society as reflected in the children's talk about the role of Norwegian language skills in their achievement of inclusion and independence. The children's talk about their need for Norwegian language skills was strongly related to their desire to meet the linguistic demands across a range of areas in the larger society and implied a strong awareness of the consequences of not meeting these demands regarding their membership in Norwegian society. The desire to achieve inclusion and independence—to participate and to manage without help—suggested an early awareness of the personal consequences of not being able to meet the linguistic requirements in salient life contexts and a subsequent motivation to learn the societal language well. In this way, the talk presented in this theme underscored the notion that the children's language attitudes are related to their beliefs about the skills demanded of them in order to achieve a necessary level of communicative competence—that is, related to the “force of the situation,” as suggested by Edwards (2013) and Grosjean (2008). The talk within this theme also underscored the relationship between language attitudes and the children's desire to fit in and their motivation to learn the language of the groups in which they desire membership, as was found by Jean (2011) and Wong Fillmore (2000). This study adds to this idea that the concern about group membership is not only regarding membership in peer groups at the present but also regarding membership in important institutions such as education and the labor market in their country of residence. As Child 54 put it (Example 9.3): If you want to be something in Norway, Norwegian is more important than any other language.

The second theme—*Awareness of the need for Turkish/Urdu skills in education and employment*—added a nuance to the children's awareness of the superior role of the Norwegian language compared to the heritage language as a warranted competence for employment. The talk within this theme highlighted that some children brought up the possibility of using their L1 as a tool in future jobs in Norway, for instance, as a bilingual teacher or when working in the mosque. These perspectives reflected the idea of how heritage language skills can be seen as a relevant tool in coping in a multilingual Norwegian society. Thomas et al. (2014) and Mills (2001), and Kulbrandstad (1997) in Norway, found

similar ideas among the children in their studies, referring to it as functional or instrumental reasons for children to continue developing their L1 skills at a higher level. Furthermore, the talk indicated that the need for heritage language skills was seen in relation to the possibility of going to school or work in their country of origin in the future. The children's frequent emphasis on Norwegian being important "if and when in Norway" and the references to the possibility of the heritage country becoming the home country in the future may suggest that language minority children become aware early-on of the situated nature of the importance and need for languages. However, the talk can also suggest that the language attitudes of language minority children can include reflections upon where they are to live and belong in the future. In Chapter 10, I return to a discussion of the need to understand and investigate further the role of the children's ideas about their future bilingualism in their present bilingualism.

The third theme—*Awareness of a close connection between language and heritage group*—illustrated the different ways in which the children related the importance of their heritage language to their sense of belonging to their ethnic heritage group. In general, the finding of the strong position of language as a content marker of belonging to one's ethnic heritage group resembles the findings in the studies by Akiba et al. (2004), Feinauer and Cutri (2012), and Rogers and colleagues (2012). That is, the present study confirmed the important role of the heritage language in facilitating their attachment to their ethnic heritage group. The importance of language was particularly found in the children's references to their heritage language as an important part of their connection with their parents. This underscores the significant role of the heritage language as a family language, as found by Feinauer (2006) and Feinauer and Cutri (2012), and resembles the integrative motivation to maintain the heritage language, as found by Kulbrandstad (1997). Furthermore, the children's descriptions of positive feelings towards speaking their heritage language with their parents support the notion that there is an affective aspect inherent in the use of the heritage language between parents and children, as suggested in earlier studies by Oh and Fuligni (2010) and Svendsen (2004). The findings also confirm the strong relation to parents this age; that in middle childhood, children ascribe great importance to their role in the family (Brown et al., 2011).

Moreover, a closeness of the heritage group was illustrated by the children's frequent references to their heritage country and experiences and relationships there as well as their contact with extended family members from a distance. Some children talked about

daily contact and close friendships with peers (cousins) in their heritage country. The examples illustrated how, despite distance, the relationships the children had with their peers in their heritage country constituted a close and continuous part of the children's social worlds and their context of developing and demonstrating knowledge and experience, facilitated by their ability to communicate in their heritage language. This underscored the closeness of the heritage country as a significant sociolinguistic context for the children as well as the children's perceived need to develop good skills in their heritage language to be able to also communicate in this context. The children also brought up a desire to be able to communicate at a "proper level" when encountering same L1-speakers in their heritage country.

At the same time, there were voices implying challenges in building continuous relationships from a distance. The talk suggested that establishment of profound relationships may be facilitated by language skills and experiences of visiting the heritage country, while few meeting points may create a distance, and a lack of heritage language skills might reinforce such a distance. This was illustrated in the fourth elaborative theme—*Awareness of a distance from heritage country and from peers living there*—and implies how sense of belonging is facilitative of, and facilitates heritage language proficiency through contact with heritage language speakers, as argued, for instance, by Imbens-Bailey (1996) and Oh and Fuligni (2010). At the same time, there were voices where children displayed a feeling of distance and identified more as Norwegian despite ascribing great importance to the heritage language. These examples recall how ideas about the importance of the heritage language may not necessarily involve an identification with other markers of belonging to the heritage language group. This is in line with how children in middle childhood conceptualize markers of belonging to social groups as multidimensional, as suggested by Akiba and colleagues (2004) and Marks and colleagues (2007). In addition, what occurred in the children's talk about the notion of distance was the significance of peer attachment in children's sense of belonging. This was seen in an awareness of being similar yet different from their peers in the heritage country and in how the children's attachment to peers in Norway provided children with a stronger attachment to Norway and to being Norwegian than to their ethnic heritage country and group. Thus, the children's talk about belonging in this regard primarily adhered to the significance of profound relationships in establishing identification, specifically with peers.

The final elaborative theme—*Awareness of being “bilanguagers”*—was explored in relation to how the children also saw themselves as bilinguals and multilinguals. Here, the heritage language was discussed as providing the children with an extra language and making them bilingual or multilingual, as opposed to their native Norwegian peers. In this way, they ascribed value to their heritage language due to its role in making them bi- or multilingual, which again marks a difference vis-à-vis peers. In this regard, one of the children introduced the term “bilanguagers” as a group label for children who have to learn three languages instead of “just” two. With this label, the child captured a specific linguistic feature shared by language minority children across linguistic backgrounds. Moreover, another relevant distinction can be drawn from the children’s talk: the distinction between referring to being bilingual or multilingual as an idea about oneself—that is, as identity—as opposed to referring to the process of actually learning two or more languages simultaneously—in other words, bilingualism as reality. Such a distinction may be useful as a contribution to an understanding of the findings by, for instance, Feinauer (2006) and Mills (2001) regarding the lack of a relationship between actual language skills and ethnic identity, but rather that the heritage language plays a symbolic role in ethnic identity.

To conclude regarding RQ 3—*How do the children perceive the importance of their two languages?*—the vast majority of the children found possessing good skills in both their languages to be important, but more children identified strongly with the importance of possessing good Norwegian language skills than with the importance of possessing good L1 skills. The children reflected univocally on the importance of the Norwegian language in relation to their need for succeeding and achieving inclusion and independence in Norway, now and in the future. In a similar vein, the children’s talk about the importance of their heritage language reflected a sense of belonging to their heritage group. In this way, the children’s talk displayed a clear perception of a relationship between language skills and group membership. On the other hand, the children displayed perceptions that challenged the importance of the heritage language as a marker of belonging and as a skill needed when living in Norway. That is, as early as in middle childhood, children were involved in complex reasoning about their present and future need of language skills. Together, the reflections point to the aspects children may take into account when they negotiate their continued learning or maintenance of the first language.

## 10 Being language minority bilingual—exerting sensitivity towards complexity

The present study was guided by the aim of illuminating language minority children's perspectives on being bilingual by addressing the overall question *How do language minority children in the Norwegian context perceive being bilingual?* More specifically, I have responded to this question with an interview study of Turkish-speaking and Urdu-speaking language minority preadolescents growing up in Norway, where the children's perceptions along three aspects of bilingualism were addressed: their language use in communication within families—with parents in particular (RQ 1); their language use with and among same L1-speaking peers in multilingual contexts—at school in particular (RQ 2); and the importance of possessing skills in their two languages—with particular attention to their need for sufficient skills in their languages and the role of language as a marker of belonging (RQ 3). By addressing these topics, the main contribution of the present study was two-fold: It identified how previously studied categories of language use and language attitudes were reflected in a sample of language minority children in Norway and added a broadened understanding of nuances in how language minority children perceive being bilingual in middle childhood.

The children's perceptions, presented in the frequency analyses of their self-ratings and the interpretations of examples from the interviews distributed across 13 elaborative themes, confirm that the bilingualism of language minority children born to immigrants is in transition, juxtaposed between its necessary, temporary, and revitalized conditions. Growing up language minority bilingual and mapping out one's course of bilingualism can be a complex matter, and children are sensitive to this complexity. Furthermore, the analyses have revealed that the children mainly saw their own bilingualism within the family and among peers as relational and dynamic in nature rather than as a global and static quality of their communication. Against this background, the study underscores the importance of acknowledging bilingualism as it unfolds at the individual level; for the individual child and family.

In her study of language minority children's attitudes towards their bilingualism in the US more than two decades ago, Pease-Alvarez (1993) concluded that "Overall, a strong commitment to bilingualism emerges, despite an intergenerational shift toward English" (in the abstract). Similar conclusions can be drawn regarding the results from the present study. Despite the children presenting their language use in accordance with the pattern of less L1

use in communication with their peer generation (siblings and friends) (chapters 7 and 8), and despite the children ascribing a univocal importance to the Norwegian language (Chapter 9), strong voices of a commitment to bilingualism and to bilingual realities were revealed across analyses. In order to summarize the findings of how language minority children perceive being bilingual in this study, I conclude by discussing along three overall observations of the complexity inherent in children's commitment to bilingualism: *on "bilanguagers" and a language learner identity* (10.1), *on one's own bilingualism as inclusive and exclusive in monolingual and multilingual contexts* (10.2), and *on exploring multiple markers of belonging when constructing one's own realities* (10.3). Finally, I point to some important methodological limitations inherent in the present study and implications for practice and future research (10.4).

### **10.1 On "bilanguagers" and language learner identity**

A first overall observation of how the children perceived being bilingual was how their talk was related to a language learner identity. The majority of the children in the sample perceived possessing skills in both their languages to be important (Chapter 9). This pattern suggests that, overall, the children were committed to their bilingualism. Moreover, in Section 9.2.5, the children positioned themselves as bi- or multilinguals vis-à-vis others in relation to being speakers of an additional language other than the majority language and other than English as a foreign language. Here, the children viewed their bilingualism as a positive attribute and skill. In addition, in Section 9.2.2, there were children who spoke of their heritage language skills as a relevant tool in coping in a multilingual Norwegian society. Furthermore, the children also displayed a perception of themselves (and their families) as competent bilinguals in communication with same L1-speakers. The children's ratings of L1 use did reveal that, overall, the children saw their communication with parents, with siblings, and with same L1-speaking peers as bilingual (chapters 7 and 8). The few explicit voices of disruptive communication suggest that adjusting to interlocutors and altering between languages in same L1-speaking contexts is perceived as fluent practices (see discussion in Section 7.3 regarding parent-child communication, and Section 8.3 regarding peer communication).

However, some children spoke of a challenge in engaging bilingually in relation to solving tasks in Norwegian. They found it difficult to talk about their Norwegian school work in their heritage language, when reconstructing what had been learned or in communication about what was to be learned (Section 7.2.2). That is, building bridges



between languages may be demanding rather than a straightforward process. In this regard, one of the most frequently cited children in the sample, Child 4, introduced the label “bilanguagers” (“tospråkere”) in Example 9.41. With “bilanguagers,” he referred to his friends who were not necessarily same L1-speakers but who all shared the common feature of having to learn three different languages (“*your own language, and Norwegian and English.*”) as opposed to those who only have to learn two languages (Norwegian and English). In this way, the boy created an understanding of himself not only as a Turkish-Norwegian bilingual, but also as part of a larger group of equals who possess distinct linguistic repertoires and face different conditions in the process of language acquisition and learning.

A language learner identity also appeared in other children’s talk about their language use in peer contexts. In Section 8.2.1, the children spoke of themselves as language learners in relation to the monolingual norm communicated to them at school. Children mentioned that they were restricted from speaking their heritage language at school, and they perceived this to be due to their need to learn more Norwegian. The affiliation with a language learning group of children was particularly relevant in the use of “we” in Example 8.1: “*we aren’t allowed to speak our mother tongue here. [...]. because our teacher wants us to get better at Norwegian.*” and in Example 8.5: “*because we need to learn mostly Norwegian.*” Simultaneously, the children’s talk also contained the notion of a sufficient level of language skills, which I will illustrate in the following: In Section 7.2.1, the children brought up parental lack of Norwegian skills. In Section 8.2.3, the children discussed their language alternation in relation to not knowing all the words in a language as well as their ability to express themselves differently in their two languages. In sections 9.2.1 and 9.2.3, the children spoke of their desire to possess sufficient skills in each of their languages in order to be able to communicate “properly” with monolingual speakers of the languages—to be able to answer questions correctly, to be independent and manage without help, and to avoid awkward situations due to their incomplete language skills. In Example 7.23, Child 29 referred to how everybody in his family said he couldn’t speak Urdu, while in Example 7.22, Child 12 said he was forced to speak more Urdu. In this way, the children were being assigned identities as struggling learners by others. Furthermore, in Example 9.23, Child 1 referred to being corrected by his cousin in Turkey, and in Example 9.4, Child 53 referred to her need to comprehend “*tricky words*” and to understand “*the words they use.*” Against this background, the children’s emphasis on language skills may reflect

bilingual realities where complete vocabularies in each of their languages cannot be taken for granted, and where children are continuously confronted with a comparison of their skills, vis-à-vis language norms or vis-à-vis the skills of others. This aspect of being bilingual has also been highlighted in other studies where children are found to exert an ability to compare and judge their skills in their languages (Krashen, 1998; Mills, 2001; Snow & Hakuta, 1992), and to be sensitive towards their own language skills (Feinauer, 2006; Jean, 2011).

Moreover, the importance of practicing a language in order to learn the language was highlighted on several occasions in the children's talk—both the Norwegian language and the heritage language (sections 7.2.1, 7.2.3, 8.2.2, and 9.2.5). The talk about language use within the family revolved around the children's language learning and of making an effort to speak more of the language they were to improve (Section 7.2.3). The talk about practicing the language in order to learn a language was also seen in how children spoke of their need to practice Norwegian among peers (Section 8.2.2) and to practice the heritage language in order not to forget it (Section 9.2.5). Moreover, the examples in Section 7.2.3 implied that a change in language use can be challenging when one is encouraged to use a language that one is less in command of and that facilitating language change may be a struggle.

Finally, Chapter 7 and Chapter 9 also revealed a strong emphasis on language minority families as language learning constitutions. In Chapter 7, the children portrayed their parents as second language learners through their talk about parents' needs and attempts to learn the Norwegian language. Children were aware of the consequences of limitations in Norwegian language skills for parental involvement in their children's homework. This awareness was based on observations of parents who were skilled in Norwegian (Example 7.9), parents who were learning Norwegian (examples 7.10 and 7.11), and parents who were struggling with Norwegian and thus were described as unable to attend parental school meetings (Example 9.7) or to support their children in homework (examples 7.26 and 9.8). Acknowledging this, the findings underscore how language minority children grow up in surroundings where language learning is explicated and modeled by their parents and where the practical consequences of continuously being a second language learner are learned from an early age. This may foster a deeper understanding of oneself as someone who needs to learn more Norwegian.

Against this background, despite being born and growing up in Norway, the children's talk in the present study suggested that the children have a sense of belonging to a larger sub-group of language learners. This language learning identity can be seen in relation to a status explicitly ascribed to them by others (teachers and families) as well as their own observations and experiences of lacking complete vocabularies in each language. The language learner identity can also be seen in relation to the possibility that the children see certain sociolinguistic environments—e.g., school and heritage country—as requiring complete skills in each language, suggesting that the children may have high standards and high expectations for their language skills—they can always learn more.

In this regard, it can be noted that in the Jean study (2011) and the Feinauer study (2006), the children related their negative feelings towards speaking a language to their level of proficiency in that language. These studies suggested that individual perceptions of one's own language proficiency are related to the context where the languages are in use. That is, children develop their perceptions of their language skills in comparison with significant others in their surroundings. In the present study, the children's affect towards speaking their languages was not directly addressed. Thus, the study cannot make conclusions as to whether a language learning identity is related to a negative affect towards speaking languages. However, based on the analyses, despite the emphasis on language learning in the children's talk, negative affects did not appear frequently in the talk they were engaged in. In this regard, it may be relevant that the children were recruited from multilingual realities with a substantial number of equals—which may protect the children from developing negative language learner identities. Nevertheless, the findings support the notion made by Alves (2014) regarding the importance of paying attention to developmental and contextual issues particularly relevant for the subpopulation of preadolescents from language minority backgrounds from an early age.

## **10.2 On one's own bilingualism as inclusive and exclusive in monolingual and multilingual contexts**

Wei (2011) has claimed that schools are stakeholders of a double monolingual norm and emphasized how mixing and switching between languages tends to be viewed negatively. Despite their bilingual realities, the children's talk contained both implicit and explicit assumptions of a monolingual learning norm. The prevalence of the language use-language learner notion (see the review in Section 2.1.2) throughout the children's talk (sections 7.2, 8.2.1, and 8.2.2 in particular) suggests an underlying assumption of language learning as

being language specific and advocates a view of comparing language skills vis-à-vis a monolingual norm. This view of bilingualism was criticized by Grosjean (2008, see Section 2.1.3), and devaluates the position of having two languages with complementary qualities in a learning context. A second overall observation in this study of how the children perceived being bilingual can be related to the notion of inclusion and exclusion in monolingual and multilingual contexts.

The monolingual norm perceived by the children as communicated to them at school is in stark contrast, but also a reaction to the intriguing role of the heritage language as a secret displayed in Section 8.2.4, and to the access many children have to use their two languages in the school context, as pointed to in Section 8.2.1. In one way, the expectations from teachers of the sole use of Norwegian by all children at school may contain a message of inclusion—an “invitation” and an expectation to share the lingua franca of the classroom. This message is in line with what the children expressed in this study: They want to be included and to become independent, and see well-developed skills in Norwegian as necessary for their participation at school and in the larger society (Section 9.2.1). Moreover, a monolingual norm may also be inclusive in terms of hindering potentially excluding power negotiations among peers who purposefully juggle between their languages in order to mark in-group and out-group affiliations, as demonstrated in the talk about the delicate topic of secrets and the intriguing role of the heritage language as a secret language in Section 9.2.4. The widespread appearance of talk relating to the social language use norm across classrooms in the present study suggests that this is a crucial topic in multilingual peer contexts.

In this regard, the interview study by Dirim and Hieronymus (2003) with multilingual adolescents pointed to how students who are not L1-speakers may demonstrate a great sensitivity towards not understanding what their friends are talking about in their L1. Wei (2013) on the other hand focused on the multicompetence demonstrated by bilingual children; on how the bilingual children in the classroom he studied creatively and critically chose between “following and flouting” the rules and norms of behaviour and dared to challenge authority and tradition (see Section 2.3 for review). Moreover, previous research has suggested that teachers may perceive children’s use of their L1 as excluding towards them (Svendsen, 2004) and that the authority of the teacher is challenged in multilingual classrooms (Cromdal & Evaldson, 2004; Svendsen, 2004; Wei, 2013). Against this background, the present and previous studies suggest that linguistic power negotiations can

be challenging for both students and teachers, and are difficult for teachers to foresee when they do not share similar linguistic competencies. Monolingual policies serve as a tool to handle the situation and establish “equal” terms for communication.

However, when bilingualism is not included in the official communication and learning sphere, and becomes either an unofficial side activity (see Example 8.5) or a limited monolingual practice, the consequence may be that some children are excluded from communicative practices related to the classroom discourse. The present study emphasizes how children perceived the support they received in their first language—from preparatory work with a teacher in the L1, from a classmate translating in the classroom, or from an L1-speaking parent or sibling when doing school work at home—to help them comprehend and become more active and more secure students in the classroom (8.2.3). It is not clear from the research that gaining Norwegian proficiency needs to be synonymous with an exclusive monolingual approach to learning (Dixon et al., 2012). The present study raises a question revolving around how teachers, parents, and the children themselves can ensure that the children can draw on all their linguistic resources in learning—individually and in their home and school surroundings—while simultaneously creating an inclusive environment. This involves looking for solutions that are not either-or, but rather reflect the nuances inherent in bilingual realities. This may also involve encompassing bilingual learner competencies into the notion of bilingualism as multicompetence (Wei, 2013).

As another concern in this regard, the present study revealed that children emphasized the important role of their peers in their learning of the Norwegian language (Section 8.2.2). The boy in Example 8.9 explicated a concern about his lack of native Norwegian-speaking classmates to improve his Norwegian skills. The boy attended a classroom with several other same L1-speakers and only one native Norwegian-speaker. This concern supports the argument that the willingness to make an effort to speak a language and build relations with native speakers of the language in order to learn a language (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2005; Gardner & Lambert, 1972, see Section 3.1.1) is also relevant at the proximal level in multilinguistic realities. Although not specifically looked into, it can be noted that the overall impression from the interviews was that only a minority of the children actually spoke of their associations with native Norwegian-speaking friends in their spontaneous stories when asked about who their friends were and who they spent time with at school or during leisure time (see interview protocol section 2). This may imply that in some contexts, facilitating relations with native Norwegian speakers is a challenge.

In relation to younger children, Cekaite, Blum-Kulka, Grøver, and Teubal (2014) presented the potentials and drawbacks of learning a second language with and from peers. For instance, children's L2 ability has been found to play a role in social acceptance among peers in studies of younger children (Blum-Kulka & Gorbat, 2014; Rydland et al., 2014b). Peer relations and peer learning is a somewhat intricate pedagogical sphere. As noted by Cekaite et al. (2014), "The teaching potentials of such peer interactions are realized primarily implicitly, rather than as explicit, meta-level educational strategies" (p. 13). The present study supports the notion that we need to advance our knowledge about peer talk and learning in multilingual linguistic contexts, as suggested by Cekaite and colleagues (2014, p. 14), not only in the early years but also in the middle years of primary school. Furthermore, because peer communication in the first and second language inevitably involves the negotiation of children's social positioning, "[c]ontext-sensitive approaches to learning [...] call attention to the diversity of social interactions, participant constellations and relations, including the diverse modes of mutual support, collaboration, or exclusion between peers" (Cekaite et al., 2014, p. 14). The present study specifically points to a need to look further into the potential motivational and inclusive aspects in multilinguistic peer environments. As the girl from Example 8.6 said: *"when you hear other people speaking it [Norwegian] you just really want to like speak it yourself. then you learn other words from the other students."*

### **10.3 On exploring multiple markers of belonging when constructing one's own realities**

A third overall observation of how children perceived being bilingual revolved around an exploration of different markers of belonging when children construct their own realities.

Firstly, the talk revealed how the children actively rather than passively took a stance in relation to exploring their present and future bilingualism. This was found, for instance, in the talk by Child 54 in examples 9.3 and 9.7, who was determined to turn parental experiences of not being able to speak Norwegian into a motivation to "become something" and to be someone who understands. This was also found in the talk by Child 25 in examples 7.26 and 9.8, who was determined to be someone who can read and understand her children's homework. On the other hand, children displayed a great concern for their parents' language learning, expressed, for instance, in examples 7.10 and 7.11, where the children are speaking positively about their mothers' achievement in gaining Norwegian skills. This adds a nuance to the effect on children's language acquisition of

having parents who are themselves second language learners of the majority language. This also demonstrates how children explored how they are similar to yet different from their parents.

Moreover, Section 7.2.3 revealed how children resist and negotiate their continued learning and use of the heritage language with their parents. There was talk that revealed how the children themselves or their siblings took a stance in their strong preference for the Norwegian language: In Example 7.6, Child 1 spoke about his sister resisting her mother's request to speak Turkish; Child 32 in Example 7.19 and Child 13 in Example 7.20 both insisted on their strong preference for the Norwegian language; Child 12 in Example 7.22 kept resisting his sister's attempts to force him to speak Urdu; and Child 27 in Example 8.10 spoke about her brother who did not want any Turkish-speaking friends. In this way, the children's voices contained a strong notion of them constructing their own linguistic realities. The voice of autonomy can be seen in relation to how parents in the Parada study (2013) suggested that siblings had unique personal connections with their heritage language. The voice of autonomy also reflects the element of a choice inherent in the model of language attitudes as the willingness to communicate in a language when free to choose to do so proposed by MacIntyre et al. (1998, see section 3.1.1).

Secondly, in previous studies involving children as participants, children's concern about group membership has been highlighted (Jean, 2011; Svendsen, 2004). Children have been described to move along shifting alliances and describe themselves in terms of a range of markers such as their personality traits (e.g., smart, funny), their favorite age- and school-related activities, their grade level, or their family roles as well as ethnicity and gender (e.g., Akiba et al., 2004; Brown & Turner, 2007; Brown et al., 2011; Feinauer, 2006). Observations of children have also illustrated how children position themselves on a range of locally valued identities, for instance, ethnicity, learner identity, and gender identity, demonstrating the multi-layered aspects of identities (Cekaite & Evaldsson, 2008; Svendsen, 2004). The talk demonstrated by the children in the present study supports the notion that the peer group constitutes an important social category in middle childhood and that children relate to multiple peer group identity markers. In Section 8.2.5, the children's talk illustrates a strong concern about belonging to their class, their gender, and their friendships; a concern about their academic achievements vis-à-vis peers; and a concern about their role as active participants in their classroom. In Section 9.2.4, the children's talk about their stronger identification with being Norwegian than with their ethnic heritage

group was connected with the importance of peer attachment. Moreover, the talk implied how time and distance can make it difficult to establish continuation in relationships with extended family (peers) in the heritage country. In this way, the present study also underscores how bilingualism is intertwined with the broader social identity development of children in middle childhood. The findings in the present study suggest that peer group belonging and personal relationships are important in understanding language minority children's language use with peers.

Thirdly, the children's talk also contained an exploration of their future need of their languages, that is, of how they were to construct their bilingual realities in the future. For instance, the perspectives on the need of the heritage language in future education and employment in Section 9.2.2 reflected an idea of how skills in their heritage language can be incorporated as a relevant competence in a multilingual Norwegian society. In Example 9.10, the girl said that she could *“be something like you, to speak to Turkish children and kids from other countries and stuff, and explain if they don't understand words in Turkish and stuff.”* Inherent in this idea is an awareness of how some children need explanations across languages in order to understand and that she has the necessary linguistic skills to contribute. At the same time, other children pointed out that being fluent in the heritage language may not be more important in the future than learning other foreign languages (e.g., Example 9.40). That is, children take into consideration the opportunities to learn other languages as well, and explore their commitment to a continued L1–L2 bilingualism.

This study did not account for how future perspectives may affect children's present attitudes towards their languages. However, the findings suggest that the children have ideas about their future need of their languages alongside their awareness of present linguistic demands of their language competencies. Many scholars within the cultural psychology tradition affiliate with an understanding of children and childhood in relation to past and future experiences. It is claimed that *“Every phase of life is embedded in—and gains meaning from—both past events and anticipated events in the future”* (Gulbrandsen, 2012, p. 5). In their conceptual review of the multidimensionality of social (or collective) identities, Ashmore and colleagues (2004) suggested that the content and meaning of a person's identification with a group can be addressed through developmental narratives. They describe narratives as the *“collective identity story”*—the *“story of me as a group member”*—that is, the individual's mentally represented narrative of self as a member of a particular social group, and state that *“[...] a collective identity story includes thoughts,*



feelings, and images about the past (my past as a member of the group), the present (where the person is now and the role that social category membership plays in that current reality), and the future (where the person hopes or fears he or she will likely go in the future)” (p. 96). The present study suggests that knowledge derived from such a narrative approach to studying children’s perspectives could provide us with a further understanding of potential risk and protective factors relevant to language minority children’s learning and social development.

#### **10.4 Methodological limitations and concluding remarks**

The specific way of investigating children’s perspectives applied in the present study, where fixed-choice questions were presented in a combination with follow-up questions and a more open-ended approach, represent specific strengths and limitations in relation to retrieving information about the investigated phenomena. The strength of the approach is that it allows an investigation into how children relate to specific categories and that children get individually tailored support in order to respond to the questions presented to them. In this way, the credibility of the approach to capture the constructs investigated as they apply to the individual child is increased. The limitation of the approach is that the conditions under which children are to rate themselves on various categories are not as equal as when provided with a questionnaire. Thus, the reliability of the frequency of self-ratings of language use and language attitudes in the material is threatened, limiting the suitability of the approach to compare children’s self-ratings with previous and future studies applying similar categories. However, the fact that the patterns of children’s self-ratings were in accordance with reports in previous studies applying similar interview approaches to investigate similar topics (Feinauer, 2006; Jean, 2011) supports the ability of the embedded fixed-choice method to capture variances in the investigated phenomena.

Furthermore, the present study reflected the experiences made by other researchers investigating children’s perspectives through individual interviews; When children are presented with closed questions and predefined categories of the targeted topic, many children spontaneously feel the need to elaborate and explain their choice outside of the given categories (Feinauer, 2006; Feinauer & Cutri, 2012). Moreover, when children are prompted to explain their choices of categories, responses range from no elaborations to elaborations containing multiple aspects and abstract reflections of the investigated phenomena (e.g. Feinauer & Cutri, 2012; Akiba et al., 2004). This variation also appeared

in the present interviews, suggesting a possible bias inherent in interview studies towards representing the perspectives of more talkative children.

The current study was conducted in Norwegian only. A bilingual mode in the interviews might have elicited a different type of conversation and made different aspects of bilingualism relevant. However, the children had all attended Norwegian schools since Grade 1, and I have no reason to believe that the interviews being conducted in Norwegian substantially affected the children's responses. Rather, the children displayed a variety of conceptions held about the investigated topics, implying that the interview condition served to capture nuances within a broad range of aspects related to being bilingual.

Furthermore, as a qualitative researcher, I might have been more sensitive towards particular voices in the sample when searching for patterns and themes. In particular, as a female researcher, I might have been more sensitive towards the girls' talk regarding some of the topics (e.g. regarding the intriguing role of L1 as a secret language), suggesting a possible bias towards missing out on boy's perspectives on these topics. This study looked at the children as a group and is limited from adhering systematically to more distal group categories in the sample, that is, gender, language group (Turkish- and Urdu-speakers), and school- and classroom background. Systematic analyses comparing the Turkish-speaking and Urdu-speaking groups, children from different school- and classroom contexts, and/or gender could have added to our understanding of possible group differences in perceptions of being bilingual.

In addition, the study did not systematically look into how language skills affect children's perceptions. Moreover, the data revealed both across-case and within-case discrepancies and nuances in perceptions of language use and language attitudes. Additional in-depth analyses of children's talk in specific cases from the sample could have contributed even further to capturing multivoiced as well as contextual qualities inherent in individual children's meaning making (see, for example, Ulvik, 2014, for a discussion of alternative approaches to talking with children and conceptualizing their meaning making). In a similar vein, the present design did not take into account that children's reflections are time-, age- and context-specific. Future research could involve longitudinal studies, where children's perceptions are followed over a longer period in order to address developmental aspects of how children perceive being bilingual. Finally, this study suggests that when investigating language minority bilingualism among children, peer group belonging is important. Future research would benefit from exploring the perspectives of native-speakers of the majority

language in order to understand language learning and peer processes in multilingual contexts.

#### **10.4.1 Concluding remarks**

In a recent Official Norwegian Report (NOU) about the future of education, multiculturalism is highlighted as one of three main issues to be dealt with in a democracy along with sustainable development and mental health (Ministry of Education and Research, 2015). The present study of how language minority children in the Norwegian context perceive being bilingual underscores the need to incorporate bilingual realities and multicompetencies into education. The study specifically points to how children make meaning of bilingualism within their home and peer contexts. Being bilingual is perceived as socially, emotionally and linguistically relevant to the language minority children. In order for home and school contexts to exert sensitivity towards “bilanguagers”, there is a need to take the complexity of being bilingual at the individual level into account; complexities involving their language attitudes, learner identities and bilingual realities.

Overall, I believe that the children perceived the interest we showed for their bilingualism very positively. We presented the children with themes assumed to be relevant to them, and they were indeed relevant. At the same time, expressing their perceptions, experiences, and ideas around their own bilingualism in this way may not have been something they were used to. As many of the children themselves stated, no one had ever asked them these questions before.



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# Appendices





## Appendix I – Interview protocol in Norwegian

**Seksjon 1: Språkbruk og kommunikasjon****1. Språkbruk i familien:**

1a) Bor du sammen med både mamman og pappan din? \_\_\_\_\_

1b) Hvor ofte bruker du urdu (punjabi)/tyrkisk når du snakker med foreldrene dine (mamma og pappa)?

1\_\_ Aldri 2\_\_ Litt 3\_\_ Halvparten av tiden 4\_\_ Mye 5\_\_ Hele tiden

1c) Hvor ofte bruker foreldrene dine urdu/tyrkisk når de snakker med deg (mamma og pappa)?

1\_\_ Aldri 2\_\_ Litt 3\_\_ Halvparten av tiden 4\_\_ Mye 5\_\_ Hele tiden

1d) Søsken? \_\_\_\_\_

1e) Hvor ofte snakker du urdu/tyrkisk med søsknene dine?

1\_\_ Aldri 2\_\_ Litt 3\_\_ Halvparten av tiden 4\_\_ Mye 5\_\_ Hele tiden

1f) Besteforeldre? \_\_\_\_\_

1g) Tanter/onkler/søskenbarn? \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Barnets språkbruk med morsmålstalende venner på skolen og i fritiden:**

2a) Når snakker du urdu/tyrkisk med venner?

1\_\_ Bare på skolen 2\_\_ Bare på fritiden 3\_\_ Både på skolen og i fritiden

2b) Hvor ofte bruker du urdu/tyrkisk med urdu/tyrkisk-talende venner på skolen?

1\_\_ Aldri 2\_\_ Litt 3\_\_ Halvparten av tiden 4\_\_ Mye 5\_\_ Hele tiden

2c) Hvor ofte bruker du urdu/tyrkisk med urdu/tyrkisk-talende venner på fritiden?

1\_\_ Aldri 2\_\_ Litt 3\_\_ Halvparten av tiden 4\_\_ Mye 5\_\_ Hele tiden

2d) Hvem vil du helst være sammen med på skolen? \_\_\_\_\_

2e) Fritidsinteresser? \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Barnets tanker om å bruke to språk til å snakke om skolearbeid og læring av språk:**

3a) Mattelekser: oversetter, teller?

3b) Er det noe du ikke kan snakke om på urdu/tyrkisk, f.eks naturfag?

3c) Lekser/språk?

3d) Hvis noen du kjente i Pakistan/Tyrkia skulle flytte hit og begynne i første klasse her, hadde du hatt noen gode råd til han/henne om hvordan han/hun kunne lære seg norsk - og å lese på norsk?

3e) Lærer du noen gang bort urdu/tyrkisk til andre?

3f) Har du noen gang tenkt på at du har vært ekstra glad for at du kan snakke tyrkisk? Hjulpet noen?

**4. Kontakt med venner og familie i Norge og Pakistan/Tyrkia via internett og telefon:**

4a) Tilgang PC? Internett? MSN?

4b) Mobil, SMS?

**Seksjon 2: Lesing på norsk**

**5. Barnets forhold til lesing:**

5a) Likte du de tekstene vi leste i klassen? Hvilken likte du best?

5b) Var det vanskelig å lese dem? Hva gjorde du da du kom til de vanskelige delene?

5c) Pleier du å diskutere tekster med andre i klassen etter at dere har lest slik som dere gjorde i dag?

5d) Hender det at du snakker om eller leser bøker sammen med andre?

5e) Hva er din favorittbok? Hva liker du ved å lese?

5f) Liker du best at noen andre gir deg en bok eller at du får velge bok selv? Hvorfor det?

5g) Kjenner du noen som du synes er flinke til å lese? Hva er forskjellen på en som er en god leser og en som ikke er det?

5h) I min jobb leser jeg mange bøker med vanskelige ord som jeg ikke forstår, på norsk og engelsk. Når du leser på norsk, for eksempel en lekse i naturfag, hender det at det er noen ord du ikke forstår? Hva gjør du da?

5i) Hjelper det deg å kunne lese på norsk når du skal lese på urdu/tyrkisk? Eller omvendt?

5j) Er det annerledes å lese urdu/tyrkisk enn norsk?

### 6. Opplevde leseferdigheter:

Veldig	Litt		Litt	Veldig
6a) 1 ___	2 ___	Noen barn synes at de er flinke til å lese MENS andre barn synes ikke de er flinke til å lese	3 ___	4 ___
6b) 1 ___	2 ___	Noen barn synes de er like flinke til å lese som andre barn i klassen MENS andre barn synes de ikke er like flinke til å lese som de andre i klassen	3 ___	4 ___
6c) 1 ___	2 ___	Noen barn leser sakte MENS andre barn leser fort	3 ___	4 ___
6d) 1 ___	2 ___	Noen barn synes det er vanskelig å forstå det de leser MENS andre barn forstår det de leser	3 ___	4 ___
6e) 1 ___	2 ___	Noen barn tror at læreren ikke synes de er flinke til å lese MENS andre barn tror at læreren synes de er flinke til å lese	3 ___	4 ___
6f) 1 ___	2 ___	Noen barn opplever at de andre elevene synes de er flinke til å lese MENS noen opplever at de andre elevene ikke synes de er flinke til å lese	3 ___	4 ___
6g) 1 ___	2 ___	Noen barn synes det er vanskelig å lese MENS noen barn synes det er lett å lese	3 ___	4 ___

### 7. Motivasjon for lesing:

7a) 1 ___	2 ___	Noen barn leser frivillig MENS andre barn leser fordi de må	3 ___	4 ___
7b) 1 ___	2 ___	Noen barn synes det er kjedelig å lese MENS andre barn synes det er gøy å lese	3 ___	4 ___
7c) 1 ___	2 ___	Noen barn opplever at de får god hjelp til å lese på skolen MENS andre barn opplever at de ikke får hjelp til å lese på skolen	3 ___	4 ___
7d) 1 ___	2 ___	Noen barn synes de lærer av å lese MENS andre barn synes ikke de lærer av å lese	3 ___	4 ___

### Seksjon 3: Holdninger til språkene og etnisk identitet

#### 8. Viktigheten av gode språkferdigheter og tilhørighet til etnisk gruppe:

- 8a) 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ For noen barn er det å være (etn) en viktig del av  
en selv MENS for andre barn er det ikke en viktig del 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_
- 8b) 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ Noen barn ser seg selv som mer (etn) enn norske  
MENS andre barn ser seg selv som mer norske enn (etn) 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_
- 8c) 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ Noen barn synes at det å være (etn) er en liten del  
av den personen de er MENS andre barn synes det å  
være (etn) er en stor del av den personen de er 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_
- 8d) 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ Noen barn synes det er viktig å kunne snakke (L1)  
flytende MENS andre barn synes ikke det er viktig  
å kunne snakke (L1) flytende 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_
- 8e) 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ Noen barn synes ikke det er viktig å kunne lese (L1)  
MENS andre barn synes det er viktig 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_
- 8f) 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ Noen barn synes det er viktig å kunne snakke  
norsk flytende MENS andre barn synes ikke det er viktig  
å kunne snakke norsk flytende 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_
- 8g) 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ Noen barn synes ikke det er viktig å kunne lese norsk  
MENS andre barn synes det er viktig 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_
- 8h) 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ Noen barn liker å være (etn) MENS  
andre barn ikke liker å være (etn) 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_
- 8i) 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ Noen barn har aldri opplevd å bli ertet eller plaget  
på grunn av sin (etn) bakgrunn MENS andre  
barn har opplevd dette 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_

Er det noe mer du har lyst til å fortelle meg? Er det noe du har lyst til å spørre meg om?

## Appendix II – Interview protocol, translated into English

### Section 1: Language use and communication

#### 1. Language use within the family:

1a) Do you live with both your mother and your father? \_\_\_\_\_

1b) How often do you use Urdu (Punjabi)/Turkish when you speak to your parents (mother and father)?

1\_\_ Never 2\_\_ A little 3\_\_ Half the time 4\_\_ Often 5\_\_ All the time

1c) How often do your parents use Urdu/Turkish when they speak to you (mother and father)?

1\_\_ Never 2\_\_ A little 3\_\_ Half the time 4\_\_ Often 5\_\_ All the time

1d) Your siblings? \_\_\_\_\_

1e) How often do you speak Urdu/Turkish to your siblings?

1\_\_ Never 2\_\_ All the time 3\_\_ Half the time 4\_\_ Often 5\_\_ All the time

1f) Grandparents? \_\_\_\_\_

1g) Aunts/uncles/cousins? \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. The child's language use when interacting with same L1-speaking friends at school and during leisure time:

2a) When do you use Urdu/Turkish with your friends?

1\_\_ Only at school 2\_\_ Only during leisure time 3\_\_ Both at school and during leisure

2b) How often do you speak Urdu/Turkish when you speak to your Urdu/Turkish speaking friends at school?

1\_\_ Never 2\_\_ All the time 3\_\_ Half the time 4\_\_ Often 5\_\_ All the time

2c) How often do you use Urdu/Turkish when you speak to your Urdu/Turkish speaking friends during leisure time?

1\_\_ Never 2\_\_ All the time 3\_\_ Half the time 4\_\_ Often 5\_\_ All the time

2d) Who would you rather spend time with at school? \_\_\_\_\_

2e) What do you enjoy doing during your leisure time? \_\_\_\_\_

**3. The child's thoughts on using two languages to talk about schoolwork and learning languages:**

3a) Math homework: translates, counts?

3b) Is there anything you are not able to speak about in Urdu/Turkish, for example in science?

3c) Homework/language?

3d) If someone you know in Pakistan/Turkey were to move here and start first grade, would you have any good advice for this person on how to learn to speak and write in Norwegian?

3e) Do you ever teach Urdu/Turkish to others?

3f) Have you ever felt that you are extra lucky because you can speak Turkish? Helped someone else?

**4. Contact with friends and family in Norway and Pakistan/Turkey via Internet and phone:**

4a) Do you have access to a computer? The Internet? MSN?

4b) Cell phone, SMS?

**Section 2: Reading in Norwegian**

**5. The child's affiliation with reading:**

5a) Did you like the texts we read during class? Which ones did you like the most?

5b) Were they difficult to read? What did you do when you came to the difficult parts?

5c) Do you normally discuss the texts you read after you have read them with the other students in class after like you did today?

5d) Do you ever read or talk about books with others?

5e) Which book is your favourite book? What do you enjoy reading?

5f) Do you prefer that someone else gives you a book, or do you prefer to choose a book yourself? Why?

5g) Do you know anyone who thinks you are good at reading? What is the difference between someone who is a good reader and someone who is not?

5h) In my work, I read many books with difficult words which I don't understand, in Norwegian and in English. When you are reading in Norwegian, for example your science homework, do you ever encounter words you cannot understand? What do you do then?

5i) Do you find it helpful to be able to read in Norwegian when you are reading in Urdu/Turkish? Or the other way around?

5j) Is reading in Urdu/Turkish different than reading in Norwegian?

## 6. Perceived reading skills:

Very A little

A little Very

6a) 1\_\_\_ 2\_\_\_ Some children believe that they are good at reading WHILE other children do not believe they are good at reading 3\_\_\_ 4\_\_\_

6b) 1\_\_\_ 2\_\_\_ Some children believe they are as good at reading as other children in their class, WHILE other children believe that they are not as good at reading as the other children in in their class 3\_\_\_ 4\_\_\_

6c) 1\_\_\_ 2\_\_\_ Some children read slowly WHILE other children read fast 3\_\_\_ 4\_\_\_

6d) 1\_\_\_ 2\_\_\_ Some children find it difficult to comprehend what they read WHILE other children comprehend what they read 3\_\_\_ 4\_\_\_

6e) 1\_\_\_ 2\_\_\_ Some children believe their teacher do not think they are good at reading WHILE other children believe the teacher thinks they are good at reading 3\_\_\_ 4\_\_\_

6f) 1\_\_\_ 2\_\_\_ Some children believe that the other students think they are good at reading WHILE other children believe the other students do not think they are good at reading 3\_\_\_ 4\_\_\_

6g) 1\_\_\_ 2\_\_\_ Some children find it difficult to read WHILE some children find it easy to read 3\_\_\_ 4\_\_\_

## 7. Motivation for reading:

7a) 1\_\_\_ 2\_\_\_ Some children read voluntarily WHILE other children read because they have to 3\_\_\_ 4\_\_\_

7b) 1\_\_\_ 2\_\_\_ Some children find reading boring WHILE other children find reading fun 3\_\_\_ 4\_\_\_

7c) 1\_\_\_ 2\_\_\_ Some children find that they receive good help while reading at school WHILE other children do not find that they receive good help while reading at school 3\_\_\_ 4\_\_\_

7d) 1\_\_\_ 2\_\_\_ Some children find that they learn from reading WHILE 3\_\_\_ 4\_\_\_

other children do not find that they learn anything from reading

### Section 3: Language attitudes and ethnic identity

#### 8. The importance of possessing skills in languages and sense of belonging to ethnic heritage group:

8a) 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ For some children, being (ethn) is an important part of self WHILE for other children it is not an important part of self 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_

8b) 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ Some children see themselves as more (ethn) than Norwegian WHILE other children see themselves as more Norwegian than (ethn) 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_

8c) 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ Some children find being (ethn) is just a small part of the person they are WHILE other children find being (ethn) is a big part of the person they are 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_

8d) 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ Some children find it important to be able to speak (L1) fluently WHILE other children do not find being able to speak [L1] fluently to be important 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_

8e) 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ Some children do not find it important to be able to read (L1) WHILE other children find this important 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_

8f) 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ Some children find it important to be able to speak Norwegian fluently WHILE other children do not find being able to speak Norwegian fluently to be important 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_

8g) 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ Some children do not find it important to be able to read Norwegian WHILE other children find this important 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_

8h) 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ Some children like being (ethn) WHILE other children do not like being (ethn) 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_

8i) 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ Some children have never experienced being bullied or teased because of their ethnicity WHILE other children have experienced this 3 \_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_

Is there anything else you would like to share with me? Is there anything you would like to ask me?



## Appendix III- Transcription guidelines in Norwegian

### Retningslinjer for transkribering:

v/Helene Fulland, 23.09.08

Tid: ca 7 timer per 1 times intervju, = 20-25 sider (?)

### Hensikten med transkriberingen:

Transkriberingen skal tilrettelegge for analyse av:

- språkbruksmønster gjennom de opplevde skalaene og i resten av intervjuet
- leseerfaringer, leseferdigheter og lesemotivasjon
- opplevelse av å være brukere av to språk, og opplevelse av det å ha (en antatt) tilknytning til både Tyrkia/Pakistan og Norge
- evt. andre, åpne kategorier

Transkripsjonen skal gi et generelt inntrykk av det enkelte barns mening og opplevelse

### Stil:

- Alle ytringer skal transkriberes ordrett
- Intonasjon, ikke avsluttede setninger, avbrytelser og overlappinger trenger ikke å markeres
- Korte og lengre pauser i teksten markeres
- Nye ytringer hos samme person markeres med ny linje

Eks:

\*INT: men når du snakker med lillesøsteren din da? Hvor ofte snakker du tyrkisk med henne?

\*BAR: veldig lite.

\*INT: det er veldig lite#.

\*INT: er det noen ganger eller er det aldri?

\*BAR: nesten aldri.

\*INT: nesten aldri#ja.

\*INT: så da snakker du norsk med henne da?

\*BAR: ja.

\*INT: hva er det hun#gikk i andre klasse ja#kan hun snakke tyrkisk?

\*BAR: ja.

\*INT:ja#.

\*IHE: hvor har hun lært det da?

\*BAR: hmm?

\*INT: hvor har hun lært det?

\*BAR: tror av mamma.

\*INT: ja.

\*INT: hvor har du lært å snakke tyrkisk?

\*BAR: hmm? Vet ikke.

\*INT: nei#.

\*INT:husker du#var det det du lærte da du var bitteliten kanskje?

\*BAR: ja.

**Etikk:**

Hvordan kode navngitte institusjoner og personer i intervjuet?

- Hvert barn får et pseudonym, det vil si et tall. NB! Vær nøye med tallene (se liste)
- Stedsnavn, institusjonsnavn og egennavn på andre personer kodes om (se nedenfor)

Taushetserklæring skrives under ved inngåelse av arbeidskontrakt

**Regler for transkribering av intervju:**

@ Begin	Markerer begynnelse på dokumentet
@Participans:	koden på barnet (se liste), kode på intervjuer
@Duration:	Varighet på intervjuet
@Date:	Dato for transkribering
@Transcriber:	Navnet på den som transkriberer
@End	Markerer slutten på dokumentet
%Time:	Tidspunkt på opptaket, markeres hvert 5.minutt
%Sit:	Kommentarer som kan bidra til å forstå barnets svar
*INT:	Intervjuer
*BAR:	Barnet
#	Kort pause
##	Lang pause
(xxx)	Utydelig ytring
(Snr)	Stedsnavn + nr
(Enr)	Egennavn på person + nr
(Inr)	Institusjonsnavn + nr
(T)	ord/ytringer på tyrkisk
(U)	ord/ytringer på urdu
?	Spørsmålstegn, markerer ytringer hos barn og intervjuer som har en spørrende form

**Slik skal alle transkripter begynne:**

Punkter som skal med:

Eks:

@Begin	
@Participans:	21.2.20 (BAR), navn på intervjuer (INT)
@Duration:	1 t 12 min
@Date:	23.09.08
@Transcriber:	Helene Fulland
%Time:0.00	

## Appendix IV – Readability guidelines

I have tried my best to present children's talk in accordance with their original expressions, while simultaneously improving the readability of the examples. The pause markers (#) or (##) in the original transcripts, which were not themselves subject to analysis, have been removed from the presentation. The use of dots and commas have been included in order for the examples to comply more with how the children's statements would be formulated in writing. Corrections in grammatical errors were done only for major errors.

(...) = shorter utterances typical for oral communication, such as self-corrections, repetitions and confirmations by the interviewer during a child's talk, have been left out in order to highlight and present the content of the children's talk more cohesively. In regard to Section 9.2, where the presented examples stem from talk revolving around the Harter-format (see interview protocol Section 3), the symbol has also been used to replace interviewer utterances where the fixed-choice question was asked.

[...] = that the following excerpt in the example stems from another section of the interview than the previous excerpt in the example.

*Child's utterance in italics* = the child is using direct speech in his/her talk.

(xxx) = untranscribed utterance due to unclear audiotapes.

### Example 1:

Transcript version	Presented Norwegian version	Presented English version
*BAR: men hjemme <u>må</u> jeg snakke tyrkisk. *BAR: eller jeg må ikke. men jeg vil. *INT: mmm. *BAR: eller jeg lyst til å snakke at mamma forstår.  [intervjuet fortsetter]  *BAR: ja mamma sier snakk tyrkisk. *BAR: jeg bare. *BAR: eller. *BAR: det er veldig vanskelig å forstå hva dere snakker om og sånt nå. *BAR: og så jeg. *BAR: også da vi snakker norsk. *INT: ja?	BAR: men hjemme må jeg snakke tyrkisk. eller jeg må ikke, men jeg vil. eller, jeg har lyst til å snakke at mamma forstår. [...] BAR: mamma sier <i>snakk tyrkisk</i> , jeg bare, eller, <i>det er veldig vanskelig å forstå hva dere snakker om og sånt nå</i> . (...) også da vi snakker norsk så sier mamma <i>du må snakke tyrkisk</i> fordi hun vil også, eller, ikke noe sånt, men, jeg vet ikke hvorfor hun vil at vi skal snakke tyrkisk, men ehh, jeg snakker tyrkisk da. men lillesøsteren min hører ikke når hun sier. hun snakker norsk.	CHI: but at home I have to speak Turkish. well I don't have to but I want to. well, I want to speak so Mommy understands. [...] CHI: Mommy says <i>speak Turkish</i> , I just, or, <i>it's very difficult to understand what you're talking about now</i> . and things like that(...). and when we speak Norwegian Mommy says <i>you have to speak Turkish</i> because she, too, wants to, or, not like that but I don't know why she wants us to speak Turkish, but uh, then I speak Turkish. but my little sister doesn't listen when she says that. she speaks Norwegian.

<p>*BAR: så sier mamma du må snakke tyrkisk fordi hun vil også.          *BAR: eller.          *BAR: # ikke noe sånt men men jeg vet ikke hvorfor hun vil at vi skal snakke tyrkisk men.          *BAR: ehh, jeg snakker tyrkisk da.          *BAR: men lillesøsteren min hører ikke når hun sier.          *BAR: hun snakker norsk.</p>		
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## Example 2:

Transcript version	Presented Norwegian version	Presented English version
<p>*BAR: det er viktig fordi jeg når jeg har undervisning her og det er mer viktigere enn å snakke tyrkisk.          *INT: mmm.          *BAR: norsk.          *INT: mmm.          *BAR: så, så det er viktig.          *INT: mmm.          *INT: ehh litt eller veldig viktig?          *BAR: veldig.          *INT: ja.          *BAR: fordi man må kunne norsk for å ehh å gå videre i skole, skole.          *INT: mmm.          *BAR: skolen.</p>	<p>BAR: det er viktig, fordi jeg når jeg har undervisning her og det er mer viktigere enn å snakke tyrkisk. (...). så det er viktig. (...). veldig, fordi man må kunne norsk for å gå videre i skolen.</p>	<p>CHI: it is important, because when I have education here it's more important than speaking Turkish, so it is important. (...). very, because you have to know Norwegian to go further in school.</p>