

**“SIT MULLA OIS OLLUT JOTAIN NIINKU PERSONALITY ISSUES”**

**Linguistic Identities of Plurilinguals**

Yohana Tewelde Habte  
Master's Thesis  
University of Jyväskylä  
Department of Language  
and Communication Studies  
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# JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

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<p>Tiivistelmä – Abstract</p> <p>Vuoteen 2030 mennessä joka viides lapsi Helsingissä puhuu suomea toisena kielenään. Monikieliset lapset ovat jo usean vuoden ajan vaatineet huomiota, joka nostaisi heidän rikkaan ja moninaisen kielenkäyttönsä negatiivisen valon sijasta positiiviseen valoon.</p> <p>Tämän tutkimuksen tavoite on tutkia monikielisten nuorten kieli-identiteettiä. Ensin tutkimus tarkastelee monikielisen ympäristön vaikutusta ihmisen kieli-identiteettiin. Tämän jälkeen tutkimus tuo esiin, miten monikieliset kuudesluokkalaiset ilmentävät kielitietoisuuttaan ja kieli-identiteettiään. Tutkimuskysymyksiin vastatakseen tutkimuksessa hyödynnettiin kolmea tiedonkeruumenetelmää. Nämä menetelmät, joita on käytetty monikielisten ihmisten identiteettien tutkimiseen, olivat etnografinen havainnointi, teemahaastattelut ja kuvataiteisiin pohjautuvat visuaaliset menetelmät. Koulun, ja pääasiassa CLIL-luokan, etnografiseen havainnointiin käytettiin noin kolme viikkoa. Tänä aikana kerättiin muistiinpanoja sekä järjestettiin teemahaastatteluja. Kuvataiteisiin pohjautuvat visuaaliset kuvaukset pyydettiin osallistujilta etukäteen, jonka jälkeen osallistajat kertoivat kuvauksistaan henkilökohtaisten haastattelujensa lopuksi.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen tuloksista voidaan päätellä, että osallistujien kielirepertuaari on rikas, moninainen ja jatkuvasti kehittyvä. Osallistujien kotikieli-identiteetillään on merkittävä rooli siinä, miten he ylläpitävät ja huolehtivat suhteestaan perheisiinsä. Tutkimuksen perusteella nähdään, että nämä monikieliset nuoret käyttävät heidän koko kielirepertuaariaan. Tämän vuoksi heidän käsityksensä kielistä on kokonaisvaltainen ja jatkuvassa liikkeessä kielten sekä kielielementtien välillä. He käyttävät kieliä ihmissuhteiden luomiseen ja ylläpitämiseen, erityisesti kotikielen ja suomen kielen avulla. Osallistajat eivät rajoita kielenkäyttöään, vaan käyttävät kieliä sujuvasti ja vapaasti, osoittaen korkeaa kielitietoisuutta. He osoittavat, että kieltenoppiminen ja sisäistäminen on prosessi, näin vahvistaen kielentämisen (languaging) käsitettä. Osallistajat ilmentävät moninaisia kieli-identiteettejään myös visuaalisissa kuvauksissa, joiden avulla he kuvasivat miten he havaitsevat jokaisen puhumansa kielen. Visuaaliset kuvaukset korostavat heidän ymmärrystään omasta kieli-repertuaaristaan, osoittaen kiel(t)en olevan työkalu, jota he käyttävät itsensä ilmaisuun ja oman identiteettinsä käsittelyyn. Tämän tutkimuksen tuloksia on tarkoitus käsitellä tapaustutkimuksena, eikä tuloksia ole tarkoitus yleistää tai käyttää edustamaan kaikkia monikielisiä. On kuitenkin suositeltavaa, että laajempaa tutkimusta kielentämiseen, kielireperutaariin ja kielten limittäiseen käyttöön (translanguaging) tehtäisiin, jotta voidaan ymmärtää miten kasvava yhteisö monikielisiä ihmisiä ymmärtää ja ilmaisee itseään tässä, usein virheellisesti yksikieliseksi mielletyissä, yhteiskunnassa.</p>	
<p>Asiasanat – Keywords</p> <p>Multilingualism, plurilingualism, identity, linguistic identity, linguistic repertoire, heritage language, translanguaging, CLIL, ethnographic observation, semi-structured interviews, visual drawings.</p>	
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# 1. INTRODUCTION

In an era when self-reflection and self-awareness are considered highly significant to one's self-understanding, becoming and being aware of one's language identity is a popular question in linguistics. The present study focuses on phenomena that have, and continue to, intrigue various scholars for many years: identity and multilingualism. For various reasons, these two topics have been a subject of research in many fields (such as psychology and sociology) for decades, but most importantly for this study, linguistics, due to the role language(s) plays in understanding and forming identity.

The interest in multilingualism arose initially because of globalization. Nowadays, with the help of advanced technology, globalization has broadened and perhaps even highlighted the spectrum of multilingualism. Throughout societies and history, multilingualism has arguably been practiced longer than monolingualism. According to Dufva et al. (2011) the notion of monolingualism rose due to establishments of nations that took place by separating and dividing lands geographically and linguistically. However, as multilingualism once again continues to notably be part of societies around the globe, Finland has proven to be no exception in recognizing the increasing presence of different languages that are slowly becoming part of its language communities. People who speak Finland's official languages (Finnish and Swedish) as their second language (L2) are slowly but continually increasing in number. According to statistics (Official Statistics of Finland), In 2019 7,5% (412 700 people) of Finland's population were second language (L2) speakers, meaning that they registered a foreign language as their mother tongue. This number is expected to increase, as Kalaja (2018) writes that the proportion of foreign-born people in Helsinki will reach 21% by 2030. While the statistics may foretell growth in the capital city, an increase in people speaking a different L1 is expected to be seen in other major cities as well. This inevitably means that as these multilinguals try to navigate and find their place in this society, they are also doing so in schools and academia, perhaps challenging what was quite recently a monolingual and homogenous school environment. Therefore, as Finland begins to try to understand the effects and nuances of having diverse language communities, it becomes clear that there is a gap in knowledge regarding the versatile profiles of multilingual children particularly of generations that were born and raised in Finland. Furthermore, more research needs to be done

in order to try to understand how these people with rich language profiles understand language use and identity.

The present study aims to shed light on young multilingual learners' language usage and their awareness of their language identities. Research shows that insufficient information has been gathered regarding multilingual speakers' linguistic identities and versatile language use. Motivated by this, the present study seeks to answer and further develop questions presented by researchers such as Lehtonen (2015), Dufva and Pietikäinen (2009) on multilinguals and their linguistic identities. In their article, *Moni-ilmeinen Monikielisyys*, Dufva and Pietikäinen (2009) introduced the linguistic identities of a Sami boy and the linguistic landscapes of Ivalo. Using Bahtin's theory on language being an entity of many languages and conceptualizing language holistically, they (2009) argue that even what is known as monolingualism could be seen as multilingualism. They observe that language within itself is versatile in its qualities and diverse in its speakers and that, therefore, the notion of one fixed language neglects to capture and reflect the complexities and nuances of language and its users. For example, the English language can be regarded as 'multiple' due to the diversity of its dialects and speakers. In addition, English speakers/users bring their own history to the language, which inevitably make each speaker's English language identity unique. The authors (2009) conclude that English speakers can, under this premise, be regarded as multilinguals. Moreover, Lehtonen (2015) examined the language use of adolescents where multilingualism is the norm in two junior high schools. With relevance to the present study, Lehtonen's (2015) work closely inspects how these adolescents identify themselves as Finnish speakers and as part of L2 Finnish speakers in this society. This is further explored through the notion of speaking 'bad Finnish' with reference to how these subjects understand that society sees them. Most importantly, her work examines the participants' ideologies of the languages they speak and how they position themselves in this society based on these ideologies, also how society positions these languages and their users. Furthermore, Lehtonen's (2015) ethnographic observation on the schools to examine language use inspired the present study to also examine a school in which young learners are part of a multilingual environment in order to capture their perception on language use. Lehtonen discovers how the usage of a learnt word from friends' linguistic repertoire can influence one's own linguistic identities and repertoire. In other words, her findings examine how the languages these adolescents use can affect others around them and their usage of the languages that they are exposed to. These objectives align with those of the

present study, but this study aims to research young learners' language use and what it reveals about their linguistic identities.

Overall, there has been a great amount of research focusing on different aspects of multilingualism and multilingual learners in Finland. However, the linguistic identity of multilinguals in elementary school has been researched little, if at all. Modeling Dufva and Pietikäinen's (2009) and Lehtonen's (2015) researches, this study furthers the research on the linguistic identities of young learners using a holistic approach to language. The present study's aim is to contribute a positive note to the study of young multilingual speakers in Finland. The focus of the present study are young learners because it was seen as important to understand how these young multilinguals live in a world in which different and multiple languages are part of their day-to-day life. This challenges higher education to provide the appropriate tools for current and future teachers to deal with learners of different language backgrounds. Subsequently, this study is relevant in that it a) enables young learners who speak at least two languages to voice their conception on how the languages they use shape and modify their linguistic identities, b) discovers how one's environment can shape one's language use and identity, and c) investigates how aware the participants are of their multilingual identities. In my attempt to further the discussion of multilinguals' linguistic identities, I discuss each participant individually in order to highlight their individuality and stories. Having said that, I also examine them as a group that shares common qualities in how language is perceived in a setting that shares specific ideologies such as maneuvering between language features in order to make full meaning of their surroundings. The present study aims to answer these research questions through three different research methods: ethnographic observation, semi-structured interviews and visual drawings. These three well-grounded methods complete each other and provide broad insights on the participants' perceptions of their language identities and how their environments shape these identities.

The present study is divided into three main sections. Section 2 focuses on the theoretical framework of the study. First, the relevance of identity and language is discussed to grasp an idea of how language identity is understood here. Second, important terminologies that are of relevance for the analysis of the study are examined. These terminologies include languaging, linguistic repertoire, heritage language (rather than mother tongue), translanguaging and content and language integrated learning, CLIL. Third, motivation and relevance of the present study are presented. Section 3 examines the data collection and used methodologies to carry out the present

study. It begins with a brief introduction of the data collection and proceeds with the purpose and aim of the present study. Subsections 3.4.-3.6. entail details on each method used before discussing the method of analysis and ethics of the study. The findings of the present study are presented in details in section 4. Finally, the main findings of the present study are reiterated before examining the limitations of the study and how it could be developed in the future. Before proceeding and in hopes of avoiding confusion I will clarify a couple of definitions.

It is important to discuss how multilingualism is perceived in the present study in order to avoid any confusion. The importance of clarifying how multilingualism is understood in the present study stems from the fact that throughout nuances have been added to the definition of multilingualism with respect to the evolution of what speaking a language entails. The definitions of multilingualism included here align with how the present study perceives multilingualism. According to Cenoz et al. (2003:2), “a multilingual individual can be defined as a person who can communicate in two or more languages”. Due to the present study being data-based and revolving around the participants’ understanding of language use, the emphasis on one being able to communicate in two or more languages rather than one’s ability to speak more than one language fits the premise of the study. Also, Kalaja and Pitkänen-Huhta (2020:3) argue that multilingualism can be explored from a “*societal*” and “*individual*” point of view. In other words, one can speak of a multilingual individual but also of a society where multiple languages are spoken. One way to separate the two from one another is to speak of *multilingualism* and *plurilingualism*. The Council of Europe (COE) (2007:4) defines multilingualism as “the knowledge of a number of languages, or the co-existence of different languages in a given society”. It is important to note that when referring to a multilingual society one does not mean that all of the members of the society possess skills in multiple languages but merely the existence of multiple languages within the same space (Council of Europe 2007:18). The difference between a multilingual and a plurilingual individual lies in the nuances of how a person who possesses skills in multiple languages understands and uses language(s). According to the Council of Europe (2007:168),

“[p]lurilingual and pluricultural competence refers to the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social agent has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of several cultures. This is not seen as the superposition or juxtaposition of distinct competences, but rather as the existence of a complex or even composite competence on which the user may draw”.

Moreover, plurilingualism highlights individual's versatile interactions and experiences with language(s). Plurilingual speakers use and navigate through multiple languages under the premise that language use is sensitive to time, place, interactants and history. Thus plurilingualism takes into consideration plurilinguals' versatile and rich understand of language use. Plurilingual speakers practice language under the premise that it is fundamentally used to enable fluid communication and also self-expression as well as well self-awareness. Ergo, while multilingualism explores languages as separate entities, plurilingualism emphasizes fluidity between languages and looks at languages holistically. Plurilingualism and plurilingual speakers are at times used intentionally in the present study when highlighting that language use is fluid and repertoire-based. (Council of Europe 2007).

Moreover, instead of referring to the first learnt/acquired language as mother tongue, I will be referring to the participants' first learnt/acquired language as heritage language (reasons for this are explained in subsection 2.3).



## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter includes theoretical background on how a) identity is understood and applied in the present study, b) language plays a role in identity formation, c) the participants use different languages, and d) the participants' environment shapes and affects their language identities and use. First, a brief history of identity is presented in order to capture its significance in the study. Second, the relationship between identity and language is discussed to clarify their connection that manifests in how one's linguistic identity is understood. Due to the countless debates on what speaking a language actually entails, a commentary on how language is perceived through languaging and linguistic repertoire in this study follows. The conceptualizing of all these topics plays a major role in how the participants are perceived and presented in light of how speaking multiple languages helps them explore their social relations. Finally, three terminologies, heritage language (HL), content language integrated learning (CLIL) and translanguaging are explained due to their relevance in explaining the participants' language use. It is important to note that the theoretical framework is presented based on the relevance for the data.

### 2.1. Identity and language

Scholars have researched identity from multiple point of view in the hope of gaining a vast yet detailed understanding of a concept that is regarded as extremely intricate in many fields. Fields such as psychology, sociology, and most importantly for this study, linguistics, have attributed to the understanding of identity. Psychology's contribution is vital as it helps people explore identity from a self-reflective perspective, whereas sociology looks at identity from an individual and social groups' points of view, and linguistics examines the role of language in constructing and expressing one's identity (Bucholtz and Hall, 2004).

Gleason (1983) claims that people make sense of the term *identity* and think that they know what it means; however, not all can manage to verbalize what it really is. This is not due to people not understanding what identity is, it is due to the intricacy of identity. The word identity comes from the Latin word *idem*, meaning 'same'. Identity later evolved from a concept that defined the sameness of things to become a notion of beliefs, values and actions of oneself. According to Benwell and Stokoe (2006:18), it was during the period of Enlightenment rationalism and idealism that identity was considered a phenomenon that explained how one perceived and explored oneself.

At the time, it was a non-changing conceptualization and manifestation of one's beliefs, behaviors and characters. In other words, people thought of identity as something that was unaltered. However, this notion expanded as a social structuralist approach began to perceive identity as a product of a social ideology that determines people's behaviors and beliefs based on their culture (Block 2007:12). This means that research began to perceive people as constructed by their ideas, beliefs, and actions, i.e., identity, as a socially and culturally constructed phenomenon. This by default meant that people's understanding of who they were reflected their surroundings but was also tied to social settings. This theory operates under the premise that humans are social beings; therefore, their identity is formed and shaped by their environment. As the notion of identity evolved, its definition shifted towards and aligned with postmodernism. While identity is still known as one's thoughts (conscious or unconscious) of oneself and how one manifests these ideologies in relation to one's world, its definition has extended to the effects of social settings and relations, but more from an individual's perspective. Block (2007:12-13) explains that where the social structuralist approach aims to research identity on the premise that it discovers universally shared ideologies and behaviors in order to make meaning of the world, poststructuralism aims to investigate identity from a more detailed and layered perspective in order to make meaning of the world from an individual's perspective. This means that identity reflects the nuances of individualism and its importance in experiencing and understanding the world.

As mentioned earlier, at its simplest, identity can be understood as our and others' perception of who we are. Furthermore, postmodernism has further developed and subjected identity to time, space and context. The *poststructuralist point of view* has broadened our understanding of identity from being one's understanding and representation of oneself to a constantly changing and evolving understanding and manifestation of oneself across space and time. The poststructuralist point of view, which is the theoretical framework of the present study, therefore perceives identity as flexible, contextual and situational. Drawing on poststructuralism, Kouhpaenejad and Gholaminejad (2014:200) define identity as "fluid, multiple, diverse, dynamic, varied, shifting, subject to change and contradictory". Moreover, Kouhpaenejad and Gholaminejad (2014:200) stress that identity is not one specific entity but has multiple layers, which are themselves a mixture of "individual agency and social influences". In other words, the authors (2014) argue that identities are the multi-faceted and the product of the individual's active

partaking in social and cultural practices. They (2014) thus conclude that a person possesses not only one identity but many and that these identities do not form in vacuum but in communities. This is important to note because the present study seeks to investigate the impact of different social settings on how one manifests one's identities through the lens of linguistics. To be more specific, the participants are for instance asked to cite examples and situations in which they use language(s) in order to capture the impact of settings on how they express their identities linguistically at the time in question. Consequently, it is essential to note the importance of where identities are formed and expressed as fundamentally all could have a specific purpose or arise due to certain circumstances. Once again, all of this is based on the premise that human beings are social creatures and that therefore the embodiment of identity takes place in social settings.

Once again, people's perception of who they are and how they represent themselves is sensitive to the interactions they have with one another and the context in which these interactions take place. Also, as there are many factors that affect how we identify ourselves and are identified by others, identity cannot be static (Kouhpaenejad and Gholaminejad 2014). This reinforces the intricacy of identity as Kouhpaenejad and Gholaminejad (2014) emphasize it is not straightforward but is rather multifaceted, ever-changing, constantly evolving and dependent on social settings. As part of identity, people can also have different social roles that are manifested depending on social context. These social roles are, for example, pupils, daughters, sons, classmates and multilingual speakers. The participants are pupils and classmates when they are at school or doing things related to school. They are children when interacting with their parent(s) and multilingual speakers when using multiple languages. We can see that through these simple identifications, the participants have more than just one identity and all their identities are formed in social settings because the social relations involved. This is important to note for the present study because one of the goals is to understand how these different social roles they embody impact their linguistic choices.

One way this study approaches identity is through social relations, societal effects and personal values in how one develops one's identity. For instance, how one develops identity is through one's social relations (such as friendships, companionships, familial relations) and even space. As people interact in different types of social situations barring different social roles, people temporarily possess different identities. Furthermore, according to Lähdesmäki et al. (2016:4), schools as "social and temporal spaces" tend to provide social settings and groups which learners

identify with or shy away from. Belonging to or isolating oneself from a certain group tells a great deal about one's identity or sense of belonging. For instance, the identification of (non)native speaker of a certain language is in itself taking up on an identity and shying away from others. Moreover, Lähdesmäki et al. (2016:4) argue that belonging can also be understood in terms of "geographical, social, and temporal spaces". Furthermore, Bucholtz and Hall (2005:591) discuss the notion of the *positionality principle*, in which they examine how people temporarily position themselves in interactions (the roles that people take up or are given, voluntarily or involuntarily). For instance, playing the roles of a speaker or a listener, people's positioning of themselves and others changes constantly in interactions, and, in doing so, people express provisional identities. This further stresses that identity constantly finds different shapes and different forms.

Next we move on to how one expresses one's identities through language. Language is the core around which everything in this present study revolves, very much like identity. Aronin and Singleton (2012) state that the language one speaks and one's identity "as a speaker of this language are inseparable". In other words, a language and its speaker's language identity cannot be separated from one another as their co-existence not only depends on one another but also because they are intricately intertwined. According to Bucholtz and Hall (2005), the earliest connection between language and identity was recorded when the former was seen as an expression of the latter. Language was a means to explore oneself, meaning that one used it as a tool to understand and express one's ideologies. One uses language to verbalize the ideas behind one's ideologies and simultaneously allow others to do the same. Bucholtz and Hall (2005:593) argue that without language, identity would fail to become the conceptualization and expression of one's being; it would lose what is called its *indexicality*. They (2005:593) note that,

in identity formation, indexicality relies heavily on ideological structures, for associations between language and identity are rooted in cultural beliefs and values – that is, ideologies – about the sorts of speakers who (can or should) produce particular sorts of language. Indexical processes occur at all levels of linguistic structure and use. The third principle outlines some of these different linguistic means whereby identity is discursively produced.

Thus, the connection between language and identity is intertwined. Identity exists due to the existence of language or discourse. Furthermore, language helps people understand their immediate environment, society and even the world. In doing so, language also allows people to comprehend and explore not only the beliefs and values of their immediate world but of others, as well. Bucholtz and Hall (2015) also confirm the poststructural notion of identity, i.e., one's

understanding and manifestation of oneself can only be constructed in social interactions and through language. In fact, they argue that one can only and truly have an understanding of oneself through the relations one creates with others that take place with the help of language. In addition, Bucholtz and Hall (2005) emphasize that one's ability to understand oneself is a crucial part of forming and expressing identity. However, as much as one's conception of oneself is needed in formulating identity, others and their contribution to the process are just as vital because identity cannot be formed in vacuum. Therefore, it is the product of an ongoing process that is constantly affected by discourse and by others. In short, identity is ultimately a reflection of one's understanding of one's internal thoughts, beliefs, and ideologies, which are formed by social and cultural influences from the immediate environment and even from around the world.

Kouhpaenejad and Gholaminejad (2014:200) state that identities are “continually reconstructed through language and discourse”. This present study explores how language and discourse play a role in how one understands and manifests identity. Fundamentally, the focus of the study is to research how the participants use language in different situations and in doing so construct their linguistic and social roles, which is essentially the sum of their identity. It specifically looks at pupils' linguistic identity, their awareness and manifestation of their linguistic identity. In other words, it focuses on how plurilingual speakers construct and negotiate their identities through different languages in different social contexts knowingly and perhaps not so consciously. For example, the study explores how CLIL multilingual learners make meaning of their school environment that is rich in languages and enables them to manifest their identities using different languages. The learners' normal school day is filled with at least two languages; one could argue that these learners use English and Finnish interchangeably at times seemingly without effort. Therefore, they manifest their identities in class through the English and Finnish language at times within the same utterance.

## **2.2. Linguaging and Linguistic repertoires**

Much like how our understanding of multilingualism has evolved, our understanding of language has as well. It is important to explain how language is conceptualized in the present study before going any further. Dufva et al. (2011) observe that throughout history, the orthodox way of defining *language* has been mainly through geography and grammar. They (2011) argue that geography has determined the definition of language through the notion of ‘one nation one

language'. This belief came into existence when nations were separated geographically. For example, the Swedish language became known as such when it was assigned to the land of Sweden. Dufva et al. (2011) suggest that the reason behind such views was politics, as there were agendas to separate “*horizontally*” and “*vertically*” (2011:111). This meant that languages were not only divided by nations but also *within* nations. This division was made according to dialects and their relative positions in the country. Some dialects were valued more than others, hence making them nationally recognized and the preferred way of speaking. At the same time, while the goal was to separate according to nations and dialects, the agenda also aimed to unite inhabitants of the same country through one language, one language belonging to the inhabitants of the society where it was spoken. This concept of identifying a language also relates to the fundamentals of the study, the nuances of identification with one language. People more than often identify a language with the country they identify with. The dis/identification with one language reveals one’s language identity. Furthermore, Dufva et al. (2011) argue that for the longest time grammar has played a major role in defining language. Educators, scholars and learners put great value on grammar when it comes to learning/acquiring a language, therefore making it a crucial way of defining and separating languages from one another. Dufva et al. (2011) suggest that this way of thinking neglects to reflect how people actually perceive language use these days.

Drawing on Dufva et al.’s (2011) conclusion of language’s primary purpose, the study perceives language as a means which one fundamentally uses to understand and express one’s thoughts, world and ideologies. In addition, language is time-, history- and culture-dependent. As how one uses language can vary depending on the situation, place and time, it is important to recognize that language is never fixed but prone to change, adapt and evolve much like the human psyche and the world. The present study discovers how the multilingual participants navigate through their world using different languages while respecting the social settings. For example, this can be explored in an environment where plurilinguals practice versatile language use, in school. School can be seen as a great space and resource where plurilinguals can learn language(s) and follow their progression in their learning process. As their ability to learn a language develops, their language awareness increases as well. This enhances the notion of language learning/acquisition being a constant process in which the use constantly develop skills and knowledge on how to expand the competence in that language. This approach towards language learning/acquisition leads to how language is further perceived in the present study.

Dufva et al. (2011) urge that people's conception of language should match how people use language. They challenge that since how one learns/acquires language is a rather ceaseless process, people must modify their understanding of language learning/acquisition being absolute. Also, Becker (1991) challenges this perception of language and argues that it is non-existent. Instead, Becker (1991:34) suggests what happens is a "continual languaging". Becker (1991:34) further explains that language learning and acquisition is a never-ending, ever-evolving process, therefore, our understanding and definition should reflect that. Becker's theory aligns with Dufva et al. (2011) as they all emphasize the dynamic aspect of language. Becker (1991) proposes that since the process never stops, a continuous verb (*languaging*) must be used to explain the process. Much like Becker (1991), Swain (2006) further expanded the definition of the term. Without knowing that other scholars had introduced the term, Swain (2006:98) described languaging as a "process of making meaning and shaping knowledge and experience through language". In other words, human beings use languaging to understand and experience the world. Swain (2006:97) further argues that languaging is a tool that one uses to express one's ideologies, be it orally or in writing. Moreover, Love (2017:115) says that "[l]anguaging is a cover term for activities involving language: speaking, hearing (listening), writing, reading, 'signing' and interpreting sign language".

Furthermore, Dufva et al. (2011) argue that the description of language requires further modification. They (2011:2) point out that the multiple and different characteristics, versatile practices and prospects that belong to a language make a language "multilingual". Take, for example, the different dialects of English: at times they make it sound like a completely different language. Dufva et al. (2011) suggest that those little nuances that make a language dynamic, and its different speakers, make language multilingual. Therefore, according to them, speakers of English are in fact multilingual speakers. Further, Dufva et al. (2011) note that when one first acquires or learns a language, one quickly realizes the many and versatile practices and prospects of the language. Dufva et al. (2011) propose that language also tends to reflect the changes that happen in the world as we constantly strive to identify phenomena and matters linguistically. For instance, the invention of technology has required the birth of new vocabulary. Consequently, as our experience of the world evolves, so does our demand for language to evolve. In addition, the process of how one learns language and how it develops throughout the (academic) years also challenges the notion of how we tend to think of learning and acquiring a language. Language

learning/acquiring is rather something that develops and changes throughout life, therefore it seems fitting to think of it as a lifelong process.

Drawing on language learning/acquisition being a process, Blommaert and Backus (2011) suggest that people should not feel discouraged by this but instead be encouraged. Blommaert and Backus (2011) note that it is nearly impossible to have full competence in all that a language has to offer, even when one is expected to have some degree of competence in a language. This means that one is not expected to have full competence in, for example, sociolinguistics, psychology, economics and so on. However, what is important is that one acquires the policies of how to use the language; i.e., one must understand when to use the right form and register in the suitable social setting. Take, for example, a scientific report: it ought to meet the socially and culturally accepted requirements in order to fulfill its purpose. Furthermore, García, and Wei (2014:8) state

“language is not a simple system of structures that is independent of human actions with others, of our being with others. The term languaging is needed to refer to the simultaneous process of continuous becoming of ourselves and our language practices as we interact and make meaning in the world”.

The notion of languaging leads us to a term used in the present study to define one’s language skills, linguistic repertoire, also known as language repertoire, which in return leads us to one of the main goals of the study. According to Gumperz (1964: 137-8), linguistic repertoire is an umbrella term used to explain how people use their language skills to communicate, make meaning of their world and express themselves, ideologies and identities. Gumperz (1964:138) points out that more often than not people intend to use language in a socially accepted way. People do so by choosing the right register or speech style to fit the social setting. This means that people understand the nuances of language (language awareness) i.e. grammar, register, style, tone and so on. For instance, the register of a television talk show will differ to a speech written to address the president. People learn to differentiate and use speech styles appropriately, as they acquire/learn a language. Gumperz (1964:138) further mentions that people have the right and freedom to choose how to use their linguistic repertoire. However, this decision is conditioned by grammar and social circumstances. This means that speakers can decide how to utilize their linguistic repertoire but how they use it is dependent on the linguistic repertoire of other(s) and social settings. For example, a mother cannot talk to her newborn baby the same way she does to her teenage daughter, whose linguistic skills have developed further than the baby’s. Therefore, while people get to choose their linguistic repertoire as they please, they must use it appropriately.



It is crucial to understand this in order to be able to answer one of the research questions, how one's environment shapes one's language identity. Conceptualizing how the participants use language allows the possibility of understanding the role of language(s) in their day-to-day lives.

In addition, linguistic or language identity is rather multilayered and subjective. Fisher et al. (2018:1-2) explain that “linguistic identity refers to the way one identifies (or is identified by others) in each of the languages in one's linguistic repertoire”. One example could be the participants' self-identification as L2 Finnish speakers but also the higher recognition by the school. Moreover, Bustamante-López (2008: 279) defines linguistic identities as “the languages we employ to represent ourselves”. In other words, linguistic identity is a phenomenon that explains the usage of language(s) when we want to express our ideas, beliefs and actions. Consequently, Bustamante-López (2008:279) argues that speaking many languages enables multiple-language speakers to have various means and tools to express their identities due to the opportunities provided by the different languages. While speaking more languages can mean more flexibility and chances in one's understanding and how one navigates through one's world, how one identifies with a language plays a major role in how one manifests one's identity in that language. How one identifies with a language can be subjective and contextual, much like how one identifies oneself. Anchimbe (2007:9) challenges that identifying oneself with a certain language and identifying oneself as a *speaker* of a specific language can be interpreted in two different ways. This further showcases the intricacy of identity even in language/linguistic identity. Anchimbe (2007:9) states that history can play a significant role in how one identifies as a certain language speaker. He explains, for example, that French speakers in France (native or non-native) most probably differ from French speakers who come from countries that were colonized by France. Consequently, Anchimbe (2007) deduces that the identities of these two French speakers differ due to circumstances. Drawing on the participants of the present study, they have a Finnish language speaker identity that is different from the linguistic identity of those whose first language is Finnish. The situations and circumstances from which they have acquired or learnt Finnish diverge; hence, their identification with the language also differs.

Fisher et al. (2018:1-2) argue, “a multilingual identity is an ‘umbrella’ identity, where one explicitly identifies as multilingual precisely because of an awareness of the linguistic repertoire one has”. This study aims to discover whether the participants themselves confirm the multilingual identity assumed by the researcher on the basis of the definition of a multilingual speaker. The

informants speak at least two languages and are therefore by definition multilingual speakers. However, only the speakers themselves can prescribe to the identification of multilingual identity. Moreover, linguistic identity is seen in how these multilinguals identify each language they speak. For instance, how do the participants identify their Finnish linguistic identity, and how does it compare to the rest of the languages that are part of their linguistic repertoire.

### **2.3. Heritage Language Speakers**

This section presents an argument for the choice to refer to nearly all of the participants' first language (L1) as a *heritage language* (HL) rather than as a mother tongue. As I began analyzing the data of the present study, I came to realize that the characteristics of the participants' first language appeared to be similar, and these characterizations matched those of a HL. The definition of one's first ever acquired or learnt language has been defined under various aliases – mother tongue, first language, native language, etc. How one defines one's first acquired language can differ due to various reasons (usage, aptitude etc.); however, there were specific elements of HL that I saw fit the nuances of the participants' L1. The main reasons for choosing HL is a) the position of the language in this society, b) position of the speakers in this society (being L2 Finnish speakers), and c) the learning/acquisition of the language and the speakers' exposure to the language.

Ann Kelleher (2010:1) states that “heritage language is used to identify languages other than the dominant language (or languages) in a given social context”. In this case, any language (spoken by a community) that is not any of Finland's two official languages (Finnish and Swedish) can be considered a HL regardless of the size of the language community. Furthermore, Polinsky (2014:1) identifies a HL speaker to be someone who is a second-generation or first-generation immigrant who has migrated at a very young age and has had to learn/acquire a HL and a local language, if not simultaneously, respectively. Moreover, Polinsky (2014) remarks that it must be noted that HL speakers are rather heterogeneous in their competence as it is common for them to have a variety or difference in their heritage language skills. Polinsky (2014) also concludes that quite often HL speakers become more skillful in the local language and their HL proficiency rarely matches up to or exceeds the language of the society they live in.

As mentioned above, a HL speaker can be a second- or first-generation immigrant. Polinsky (2014:1) argues that HL speakers formulate a “cultural or familial connection to their heritage

language”. In cases such as migrating from one place to another, the importance of maintaining one’s origins can be detected in the motivation and reinforcements for learning and teaching about the culture and language of origin. HL speakers recognize the importance of learning the language not only to preserve their culture and language but also for the opportunity to speak the language of their preceding generations, the primary language that their families and relatives use to communicate with one another. Consequently, this enables them to develop familial relations through those languages. Also, quite often the only exposure they have to the language is through their immediate families (Rothman 2007:360). This means that time and again the only source of acquiring/learning the language is through a(n) (in)formal way of learning and teaching and through the interactions they have with their immediate and distant families. Polinsky (2014:5) remarks that the exposure HL speakers have to the language will often depend on the importance and resources the family puts into teaching the language. As this can be subjective, the competence in HL can, and often does, vary.

Kelleher (2001) observes that HL speakers differ in their skill competence; some may excel in all skills (listening, speaking, writing, reading) while others may only understand the language but fail to produce it (though they continue to be part of the community). Polinsky (2014:2) notes that HL speakers could also include speakers that have very minimal (if any) skills in the language, which makes them “receptive bilinguals”. Polinsky (2014:6) examines that in order for a HL speaker to develop all four-language skills the speaker must obtain “formal instruction”. However, Polinsky (2014:1) observes that this rarely happens and HL speakers are less likely to ever develop fluency in their HL. Polinsky (2014:4) reasons this by arguing that HL speakers never develop their skills to native-like skills because the input and the output of the language becomes limited to a certain level as it never gets exposed to versatile ways of using and learning the language. In addition, HL speakers seldom receive formal teaching. This ultimately determines how far the language can develop unless speakers put in a tremendous amount of effort to further develop the language.

#### **2.4. Translanguaging**

In order to understand plurilingual speakers, the subjects of the present study, one must discuss a phenomenon that is evidently a part of many language speakers’ way of using languages and expressing themselves, *translanguaging*. *Translanguaging*, a phenomenon coined by Cen

Williams in Wales, was first used to explain how using two languages without any barriers could enrich learning (Baker 2011:288). In other words, translanguaging was seen as a mean for bilinguals to dispute the notion of separating languages (one language as one entity) and instead break those limiting barriers to maximize language use. Scholars such as García and Wei (2014) have since further expanded its definition, arguing that translanguaging transcends beyond language barriers and enables fluidity between languages in oral and written discourse. In translanguaging, speakers of more than one language can utilize all of their different linguistic features that are part of their one linguistic repertoire in order to make meaning and the most of communication. Further, García and Wei (2014:21) state that translanguaging “refers to new language practices that make visible the complexity of language exchanges among people with different histories, and releases histories and understandings that had been buried within fixed language identities constrained by nation-states”. Since its emergence, different scholars have defined translanguaging differently often differentiating the fluidity and breaking barriers between languages and their features. However in this study, García and Wei’s definition will be used as it best describes the language practices of the participants of this study. The biggest reason for this is that these participants exist in an environment that is rich in different languages and where speakers consciously and subconsciously maneuver between languages and language features without creating any barriers seems to match the nature of translanguaging. Furthermore, García and Wei’s (2014:22) argument to which such speakers utilizing all of their linguistic skills or repertoires to make the most of their surroundings and operate in it fits how the participants employ their languages in their environment.

As for why I am choosing to use translanguaging instead of code-switching, a phenomena that has a longer history, García, Johnson and Seltzer (2017:20) argue that code-switching functions under the premise that languages are separated entities and code-switching happens between these separate languages. In doing so, code-switching, therefore, regards speakers of many languages as of monolinguals who use languages separately. On the contrary, García et al. (2017:20) explain that in translanguaging, speakers use languages based on the understanding of having one linguistic repertoire that provides multiple language skills which are available at all times. García et al. (2017:18) explain that one’s language repertoire consists of “linguistic features that are associated socially and politically with one language or another and are named English,

Spanish, Chinese, Russian, and the rest”. They (2017:18) define linguistic features to be “phonemes (sounds), words, morphemes (word forms), nouns, verbs, adjectives, tense systems, pronoun systems, case distinctions, gender distinctions, syntactic rules, and discourse markers (e.g., marking transitions, information structure)”. Moreover, García et al. (2017:18) state that speakers of more than two languages use languages differently to those who speak only one language because they have more language features to choose from within their linguistic repertoires. They (2017) state that one’s linguistic skills suggest that all of one’s language features lie under the umbrella of language repertoires. Furthermore, these speakers behave based on their personal preferences rather than external and in doing so, they dissolve hierarchies between languages or when hierarchies between languages do occur, they are done by the speakers themselves to maximize communication and self-understanding and expression.

Translanguaging is known to have benefits to its users. Firstly, it encourages users to consider that “languages as practices that are used in different social contexts for different purposes” (García, Johnson and Seltzer 2017:12). In other words, it helps users critically think of all the factors that affect and shape communication. Speakers fathom that these factors such as the linguistic repertoire of others and societal circumstances of the interaction can shape and even dictate the interaction. To be more specific, it encourages users to assess and value their linguistic repertoires to fully make meaning of their world. For example, the present study aims to discover how multilinguals choose which language to use, with whom and for what purpose, a practice that can also be explained through languaging. According to García et al. (2017:12), this practice consequently leads to another benefit, “critical metalinguistic awareness”. A critical metalinguistic awareness refers to one’s ability to understand deeper nuances of a language such as form, style, structure and lexicon. In addition, metalinguistic awareness can also refer to one’s awareness of linguistic features. When one has critical metalinguistic awareness one also has the ability to know when and how to use language and language features. Moreover, García et al. (2017:12) urge that speakers who use translanguaging apprehend that language can have “social, political and ideological aspects” to it. This refers to societally constructed ideologies of the different positioning of languages or their hierarchies. From an individual stand this could be seen in how one values one’s language skills and from a societal stand this could be seen in the languages that are preferred in academia and society, for example, the high regards of English. Moreover, they (2017:14) also argue that translanguaging encourages practices in classroom that “promote social

justice”. Learners, whose skills may not match ‘what one is supposed to strive for- native like skills’, can confidently use their entire linguistic repertoire to stay active and participate in classroom activities without any restrictions. Therefore, in creating an environment where students freely get to use their linguistic repertoires, students are encouraged to be active academically as well.

## **2.5. Content and language integrated learning**

This section discusses a practice, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), which plays a major role in the present study as it provides some explanations for the linguistic behaviors of the participants. The participants of the present study are members of a classroom that uses English as a teaching and learning medium alongside Finnish. This means that English is integrated into the content of all subjects, making it the second language through which instruction takes place in all subjects apart from L1 Finnish. Researchers have focused on different aspects of language learning and teaching in order to have a comprehensive understanding of, and to improve, the quality of education systems. For instance, one of the issues that has been studied is the integration of a second or foreign language as a mean of teaching and learning in all subjects. Employing L1 and L2 as instruction languages is arguably an old part of education but it has had different names at different times. In addition to CLIL, the phenomenon has been presented under multiple concepts such as *immersion* or *bilingual education*. While each practice may differ in small details, they all pursue the same goal, using the L1 of the country and a second/foreign language in instruction (Seikkula-Leino 2007:329). The L1 of the local national language in this case is Finnish. (Dalton-Puffer 2007:13).

Despite the fact that the use of L1 and L2 as instruction languages is an ancient teaching philosophy, CLIL as a term and its incorporation into the European education system has only been recognized starting in the 1990s. Dalton-Puffer (2007:13) argues that the introduction of CLIL in Europe was mainly driven by a political cause, the increase in “internationalization and globalization”. Europe had managed, and continues, to attract outsiders due to its constant “[d]emographic developments” (Dalton-Puffer 2007:13). Due to this political agenda, a need to educate people to match up and thrive in a world of internationalization and globalization became apparent for academic institutions. In order to solve this need, academic institutions resorted to employing what were then recognized as internationally prestigious languages into teaching and

learning in order to maximize learners' aptitude and ability to adapt in an ever-changing world (2007:13-14). These languages were English, German and French. Seikkula-Leino (2007) characterizes English as being the most used CLIL language next to Russian, German and French in Finland. The school from which the data was collected uses English in its CLIL classrooms. Dalton-Puffer (2007:14) cites that a CLIL classroom can be offered in all levels of school, starting from pre-school to higher education. The participants of the present study had been in a CLIL classroom since the first grade. This means that English has been part of their learning and teaching process for already six years. How one uses CLIL is often determined by schools and teachers. This is often resolved by the teacher's teaching philosophy. (Dalton-Puffer 2007).

Like other teaching philosophies, CLIL has been researched in the hope of discovering its advantages and disadvantages. The use of CLIL has been questioned and studied by various researchers. Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols (2008:20) report that one of the concerns that has been raised in regard to using CLIL is whether learning in L2 enables learners to learn the same content as well as those using in L1. In her study, Seikkula-Leino (2007) researched this issue in CLIL and non-CLIL fifth and sixth graders. She concludes that the marginal differences suggest that nonCLIL learners did slightly better than CLIL learners. In fact, Mehisto et al. (2008) note that CLIL greatly benefits its learners in several ways. One important advantage is that it enhances learners' "metalinguistic awareness. This means that they are better able to compare languages and be more precise in their word choice and in passing on the content of their message". CLIL has also other benefits, it enhances one's language awareness, which plays a major role in understanding one's linguistic identities. Language awareness explains the process in which a language learner develops from a language learner into a language user. This means that when one begins to learn a language, one is in the process of understanding the mechanics behind learning the language, but once that happens, the learner begins to use the learnt language under the premise of fully understanding when, how and with whom to use the language (Marsh 2012:58.)

## **2.6. Need for this study**

Research shows that individuals speaking multiple languages have long been part of human history, nevertheless, the presence and impact of multilingualism and multilinguals in societies seem to be trending globally in recent times. Pitkänen-Huhta and Mäntylä (2014) state that the interest in multilingualism has been present in the field of linguistics for a long time. However,

they remark that certain aspects, which could benefit learners, need more attention. One of these issues is the lack of research on how to utilize multilingualism in language learning. They note that prior to their research, multilingualism had been researched from many angles in hopes of gaining insight into its effects on learning. However, it had not been researched as an additional resource that can be utilized in language learning. Moreover, they (2014) emphasize that educators in Finland lack knowledge in how to deal with multilingualism and that, in fact, the matter is minimally recognized in teacher training. They (2014) argue that this can be alarming as the number of learners with different language backgrounds is continuously increasing. This means that current and future educators have little, if any, tools in dealing with learners with different language backgrounds. This could potentially result in teachers not being able to support their learners in ways they would need or would maximize their learning ability. Thus, this challenges higher education to provide the appropriate tools and information for current and future teachers to support and maximize these learners' skills. This means that in order to do so, there are still aspects to multilingualism that can be explored and examined still. For example, multilingualism and linguistic identity among young multilingual speakers have been researched both on a small scale (e.g., master theses) and on a slightly larger scale (e.g., doctoral theses). The focus of the research and the methods used have differed somewhat, thus resulting in different outcomes. However, all the interest that has been raised in the issue has, and will further the much-needed understanding of multilingualism in Finland. There is still a huge gap in understanding how young learners with versatile linguistic skills utilize their linguistic repertoire to function in their immediate world. Consequently, the present study's aim is to provide a different perspective of young multilinguals and their linguistic identities in Finland.

Boeckmann, Aalto, Abel, Atanasoska and Lamb (2011:23) argue that for learners to flourish in a multilingual environment (the reality in many schools), schools must provide an environment that encourages and supports multilingualism. In other words, the school plays an important role in developing learners' diverse language skills. As it is one of the present study's goals to highlight positive aspects of multilingualism, it seemed fitting to see how schools encourage and support multilingualism. Bearing this in mind, one of my research questions is how one's environment affects and enables one's ability to use language(s). The first research method, ethnographic observation, aims to unveil how the school's environment shapes and allows multilingual learners



to use language(s). As language use is perceived to be content- and setting-dependent, the role of environment is seen as predominant in how one develops language and language identity.

Yle (2011), the national broadcasting company, reported that multilingualism has been part of many Finnish schools. Schools such as Hakunila deal with pupils who speak a combined total of 20 mother tongues, making it one of Finland's most multilingual schools. While the details of the backgrounds of these languages or the learners were barely discussed in the article, two educators from the school, Rapatilla and Postilla pointed out that the majority of these children are second-generation immigrants. Second-generation immigrants are people who were born in Finland, but whose parent(s) were born elsewhere (Martikainen & Haikkola 2010, p. 9). Rapatilla and Postilla remark that some of the learners speak more than two languages, a remarkable accomplishment that aids them in learning other languages. The educators note that these pupils possess skills that put them at an advantage compared to L1 Finnish speakers. They state that these learners "*can see beyond language*". Cenoz and Todeva (2009:278) confirms this and argue that knowing and speaking many languages can develop "linguistic knowledge", which in return eases the learning of other languages.

In order to understand and help young plurilinguals in Finland, we must understand how they continue to learn and use language. Pietikäinen et al. (2010) argue that one crucial aspect of how one learns languages is one's previous experiences with language learning/acquisition, therefore, one way to understand learners' experiences with language learning/ acquisition is to understand their relationship with the languages they speak (language identity) and languaging. Moreover, Pietikäinen et al. (2010) note that one's agency and social settings enable or constrain what one can do with language. As mentioned before, multilingualism in media tends to have negative tone and speaks mainly of the 'challenges' multilingual speakers face in schools and society. Therefore, by researching first how they learn/acquire language we can slowly begin to understand their high language and even linguistic skills. This present study aims to study multilingual speakers as a group in a unique environment, however it also aims to highlight the individuality of the participants by individually looking at their versatile language use, linguistic repertoire and identities.

In their article, Kalaja and Pitkänen-Huhta (2020) report that while multilingualism continues to be the norm in schools, teachers are yet to be provided with tools to approach multilingualism in ways that can be used in teaching. According to Kalaja and Pitkänen-Huhta

(2020:6), the recent National Core Curriculum (NCC) for grades 1-9 (2014) emphasizes “learners’ language awareness”, and “appreciation of multilingualism and multiculturalism”. Moreover, they (2020:6) point out that the NCC also encourages learners to “develop their proficiency in FLs in three abilities, i.e. in the ability to interact, interpret, and/or produce texts in different modes”. Motivated by these initiatives and problem, they (2020) examined ways to explore and expand multilingual learners’ language and culture awareness using visual methodologies, which are becoming more and more popular in researching language awareness. Their research allowed participants to draw on their own perceptions, “trajectories and future aspirations by opening up spaces of self-reflection and identity construction” (Kalaja and Pitkänen-Huhta 2020:13).

To sum up, researching plurilingualism, translanguaging and language identity is a timely matter that can greatly be explored in Finland due to many reasons. As mentioned above, there has been some research and the most recent one being Kalaja and Pitkänen-Huhta (2020) in which similar topics and phenomenon were researched. Due to the NCC (2014)’s emphasis on language/cultural awareness, multiliteracy and multilingualism, researching plurilinguals’ language identity and awareness is rather a timely issue.

### 3. THE PRESENT STUDY

This chapter discusses the research questions and how the chosen methods were constructed and developed to fit the needs of this study. It begins with an overview of the participants and research questions, and continues with information on the data and methodology. The methods (ethnographic observation, semi-structured interviews and drawings) are discussed in detail in the order of collection. Finally, methods of analysis and the ethics of the study are explored.

#### **3.1. Data collection**

This segment entails basic and common information about how and where the data was collected. The data was collected from a school located in Southern Finland with pupils of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. There are forty-nine languages spoken in this particular school. One can assume that a school with such a diversity of languages would provide an environment where learners' linguistic skills and identities get to flourish. The school as such was used to see how language use in such an environment is practiced. While schools with similar numbers of learners with different L1 can be found in areas such as East Helsinki, the circumstances of this school do not represent those schools or every school in Finland. It is crucial to understand that the ethnographic observation of the school is contextual and perhaps unique in comparison to the majority of schools in Finland, having said that, the semi-structured interviews in which the plurilingual participants share their experiences, they can be detected in other contexts and studies as well.

Like most schools in Finland, the school follows the national core curriculum but also provides CLIL classes and has a separate branch of International Baccalaureate curriculum. This means that in addition to Finnish, English is used as a (second) teaching and learning language. The ethnographic observation mainly took place in a home classroom which was a CLIL classroom. The class which took part in this study was one such language immersion class. This supported the study as it assured that the pupils were at least bilingual (Finnish and English) and familiar with using at least two languages on a nearly daily basis, allowing for more room to explore multilingualism and linguistic identities.

While the school from which the data was collected provided insights on language use from a larger spectrum, the classroom did so from a smaller and closer spectrum. There were always 20

pupils in the classroom where observation mostly took place. However, there were other classrooms where other specific lessons, for instance Swedish, were taught, and those classes often included learners from different classrooms. Learners often sat in round tables of five. It is crucial to note that ethnography was used to understand the uniqueness of the school and this class. It is also important to remember the unusual nature of this particular school; it is not a representative of a 'normal' school in Finland. Even though, as Pitkänen-Huhta and Mäntylä (2014) disclose, multilingualism is slowly becoming the norm in nearly all schools these days, this particular school differs in terms of the number of pupils who speak Finnish as a second language and in its provision of CLIL classrooms.

### **3.2. Research aim and questions**

The fundamental purpose of qualitative research is to investigate a phenomenon in hopes of understanding its function, characteristics and members from a social point of view (Croker, 2009:5-7). As in the present study, constructivists investigate under the premise of one's ability to make meaning of one's ideologies based on one's environment, experiences and setting. In other words, one's conceived notion of identity may not only reflect one's world but is very much dependent on how that world is constantly socially constructed. Therefore, while researching a phenomenon like the linguistic identities of multilinguals, one must take into consideration that while the participants of the study may share similar aspects of their lives such as time, school and linguistic repertoires, their perception of these experiences offer different realities of what one might consider to be the same situation. This is due to each individual making meaning based on their own subjective understanding of their world. This study is interested in the subjects as individuals with various and heterogeneous understandings and awareness of their own linguistic repertoires. Along these lines, I hope to unveil how the subjects conceive their linguistic identities and the effects of their surroundings on the development of their linguistic repertoires. I aim to do so under the premise that linguistic identities are socially constructed. (Croker, 2009:6-7).

Three data collection methods were used to accomplish this: ethnography, semi-structured interviews and visual drawings. The first objective of the study is to research how, when, why and with whom the participants use the language(s) they speak. These questions aim to answer the first research question, how does one's multilingual environment shape one's linguistic identities? Note that the present study takes a *poststructuralist point of view* (see section 2.1) in understanding that

one has hybrid, multiple identities that are time-, situation- and context-dependent. Additionally, language is considered a tool people use to express and construct their identities by identifying (or not identifying) with certain languages or language features (Aronin and Singleton 2012). Language identity is viewed similarly; speakers of multiple languages can have different language identities while speaking a certain language. For example, the participants' Finnish speaker identity differs from their Swedish speaker identity due to the level, situations and circumstance in which they speak the language. Moreover, the participants' language identity can differ even with the same language as various factors alter one's understanding and manifestation of identity and language identity (Anchimbe 2018:9). The second objective is to find concrete answers to the questions listed above in the first objective of the study using ethnography and semi-structured interviews. The third and last objective is to explore participants' language identity awareness and how they express it. The visual drawings aspire to discover how the participants see themselves as many-languages users. Consequently, the present study aspires to answer the following research questions:

1. How does one's multilingual environment shape one's linguistic identities?
2. How do multilingual sixth graders manifest language awareness and identities?

### **3.3. Data collection methods**

The aim of the present study is to investigate how aware multilingual speakers are of their multilingual skills in shaping their linguistic identities. This section begins with an explanation of the data collection methods and why they were chosen. A brief explanation of the methods will be followed by detailed information on each method separately in the order of which they were conducted. Considering the aims of this study, the use of a combination of different methods was deemed most appropriate. The first method, ethnography, was chosen to provide insights into the culture of a multilinguistic and multicultural school and to see how such an environment could shape learners' linguistic identities. The other two methods, semi-structured interviews and visual drawings, which were the main and primary mean of data collection, were chosen to provide insights into the reasons for when, where, with whom and why participants use each language, whether they are aware of their linguistic practices and how consciously they link them to their linguistic identities. More precisely, the visual drawings aspire to reveal how the learners perceived

their own linguistic identities. Prior to data collection, extensive research was done on the chosen methods in order to have a general and comprehensive idea of what to expect before going into the field to collect data.

### **3.4. Ethnography observation**

The foundation of the study's data collection was ethnographic observation. This section includes a description of the significance and procedure of ethnographic observation in this study, including a detailed review of the reasons for selecting ethnography and the nature and circumstances of where the ethnographic observation took place. Prior to gaining a deeper and individual understanding of the participants' linguistic identities, it seemed beneficial to start with a setting or platform that provides learners with different languages and cultures, the school. The school was seen as a podium where these participants get to learn, practice, speak, and hear many different languages, indicating that the school plays a major role in developing the participants' language skills and identities. The school was perceived as a place that enables and encourages its learners to have many linguistic identities and perhaps even raises their awareness of these identities. Ethnography was chosen as an ideal method to understand how the participants behave in such an environment and community.

Blommaert and Jie (2010:4) distinguish between the use of ethnography as a *method* and as an *approach*. "Ethnography is perceived as a *method* for collecting different types of data and thus as something that can be added". This means that ethnography within itself can be understood as an umbrella, harboring different types of methodology to produce well-rounded research. As mentioned earlier, interviews and visual means were used in the present study along with ethnographic observation. Moreover, Blommaert and Jie (2010:4) discover that in linguistics, ethnography used as a method enables a researcher to observe and define things as they are. In this study, it can be said that ethnography was used as a method and an approach. Ethnography was used to observe the pupils in their normal day-to-day multilingual and multicultural school setting, providing a better understanding of how they act in an environment where speaking different and many languages is the norm and continuously present, therefore making it an approach. Ethnographic observation provided insights into the community of the school – information on how and with whom learners used each language to communicate. Heigham and Sakui (2009:92) confirm that "ethnographers' main purpose is to learn enough about a group to create a cultural

portrait of how the people belonging to that culture live, work and/or play together”. Another reason for choosing ethnography is Heller’s (2009) remark on previous studies that focused on issues such as bilingualism. Heller (2009:256) notes that researchers in bilingualism tend to combine different methods, and that, amongst these methods, a “combination of observation (usually accompanied by audio- or videotape recording) and interviews” was the most prominent and effective.

In this study, ethnography aimed to discover how the subjects act, communicate and function as individuals and group members of a school environment that is rich in languages and different cultures (Cowie 2009:166). It aspired to uncover how they employ language(s) in their day-to-day life, what they believe about it and why, all from the standpoint that it is a social construction (Heller 2009). Furthermore, it was done to see how they have built their linguistic repertoire, how their language ideologies/identities can be detected in classrooms/school based on their behaviors and interactions. As language use was of great interest for the present study, *fieldwork* was thought necessary to understand the culture of the school and, most importantly, the CLIL classroom (Heigham and Sakui 2009:96). Doing fieldwork in the school and in the classroom, I began to comprehend how learners behaved in these settings. Heller (2009) also suggests that fieldwork can be beneficial in terms of providing insights which can reveal how and why something has come to be over time. It is unquestionable that plenty of things happen simultaneously in a class and in the school, but the focus during this period was only on language use during classes and occasionally recess.

Blommaert and Jie (2010:16) identify three steps that take place in carrying out ethnographic observations, classified in the order in which they often occur: *prior to, during and after fieldwork*. Actions that take place before fieldwork entail “preparation and documentation” (2010:16). First, preparation included extensive research on multilingualism, linguistic identity, multilinguals and ethnography. This provided insights on how ethnography can be employed when dealing with identity and multilingualism. The authors (2010:16-23) emphasize the importance of researching the place where the fieldwork takes place; advise researchers to be prepared and to always expect that things may not go as planned (and therefore to adapt); note that it is essential to try to comprehend the history of the place in order to be able to get the most out of the findings; and urge that the field, which they describe as “the object”, can only be fully understood and explored “when it is adequately contextualized in micro- and macro-contexts” (2010:18). I decided

to collect the data from this particular school before I had decided which methods to apply. I had heard that the school has a diverse background in languages, making it a perfect environment to collect the data needed for this study. The school seemed to provide a door to understanding how one's environment can shape one's linguistic identities, the first research question. Moreover, it seemed important to understand this specific community before attempting to understand the individuals in it.

The *during the fieldwork* stage entailed the actual process of data collection. Before data collection, research approval permits with all the necessary information on the study were given to the headmaster and the teacher of the classroom in which ethnography and interviews were conducted. (Kalaja et al. 2011: 22-23) The headmaster of the school granted permission to interview pupils and carry out the ethnographic observation. This permission granted access to the entire school, hence making it possible to do ethnographic observations in the entire school at any time. As for the selection of the class, knowing that outsiders are allowed to observe on-going class at any given time encouraged me to choose a class from which I could potentially collect the necessary data. I decided to ask a teacher of sixth graders to observe a lesson. The teacher welcomed me and after the lesson, I told the teacher about my research and asked about the background of the learners. The teacher explained that there was a diversity in the mother tongues of the learners and that I was welcome to collect data. I had observed a few classes before the teacher allowed me to introduce myself to the whole class. I explained to the class that I was conducting research that required observing and interviewing some of them provided that they wanted to participate. I began taking field notes immediately after the headmaster and teacher gave me permission. The ethnographic observation lasted for about four weeks between April and May 2017. During that period, the class went on a trip to Berlin for a week, resulting in the interruption of the observations. Thus, ethnography yielded three weeks' worth of materials during which field notes were taken. Although three weeks of fieldwork may not fully explain the culture of a community, one can get a broad idea of what happens in a language immersion classroom with multilingual learners. In order to maximize the outcome of the fieldwork and build a relationship with the learners, I tried to attend at least three lessons a day. One lesson lasts forty-five minutes and I spent most of the time in the home class in question.

The fieldwork included the most popular methods utilized in ethnography: observation and interviews (Heigham and Sakui 2009:97). The goal of the observation was to note what language(s)



was used, between whom the interactions occurred and any shifts in languages. Whenever something related to language use occurred, it was written down on what Cowie (2007:167) calls “field notes”. The field notes were taken during the entire time I spent in the school and some of these field notes were used as part of the data in the present study. Other means that can be utilized to collect data in observation are different recording equipment, photographs and participants’ work, such as ‘notebooks’. In the case of the present study, field notes were the only means of collecting data from the field (Blommaert and Jie 2010:31). As the plan was to spend as much time as possible in the field in order to gain a deep understanding of the culture of the school, it was decided that field notes would be enough for the present data, since there were two other methods to provide sufficient data. Field notes were taken, for instance, during incidents such as the teacher asking a question in English but pupils answering in Finnish or when pupils spoke in their mother tongue with one another. The field notes were used to shed light on the nature and culture of multilingual speakers in an environment rich in different languages and cultures. In other words, they were used to note how the members of this specific community used their linguistic repertoires to communicate. Fieldnotes provided information that helps understand the learners as a part of a community. They were also used in the analysis phase to support or contradict what the participants said, providing important descriptions. The conclusions that were drawn based on the ethnographic observation manifest only what was collected from this particular school, therefore making the remarks contextual (Blommaert and Jie 2010: 16-17). In doing so, the analysis drawn from ethnography unveils the characteristics of the school. Finally, analysis of the data from the fieldwork is what Blommaert and Jie (2010) characterize as *after fieldwork*. This will be separately discussed in the methods of analysis section (see section 3.7).

Cowie (2009:166-167) explains that the involvement of the observer tends to depend on the nature and direction of the study, meaning that the role of the researcher is not fixed but can change as the study develops. He (2009:167) notes, “participation does not have to mean taking a full part in whatever activity is going on. Rather, it means interacting with people while they are carrying out their normal tasks such as teaching or studying”, which is what happened in the present study. Observation was the primary goal, but occasional participation was also part of the data. The teacher had encouraged me to participate whenever help was needed. For example, I assisted during mathematics lessons during which pupils often worked independently and helped one another. Assistance was provided by walking around the classroom aiding with the

mathematical problems that the pupils faced and could not solve on their own. Additionally, I took part in oral tasks during Swedish lessons where I partnered up with a learner who did not have one.

Participation was seen as beneficial in establishing relations with pupils. In addition, it helped develop a relationship and trust between us. This made approaching and talking to them easier as they became familiar with the researcher. Furthermore, this familiarity helped to the interviews go more smoothly. The last interviews were perhaps more interactive and relaxed because the learners had gotten used to my presence and got to know me a little bit. I also became more comfortable, especially with certain learners, because I started building a relationship with them. These relationships were built through small interactions I would have while doing the ethnographic observations. Moreover, conducting interviews during which I was able to get to know the informants made post-interview interactions much easier. Having said that, I tried to be conscious of my role as a researcher throughout the observation period.

Heigham and Sakui (2010:97) argue that it is crucial for the researcher to be able to establish an “emic position” while also preserving an “etic position”. In a perfect scenario, a researcher should establish a relationship to be able to participate within the community s/he is researching (being in an emic position). Through this, the researcher can hope to gain a better understanding of the environment in question. However, the researcher must also not forget the reason why s/he is in the field. The researcher must be able to observe and describe the community from an objective, outsider perspective (from an etic position). However, the authors stress that before entering the field, the researcher must understand that while ethnography aspires to unveil a community’s habits from an outsider’s point of view, it will nonetheless always be “subjective” (2010:17).

### **3.5. Semi-structured Interviews**

The semi-structured interviews provided detailed answers to the research questions by the participants themselves. This section begins with a brief explanation of why semi-structured interviews were used and continues with an overview of what semi-structured interviews are. The primary reason for choosing semi-structured interviews was to allow the participants to explain in their own words and terms their linguistic identities and how their environment shapes these linguistic identities (Kalaja et al. 2011:131-132). Along with visual drawings, these interviews were seen as methods that would enable the informants to show their understanding and habits of

the different languages they speak. Moreover, through these two methodologies, I wanted the participants to be the protagonists of their narratives, particularly through the drawing task (Thomson and Hall 2008). Copland & Creese (2015:2) support this idea by arguing that interviews allow the researcher to have an ‘emic perspective’, meaning that the researcher’s purpose is to merely understand the informants’ ideologies on the subject of study.

The semi-structured interviews aimed to answer questions such as where and with whom the participants use the languages they speak and also to find out which language(s) they feel most able to express themselves in. Nearly all were plurilingual speakers, speaking at least three languages; Finnish, English and their mother tongue (Anchimbe 2007:6), which made them ideal subjects for the present study. This is also a crucial part of the study, as perceived and given identities play a role in one’s understanding and manifestation of one’s own identity. One of the questions for the participants was whether they thought of themselves as multilingual individuals. This set up of an identity of a multilingual speaker given by the researcher and the participants answer to the question of whether they perceive themselves as multilingual speakers in an interesting dilemma that is explored in the analysis. This opened room to discuss the complexity of an emic and given identity. Based on the background reading I had done on identities, it was important to avoid misinterpreting or telling the interviewees how they are perceived, but instead allow them to manifest their identities in ways they were comfortable with and saw fit. The interviews and visual images aimed to highlight their self-perceived identities and voices.

At its simplest, an interview is a dialogue that engages purposefully (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2001:42). Interviews and conversations tend to have a similar ground base: both happen due to an interest in finding out something while also maintaining other objectives, be it to entertain, exchange ideologies or to pass time. The purpose of the interviews was to allow participants to explain or reveal how, where, when, why and with whom they use each language, in addition to seeing how aware multilingual speakers are of their multilingual identities and discovering how the participants perceive their own linguistic identities. Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2009:73) argue that the most appealing aspect of using interview as a methodology is the flexibility it provides the interviewer. The researcher has the opportunity to assess and adapt as needed in order to ensure that the interviewees have the chance to discuss and present their ideas on the matter as they see fit (Richards 2009:186). Further, Richards (2009:185-186) explains that semi-structured (as opposed to structured) interviews give the researcher room for improvisation. Instead of being

blinded by a set of questions often designed prior to the structured interview, semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to take the interview towards a desirable outcome, which is to answer the research questions. For instance, I can “ask follow-up questions” in case of uncertainty and come up with questions that are not in the set of questions. I can make adjustments depending on the needs of the interviewee. In addition, it allowed me to come up with questions that had not occurred to me before, but may have been useful for the research. Furthermore, due to the participants’ age, the opportunity to paraphrase, reformulate questions and clarify in more detail when necessary was important to take into consideration and to be able to tailor the questions to the interviewee’s requirements (e.g., to suit their level of understanding).

As the name suggests, in semi-structured interviews, the researchers have thought of how they want to carry out the interviews, often through a set of questions or themes. In the present study, a set of questions within certain themes was listed to help answer the research questions (see Appendix 1). The first theme dealt with the interviewee’s background information (e.g., age, place of birth, etc.). This was followed by finding out about how the participant preferred to spend his/her spare time. The last theme was about language use. Each question was asked in the hope of finding out more about the linguistic identities of the informants. In order to do so, I concluded that it was relevant to discover how their homes, families, friends, hobbies and school played a role in shaping and allowing them to manifest their linguistic identities. The questions were prepared before entering the field and eventually carried out in Finnish. Some of the questions were modified after a few interviews because they seemed difficult for the participants. For example, the question “Mihin kieleen identifioit? (*Which language do you identify yourself with?*)” seemed to be too difficult. I took note of this and made sure to assess the interview before asking the interviewee this question. When asked, the question was clarified by using examples. Here are some examples of the questions;

1. Kerro enemmän sinun taustasta/ jotain perheestäsi, mitä kieliä puhutte kotona? – *Tell me something about your background, family and what language(s) do you speak at home?*
2. Montaa kieltä puhut päivässä? – *How many languages do you speak a day?*
3. Mitä ajattelet kun kuulet sanan ‘monikielinen’? / mitä siitä tulee mieleen? – *What do you think when you first hear the word ‘multilingual’/ What comes to mind when you hear the word ‘multilingual speaker’?*

4. Koetko olevasi sellainen? Jos ei, mikset? /Oletko sä monikielinen? – *Do you feel like one?*  
*If no, why not? / Are you multilingual?*

As mentioned above, the participants were chosen after a brief discussion with the class teacher. All the interviews were carried out with pupils of the same class. The class teacher explained that there were 12 pupils who were registered as second-language speakers of Finnish. This meant that they were categorized as native speakers of other languages. Once again, this was important as it guaranteed that the participants spoke at least three languages (the target participants for the present study). All the interviews were carried out after the interviewees handed in their signed research permissions. The interviews lasted from 15 to 35 minutes and were conducted individually in order to allow the interlocutor to answer as freely as possible, and enable me as the interviewer to have more time to react to, and focus on, only one interviewee (Kalaja et al. 2011:135). I did all the interviews face-to-face at school, most often in their home class, because it is advisable to do interviews in places that are familiar to the participants in order to make them feel comfortable and safe, and at the end of the school day to avoid interfering with learners' education. By the end of the procedure, eight interviews were collected.

All the interviews were carried out with pupils of the same class. The participants were chosen after a brief discussion with the class teacher. Soon after, I gave these 12 learners the research permits to give to their parents for approval of participation. Due to the age of the participants, parents' permissions were necessary before conducting the interviews and collecting the rest of the data. The details of the process of interviewing are described in the relevant section later. The table below gives some information about the participants. All the interviews were carried out during the duration of the ethnographic observation. In order to protect the identity of the participants, they were all given pseudonym names. As already mentioned, the participants are all from the sixth grade (12 or 13 years old). Of the 20 pupils in the class, 12 (also the interviewees) were registered as L2 speakers of Finnish; they were categorized as native-speakers of other languages. Importantly, identifying a language as a second language is in itself a language identity. One can self-identify what one's L1 is, but schools and society can also assign this identification. For instance, Finland allows only one L1 to be registered in one's information. This could be problematic in regards to how one identifies one's L1 and other languages in cases of multilinguals. Eight of these 12 pupils agreed to participate in the present study, five girls and three boys.

Amongst these pupils, three spoke the same HL, Albanian, one spoke Kurdish, one Arabic, one Persian, one Russian, and one English. In addition to Finnish and English, they had all started studying Swedish, either since the third grade or at the beginning of the sixth. Based on observations and their own words, all seemed to have a high level of English and Finnish.

Similarities the interviewees shared were that nearly all of their parents had moved to Finland from different parts of the world and that their L1 is different from the L1 in Finland. All but one of the participants were born and raised in Finland. The exception, Zamir, had lived in Finland with his family for about three years at the time of data collection. Apart from Zamir, all the participants had been going to this specific school since the first grade. All participants had always been part of a CLIL curriculum, which has impacted their academic career and shaped their linguistic identities in ways that are relevant to this study. Also, coming from a family that speaks a different language and has a different culture than the society in which they live has affected and modified the participants' perception of language and how to use it. Their understanding of how and why to use language(s) (i.e., their understanding of language's function) is manifested in how they daily employ language(s), i.e. which language(s) to use, with whom and for what purpose. In terms of language identities, while the participants' school languages are primarily Finnish and English, they could also include other languages, including their mother tongues/heritage languages.

As mentioned above, all the interviews were carried out with pupils of the same class. The participants were chosen after a brief discussion with the class teacher. Soon after, I gave these 12 learners the research permits to give to their parents for approval of participation. Due to the age of the participants, parents' permissions were necessary before conducting the interviews and collecting the rest of the data. The details of the process of interviewing are described in the relevant section later. The table below gives some information about the participants.

Table 1. Categorization of the interviewees using their pseudonym names.

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Place of birth</b>	<b>Mother tongue/heritage language</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>
Amina	Finland	Arabic	Girl	12
Hiba	Finland	Persian	Girl	12
Veton	Finland	Albanian	Boy	12
Zamir	Albania	Albanian	Boy	12
Edona	Finland	Albanian	Girl	12
Irina	Finland	Russian	Girl	12
Ahmed	Finland	Kurdish	Boy	13
Jenny	Finland	English	Girl	13

### **3.6. Visual Drawings**

In recent years, “visual narratives” have been used in linguistics to provide more chances for subjects to voice their own “experiences and feelings and to reflect on their language practices, identities and learning” (Kalaja et al. 2017). According to Kalaja et al. (2013:105-106), by allowing learners to share their own tales, you enable them to understand their actions and the reasons behind it, i.e., identities. Participants are given an opportunity to reflect on their subjective experiences, helping them become aware and understand the reasons for their experiences. This also gives them a chance to formulate their ideas of who they are and manifest them through other means than oral or written discourse. Drawing on this, the third and final method was a visual drawing task in which participants had to draw a portrait of themselves as speakers of language x. This form of narrative inquiry, asking multilingual learners to draw self-portraits in order to interpret their multilingual identities has been done before (Kalaja et al. 2013:108). Further developed by Kalaja et al. (2013) and done by Melo-Pfeifer (2017), visual narratives were used to research how multilinguals understood and manifested their linguistic repertoire and language identities through drawings.

Essentially, the aim of this task was to use a visual method that gives the participants an opportunity to express themselves as multiple language users and show their awareness of their

language identities. It was intended to see how the participants saw themselves as users of that specific language and what they associated with that language. As one of the objectives of this study was to see how the participants perceived their linguistic identities, this method was considered to be an effective means to achieve this goal. Moreover, this method enabled participants to produce materials through which they could comfortably express how they saw themselves as different-languages users. As opposed to the interviews, which were thematically structured and inevitably led the direction of the interviews, this method allowed the interviewees to express themselves without my directions or limitations. The goal was to eventually allow the participants to narrate the drawings themselves with minimal instructions. Further questions were only asked for clarifications. The idea of the visual narratives began and ended with the speakers being the main storytellers. The participants were given the opportunity to first freely explain the drawings at the end of the structured interview. As I listened to their stories, I would ask for clarifications whenever I felt the need for more information that could help me understand their reasoning better. In doing so, I wanted them to feel as the expert, or even artist, who explains the process behind their work. (Thomson and Hall 2008:145). Schiffirin (1996) proposes that in situations where one is given the opportunity to share one's experience, in any form, one will ultimately reveal oneself.

I gave the participants the following instructions (oral and written) for the drawings when the interviews were scheduled.

- 1) list all the languages that you speak, and
- 2) draw a picture of yourself while using each language you speak or as an x language speaker. For example, draw a picture of yourself when you speak English.

These instructions seemed to confuse most of the participants as they asked for further clarifications. After noting this reoccurring issue, I decided to start with asking them how many languages they spoke and after they told me, I asked them to draw a picture of themselves as they spoke each language. Nearly all the participants told me that they were not certain of what they were supposed to do when we went through the drawings. This could be seen in the variety of the pictures as some learners drew self-portraits while others drew circumstances during which they spoke that specific language.

Veale (2005: 173) explains that children's illustrations have long been used to better understand their cognition and emotions, which was the one of the goals of the drawing, to better



understand their cognition and emotions towards the languages. While ethnographic observation provides insights into the linguistic repertoires of such a school and the interviews answer the questions of how their linguistic repertoires and identities are built, drawings reveal how they see and understand themselves as speakers of many languages. They were meant to illustrate their language and identity awareness. All the interviewees produced visual drawings of themselves or situations during which they use the language.

### **3.7. Methods of analysis**

Blommaert and Jie's (2010) category of *after fieldwork* is what happens post-data collection, analysis of the data. However, the analysis of the data can be foreshadowed and be part of the fieldwork phase, which is what happened in the present study. While researching the methods, ways of analyzing the results were also researched. For instance, prior to doing the interviews, I had learnt that one way of analyzing the (interview) data is to code and divide the findings according to major themes (Mäntynen ja Pietikäinen 2009:166). This was already taken into consideration while conducting the list of the questions for the semi-structured interviews, as the interviews were also conducted according to themes. This helped me construct a clear and logical interview that proceeded according to specific themes. For example, the first theme aimed to find out about the subjects' background, proceeding with the second theme, their linguistic repertoires, before finally discovering the situations in which they use the languages they speak. Moreover, during the interviews, this helped with the flow of topics and left little room for jumping between what may have seemed random topics, which could have resulted in confusion. After all the interviews were done, I transcribed them in order to ease the process of coding and dividing the data and eventually doing a content analysis of the data. In doing so, some of the central themes that I discovered are a) language(s) used at home, b) language(s) used elsewhere, and c) use of language in social media. Much like in the interviews, I used coding and content analysis in analyzing the field notes from the fieldwork (Heigham and Sakui (2000:102). The findings from ethnography were analyzed separately in order to give an understanding of the school and the culture of language use there. I analyzed the interviews and drawings together as the findings overlapped and supported one another. Findings from these two methods were analyzed according to content and were done so with each participant separately to highlight the individuality of the interviewees.

Furthermore, in order to paint a picture of these children's linguistic repertoires and set up story-telling like analysis *personal narrative analysis* was employed (Pavlenko 2008). I began the rest of data analysis with the participant's first language through the visual narratives. I wanted to begin with the narrative analysis in order to paint a picture of how the interviewee understands language and language use. This, I believe, allows me to break down their perception of the drawing(s) and also helps me to create a broader image of their profile. The participants' interpretation of the drawing task varies, and so I have decided to explain the drawings individually to project their perception of their linguistic identities. This goal was achieved through functional analysis. The functional approach supported the goal of the present study, which was to provide wide-ranging insight into how the participants define their world of multiple languages, their multilingual identities and finally illustrate their awareness (Gimenez 2010:8). Furthermore, Melo-Pfeifer (2015 & 2017) who has researched multilingualism through visual narratives divided participants' drawings into different sub-categories, which were used to analyze the visual drawings of the participants as well. I used Melo-Pfeifer's (2015 & 2017) analysis of plurilinguals' drawings of their language identities as a model to categorize and classify the drawings of the participants.

### **3.8. Ethics**

As one carries out qualitative research, one must ensure that the research is done in an ethically acceptable manner. I have had to question the ethics of my decisions, starting from the design of the research through to the data collection and analysis phases. While collecting data using the previously mentioned methods, one must think of the partiality, subjectivity and reliability of the researcher before and after collecting the data. Starting from the ethnographic observation, Copland and Creese (2015:11) evaluate that it is nearly impossible for researchers to completely avoid biases, partiality and subjectivity. Researchers inevitably go to the field affected by their own history, knowledge, what they want to achieve and even preconceived notions. As a plurilingual myself, I began to research multilingualism and language identities for personal reasons. As someone who had migrated to Finland at a young age and constantly reads about multilinguals in a negative tone, I wanted to research the richness of multilingualism and its heterogeneous nuances and faces. Multilingualism tends to be reported in a negative tone and the challenges plurilingual speakers face at school tend to be reported in a shortage in their Finnish

skills and lack of major success in school. While I have tried to stay as objective as possible, it has been rather difficult.

As mentioned earlier (see section 3.2), I first had to get permission from the headmaster to collect the data because all the learners were under the age of 15. The permission granted access to the school but I was to conceal all of the learners' identity-revealing information. According to Kalaja et al. (2011: 22-23) researchers are obligated to protect the identity of the participants and conceal any information that could reveal the identity of the participants. This was ensured by using pseudonym names when referring to the participants and also the details of the school were kept to minimum. Only essential and relevant information for the present study was provided. Moreover, due to the age of the informants, their teacher and parents' permission were to be granted. Participants were informed that participation was voluntary and they had the right to withdraw their participation at any time. Moreover, only I have access of the recordings of the interviews and the drawings. The goal is to destroy the data once the present study has been approved of. Concerning interviews, Pavlenko (2007:1173) states that when analyzing oral narratives, in this case the interviews, the researcher must carefully transcribe the interviews prior to analyzing. In order to avoid missing significant remarks such as hesitation, repetition, pauses or anything that may add value to the analysis, the researcher must carefully note down all things to assure credibility and relevancy. The researcher must also be careful in adding things that may not have happened. As Pavlenko (2007:173) suggests, in order to stay trustworthy, I had to examine the data repeatedly to portray an authentic re-creation of the interviews in the transcripts. This ultimately also helped me to get the most out of the interviews. Pavlenko (173-174) also urges that while referencing what the subjects had said, the researcher must include the language in which the interviews were carried out in case it differs from the language of presentation. Pavlenko (2007) explains that if the text were to be analyzed in English for instance, there would be a risk of not being fully able to convey what the informants wanted to say. This could affect the analysis and avoid perhaps essential details in translation.

Prior to analyzing the data, Pavlenko (175) recommends that the researcher critically analyses his/her ideologies and conceptions. As a researcher who speaks at least four languages (Finnish, Arabic, English and Spanish) fluently, I have tried to constantly evaluate my ideologies on language, identity, their relation to one another and, most importantly, my awareness of my linguistic repertoires. I have also tried to pay attention to fact that an interview is a situation in

which both parties are affected by one another. The interviewees react to what I ask just as much as I react to what they say. This is crucial to note, especially with the subjects of the present study being quite young. I have tried to avoid ‘feeding’ them any ideas and tried to ask for clarification rather than repeat to them my own interpretation of what they said in cases of doubt. As a researcher, I have tried to critically examine the influence of my words on their responses during my analysis. For instance, when I asked the participants whether they think of themselves as multilinguals because according to the definition and their language use they are multilingual. However, when I asked them nearly all of them had a hard time owning and accepting that identity, therefore making it at least according to their own words a given identity. Moreover, it is important to analyze the consequences of rephrasing a question. This may lead the interviewee to answer in a specific way (Pavlenko 2007:178).

Finally, the interviews and visual drawings were analyzed on a *micro-level* and a *macrolevel*, meaning that the analyses were drawn from the interviews and the descriptions of the informants, but the societal effects were also taken into consideration. As the participants’ experiences and ideologies are believed to be constructed and altered in social settings, the analysis also considers those by weighing them whenever necessary. By doing so, I try to make sense of how the subjects have come to make sense of their world and ideologies. (Pavlenko 2007:175-177).

## 4. FINDINGS

In this chapter, I discuss the findings of the data starting with an analysis of the ethnographic observations (section 4.1), proceeding with an analysis of the interviews combined with the analysis of the drawings (section 4.2-4.9). I decided to analyze the findings from the ethnographic observations separately because I wanted to create a well-rounded understanding of the school as an environment in which the participants spend a considerable amount of time practicing their versatile linguistic skills. First and foremost, I wanted to understand the participants as members of this unique community before decoding their stories individually in more depth and details. The school provides opportunities and platforms for learners to not only practice some of the languages they use freely but also develop skills to maneuver between languages (i.e. translanguaging). Once again, the premise of the present study is that one uses language as a mean of communication and one's linguistic identities are constructed and nourished in social contexts, therefore, it was seen fit to analyze the environment, where the participants continue to practice and evolve as language speakers. The findings from the ethnographic observations are regarded as an introduction to the findings from the interviews and visual narratives. In addition, the method provides insights on the participants' linguistic identities seen from an outsider's point of view whereas the interviews and visual drawings enable the participants to self-explain how they perceive language and their language identities. Understanding the school's language culture helped me observe how the members of such culture behave. The findings from the ethnographic observations reflect how learners act and interact with one another from a linguistic standpoint in that they provide detailed insights into how language is used in a multilingual environment. Additionally, the drawings and the interviews added subjective information on the language practices that were noted during the observation and in their daily lives. The drawings showcased the interviewees understanding of their linguistic repertoire, hence insights on their awareness of their linguistic skills. The analysis of the drawings, which will be discussed together with the findings from the interviews as a narrative analysis, reveal how the participants see themselves as different language speakers.

Direct quotes from the interviews and incidents from the ethnographic observation were used in the analysis of the data. Direct quotes are used within the text as well as separate examples when the extract is longer and needed in the analysis. The interviews were carried out in Finnish, hence the original quote is included and presented in its original form. The quotes are indicated

using single quotation mark and the translations (by me) are indicated in italics and single quotation mark. When a direct quote is in English and not in italics, it means that the utterance was said in English.

#### **4.1. Analysis of the ethnographic observations**

One of the first things I noticed in the school was the diversity of pupils and languages. There was a variety in the backgrounds of the pupils and the languages, indicating that the environment enables the possibility for such variety and richness (Hornberger, 2002:30). During the first day, I merely observed the school, trying to gain a broad perspective of how pupils interacted with one another outside classrooms. My focus during that day just like all days was to see which language(s) students used to communicate with one another and in what situations. On the first day, the observations were made from a hall and my role was merely that of an observant. First day was exceptional as there was a jubilee happening and some family members were present as well. The second thing I marked was that the most spoken language was during that day and throughout the period of observation was understandably, Finnish. This is arguably due to the school and society's main instruction and communicating language being Finnish. Moreover, in a school of different backgrounds, the one common language for all (apart from the international students) students seemed to be Finnish. Finally, I picked up other languages amongst which there were English and Arabic (I am fluent in all three languages).

Moving on to how and when these languages were used on the first day, I paid close attention to the interactions between parents and teachers. The interactions varied from pupils introducing their parents to their teachers to parents catching up with teachers, illustrating that there was an existing relationship. When parents interacted with teachers, they mainly communicated in Finnish or English. Understandably, the parents' language skills and competence in Finnish and English determined the language used for communication with the teachers. For example, parents whose competence in English was higher than in Finnish would switch to English after a few attempts to speak Finnish. Parents who managed to communicate well in Finnish resorted to Finnish solely. On the other hand, parents whose linguistic repertoires did not include either languages relied on their children's language skills to interact with the teachers. The parents presumably talked in their HL to their children and the children interpreted for their parents and teachers. Children whose families have migrated to another country tend to often have better

linguistic skills than their parents on the local language. Budría & Pablo (2014) say that this tends to happen because children have more opportunities to learn and use the language. This thus results in children learning the host language faster than their parents do. Budría & Pablo (2014) deduce that as children learn the local language and parents struggle, parents come to rely on their children's skills, which could unfortunately discourage the parents from learning the local language.

In these interactions, children demonstrated three things, 1) switching between languages, 2) different social roles and identities and 3) language use is conditioned by social settings and language repertoire. First, children illustrated switching between two language features from their linguistic repertoires. Second, in this interaction the children had two different social roles simultaneously, the role of being a child and a pupil. In addition to that, they demonstrated how social identities can be expressed through different languages, their role of being children was demonstrated via their HL whereas the role of student was manifested through their Finnish or English skills. Third, these interactions illustrated how language use is conditioned to time, space and the interactants', different linguistic repertoires, social roles and backgrounds. The settings of the school permitted them to speak of school related topics yet as the occasion was somewhat festive, the conversations seemed to be light and informal.

As for learners who presumably spoke the same mother tongue or a common language beside Finnish and English seemed to also communicate in that language. One of three noted languages was Arabic, but two other languages that I could not identify were also used. Learners seemed to use Finnish and their other common language interchangeably. This meant that pupils would make an utterance that contained language features of both languages. Moreover, pupils spoke Finnish and English with the teachers. For instance, there was a teacher who was going through common ground rules and he said, 'everyone should be nice ja meillä oli myös sopimus (*we also agreed that*) everyone should not be judged by the way they look'. This is an example of a translanguaging incident, which seemed to occur between teachers and students regularly and was noted nearly on a daily basis during the three weeks of observation. García and Wei (2014:23) confirm this to be the "discursive norm" amongst people who speak multiple languages. Moreover, it is a perfect example of translanguaging because both parties make full use of their linguistic repertoires and instead of creating boundaries between the different languages or being limited by one language, fluidity between languages and their features are used in order to maximize and

make meaning of communication (García et al. 2017). The teacher uses English and Finnish to convey his message in one utterance. In this utterance, which sounds like a reminder, the learners are already familiar with the message and have most probably gone through it when the teacher he says, ‘we also agreed’. We can also notice that the nature of the relationship between a teacher and learners in this example. The teacher has an identity of a superior figure, whereas the pupils have an identity of an inferior. The teacher is asserting the rules and expects the learners to obey or act within these norms. García et al. (2017) argue that translanguaging enables its users to think beyond boundaries of different languages, which also allows them to have freedom in expressing, and understanding their world through whatever language seems comfortable or suitable. This is important to note as translanguaging enables speakers to understand their linguistic repertoire and identities without limitations. Understanding one’s linguistic repertoire helps one become conscious of how to break boundaries and limitations which can be caused when regarding different languages as separate entities (García et al. 2017). One of the research questions of the present study is *how multilingual speakers manifest their linguistic identities*, and one way to answer that question is to understand how and when the interviewees use translanguaging. Translanguaging reveals one’s awareness of one’s abilities, therefore, when one translanguages within one’s linguistic repertoire, one knows when and how to use all of the skills one possesses in order to translanguage. When this is done constantly this could arguably become a subconscious decision but also when plurilinguals forget a word or do not know a word in a certain language (feature) they can comfortably resort to using another language (feature). Furthermore, García and Wei (2014:6) argue that in order to fathom a setting in which multiple languages are practiced, we must understand translanguaging. They explain that translanguaging is a window to how multilingual speakers navigate through, and gain a better understanding of their world.

After the first day of fieldwork, the second day I began observing the CLIL class from which I gathered much of my data. In the CLIL classroom I observed, there were twenty pupils divided into four groups usually seated in a round table for five. Amongst the twenty learners, twelve pupils identified themselves as non-native Finnish speakers. Each table seemed to have a variation in terms of the pupils’ mother tongues. Those who shared the same mother tongue apart from Finnish were seated in separate table for unknown reason, however, two of the interviewees mentioned that teacher had forbidden them from speaking their mother tongue during their early academic years because the teacher wanted them to learn Finnish and English. It must be noted



this discouragement from the teacher was not noted during the observations and some learners were noted speaking their own HL, Albanian with one another. During the ethnographic observations, the three major findings were a) the teacher dictated when and which language to use, b) pupils often replied in the language spoken to them and finally c) learners seemed to naturally translanguage. The day often started with all the pupils standing up and greeting the teacher in English. The teacher would address all the learners and collectively the learners would reply to the teacher. Here is their opening for the day:

Teacher: Good morning everyone.

Pupils: Good morning Mrs. Sanni.

Teacher: How are you doing today?

Pupils: (collectively answer) I am fine, thank you, and you?

Teacher: I am fine, thank you. Have a seat please.

As mentioned earlier, there seemed to be no strict rule on when to use English or Finnish in the immersion class. The teacher often modelled the language usage in the classroom presumably for pedagogical purposes, but she did not pressure pupils into speaking English, whenever they spoke, they seemed to decide themselves which language to use. Having said that, the teacher did insist on replying in English at times. This appeared to be because the matter they had just learnt was a new issue in English and the teacher wanted to emphasize vocabulary learning in both languages. The teacher used English more than Finnish during most classes, however, there were exceptional classes. One exceptional class was history class during which they were going through the *Age of Enlightenment*. The main language which was used during that class was Finnish, nevertheless, all the new terminology such as *Enlightenment* were gone through in English as well.

During the interviews, some of the participants had mentioned that their teacher used to encourage them to speak English, but she no longer does so. The girls seemed more lenient to use English than the boys even though their proficiency level showed no clear evidence that the girls were more skilled in English than the boys were. For instance, there was a group assignment that involved two pupils, Essi and Matti.

Essi: ooksä valmis  
Matti: oon  
Essi: good job! Good job!

*Essi: are you ready?*  
*Matti: I am*  
Essi: good job! Good job!

In this particular example, we can see that there were two languages that were used during the interaction, Finnish and English. Both participants are fully aware that both languages are part of their linguistic repertoires, therefore when Essi speaks to Matti in English she knows that he understands what she is communicating to him which also becomes apparent because Matti answers her question. Essi then also confirms that she understood Matti's response by reassuring him that he has done a good job. García et al. (2017:21) argue that this is rather the norm for "when bilingual students work together to carry out an academic task, they negotiate and make meaning by pooling all of their linguistic resources". Moreover, what occurs in the interaction is the role of positioning through language. Essi's language and word choice indicate that she might be trying to position herself and Matti differently. Her choice to use English can be explained by temporary positioning during which takes a role of a leader and also uses English and a tone that is often accustomed to the teacher. This means that as English is recognized to have an authoritative position, therefore, by insisting to talk to Matti in English and asking him questions such as '*are you ready*', Essi is inserting an authoritative position and hinting that the group is ready and waiting for Matti. Essi addresses Matti in English, but Matti replies in Finnish, to which once again Essi responds in English. The teacher was the one who used English the most during the three weeks. In addition to the teacher, Essi was perhaps one of the few girls that used English more than others, whereas Matti usually resorted to Finnish.

Amina, an interviewee, uses translanguaging within one utterance to showcase an example of multilinguals mixing different language features freely and effortlessly. In this particular example learners were working in groups discussing puberty and its different stages. At one point two girls in one group started discussing reasons for gaining weight during puberty. They first discussed the benefits of eating healthy as it was part of their task but eventually the conversation turned into the types of food they enjoy. In this example, Oona tries to tell Amina the type of healthy food she must include in the task,

Amina: sipsit, kakku  
Oona: tomaattia, kurkkua ei sipsiä Amina:  
se on hyvä tiiäksä tasty.

*Amina: chips, cake*  
*Oona: tomatoes, cucumber not chips Amina:*  
*it is good you know tasty.*

Amina's last comment is an example of using different language features from two languages or using one's linguistic repertoire holistically. Amina and Oona both display a shared understanding of their multilingual repertoire and communicate within the parameters of this awareness. Another example in which Amina once again uses translanguaging within the same utterances is when she tells her friend that she looks good.

Amina: Edona, sinä näytät gorgeous!  
Edona: kiitos.

*Amina: Edona, you look gorgeous!*  
*Edona: thank you.*

As expected, humor was used by the learners on a daily basis. The learners seemed to have a rather relaxed and playful atmosphere indicating a good rapport in the classroom. At times English and Finnish were used to create humor, however also accents were used. Pavlenko (2005:156) remarks that accents can be used to create humor. For instance, two girls were presenting their answers which they conducted in groups but some pupils were disturbing the class. The two positioned themselves in an authoritative position and said in a loud voice and what has become known to be as 'rally English', '*shut up! It is our turn*'. What the girls do is presume an authoritative role by asking them to be quiet, however create a smaller gap between them and their classmates by using humor through a ridiculed accent. Rally English has nationally become known as an accent Finnish athletes use and what is not perhaps considered as a high level of English.

The major findings of the ethnographic observation were a) the school provided an environment where multiple languages were practiced, thus encouraging plurilingualism (Boeckmann et al. 2011) b) learners and teachers used translanguaging on the daily basis in order to make full meaning of their interactions c) learners used language(s) for different purposes, for instance, to create humor or positioning themselves differently.

## **4.2. Analysis of the interviews and visual drawings**

This section reveals the findings from the interviews and drawing task. Each participant's data is discussed separately and overall similarities drawn from the results will be discussed in the discussion part. As mentioned earlier, I will analyze the drawing(s) and the interviews together as there appeared to be overlapping themes that occurred in both methodologies. After careful and extensive assessment one of the interviews was not analyzed due to overlapping themes and results. Therefore, in order to avoid repetition one interview was left out. Also, in order to avoid repetition whenever an analysis was already extensively covered, it was condensed as the analysis progressed.

## **4.3. Ahmed**

The analysis of the participants' data begins with Ahmed. Ahmed, a football fanatic, was born and raised in Finland. He lives with his parents and two younger brothers. He reports that his father's origins come from Iran while his mother's from Iraq. He self-identifies Kurdish to be his mother tongue, however I will be referring to it as his HL, as the characteristics of the language fit those of HL. The reasons for this will be explained in details as I discuss his Kurdish language identity. Furthermore, as I analyzed his interview and self-portrait, it became apparent that his social relations are manifested and built through all the languages he speaks. All these languages seem to enable him to express his identities as he sees fit depending on the social settings.

I begin Ahmed's analysis with his interpretation of the drawing task to set up a broad his understanding of the task and language identities. Ahmed drew a self-portrait with five speech bubbles branching from his body. At this point, it is important to note how self-portrait is perceived in the present study. According to Wegner (2006:1) "[t]he mind's self-portrait appears as a complete picture of its own operation, something so simple and clear that we can't help but believe it. And the major feature of this self-portrait is the idea that we cause ourselves to behave". Drawing on this, Ahmed's self-portrait projects his own comprehension of himself (i.e. thoughts and behaviors) and also how he projects his language identities. Wegner (2006) further argues that one's understanding of one's thoughts may or may not be known to one. The first notable thing about Ahmed's drawing is his almost identical illustration of his hairstyle, which he describes as important, dark eyes, thick and dark eyebrows and long face. He displays a crooked smile in the

drawing. The importance of his hairstyle is projected in the self-portrait, therefore indicating that this is known to the subject himself. He gleefully reports that his love for football is also projected in his style as he owns many cleats (football shoes). As Wegner (2006) argues, Ahmed has portrayed many layers of his identities into the self-portrait. These layers are further explored through the languages he uses as he explains the importance and roles of these languages in the five speech bubbles.

Moving on to the five speech bubbles that represent all the languages he speaks. Through this drawing, Ahmed narrates how he constructs his social identities and roles using these languages. In each speech bubble, he has written a text in Finnish explaining each language and situations in which he uses the language. Melo-Pfeifer (2017:50) calls this the “linguistic label” because each language is explained in terms of its purpose in its own bubble by the user. In more details, Melo-Pfeifer (2017:48) goes on and sums this to be an example of “[o]ne self – different languages”. In Ahmed’s case, he drew a self-portrait - ‘one self’ demonstrating that he has one linguistic repertoire, but within that one repertoire, he possess language skills in five languages. This means that he uses his entire linguistic repertoire in a way that allows him to freely and interchangeably use all the languages he speaks and their features within that repertoire, thus aligning with the definition of a plurilingual speaker (COE 2007:168). By doing so, Ahmed also illustrates an awareness of how language use is in fact dependent on factors such as time, interactant(s), history and social settings (Dufva et al. 2011). Moreover, García and Wei’s (2014:8) argument that “linguaging is indeed to refer to the simultaneous process of continuous becoming of ourselves and our language practices, as we interact and make meaning in the world”, supports Ahmed’s understanding of language use. Although, Ahmed clearly states situations in which he uses each and separate language, he does also elaborate and report that usage of one specific language is not limited to a situation. But in fact, there are situations in which he interchangeably uses more than one language at a given setting in order to express himself and also understand his surrounding world better. This becomes apparent as he explains the role of language(s) in his life.

As instructed in the drawing task, Ahmed first lists all the languages he speaks in Finnish at the top of the page; ‘kurdi, englanti, suomi, ruotsi ja persia (*Kurdish, English, Finnish and Persian*)’. Ahmed’s notes were all written in Finnish. This could be due to the fact that I gave the instructions in Finnish and all my interactions with him occurred in Finnish as well. Once again, it was not specified as to what speaking a language really entails in the visual drawing task. It was

intentionally left out to see how the participants themselves defined what speaking a language means to them. This was also aimed to make them critically think whether in their opinion they speak the listed language or not. Ahmed states that he knows how to read, write, and speak all these languages. Starting with what he self-identifies as his mother tongue, Kurdish, Ahmed immediately associates the language with home and family. In his Kurdish speech bubble, which is where his left ear would be and above the English bubble, the bubble says,

'[p]uhun paljon kurdia kotona. En käytä sitä paljon ulkona'

*'I speak Kurdish a lot at home. I don't use it a lot outside'.*

First, what becomes apparent during the interview and in the drawing is that Ahmed uses Kurdish mainly with his family and more specifically at home. This suggests that Ahmed understands that language use can be situation, context and time dependent. Second, he shows awareness of how language can be used to manifest, construct and develop social relations. In this case, familial identities such as being a son, brother and relative (Kouhpaenejad and Gholaminejad 2014:200). In addition to that, this is an example of *linguaging* because Ahmed constantly develops his familial identities through the language while simultaneously developing his Kurdish skills (García and Wei 2014). Moreover, this showcases that identities can be conceptualized in terms of positions and in his example, place-home. Finally, what his case supports is the notion of HL. I will try to make a case for why I think the notion of heritage language is more suitable rather than mother tongue. The reasons for this are a) he is a second-generation immigrant and his first language is a minority in the society he lives, b) his HL is not as dominant as his Finnish, and c) he does not disclose that he has received any formal education on the language, which strongly allies with the characteristics of HL. Moreover, Ahmed's comment on not using Kurdish outside his home, further suggests that he has acquired the language at home from his parents and his chances of using the language elsewhere are rather limited. Furthermore, he also uses it with his relatives and assesses that he needs it in particular to his familial relations. He remarks that he needs it because he has relatives or when he visits Iran, he socializes with people whose linguistic repertoire permits communication only in Kurdish. Ahmed's assessment of his need for the language also indicates the social relations he has, which are and continue to be built, reformed and negotiated, exist because of his ability to speak Kurdish (Kouhpaenejad and Gholaminejad 2014:200). This highlights his desire to continue to be part of the Kurdish speaking community,

which in itself is a form of language identity. Although, Ahmed can resort to Finnish to interact with his parents, he states that he cannot with his youngest brother as his linguistic repertoire only includes Kurdish now. This means that the only mean for him and his younger brother to have a relationship or be able to communicate is solely dependent on this language. Correspondingly, through such comments, Ahmed suggests Kurdish to be the first language the parents teach their children.

Interestingly, Ahmed reports to use Kurdish to convey secrets when he does not want anyone else to understand. For instance, when he wants to discuss tactics on a football court with his Kurdish speaking teammates. Ahmed's choice to use Kurdish as a mean to convey secretive messages showcases an awareness of not only his linguistic repertoire but also of the others' who share the social setting in question of usage. Ahmed and his Kurdish speaking teammates exclude others by choosing to speak a language that is not within the linguistic repertoire of others, therefore they build a sense of 'otherness' by creating 'us' and 'them' through a specific language. Furthermore, he describes other incidents during which he uses Kurdish to be are when he wants to use profanity. He explains such incidents could happen at a football match when he disagrees with the referee's call. For instance, when he thinks he deserves a penalty kick, but the referee does not. These two different examples of when he uses Kurdish amongst interactants who do not necessarily understand that the language display two 'advantages' arguably. 1) Ahmed can use Kurdish to his own advantage that can end up benefiting him and his teammates, and 2) Ahmed can freely express himself without necessarily any repercussions as it is within the rules of football to be punished when a player uses profanity. Interestingly, Ahmed does not mention expressing anger or frustration through his Kurdish linguistic skills while interacting with his family or relatives. This is not to say that he does not experience such emotions while interacting with them, however, it seems that he expresses such emotions freely in Kurdish while interacting with people who do not speak Kurdish.

A: no kurdii mä puhun kukaan ei sitä ymmärrä voin sanoo ihan mitä mä haluun varsinkin kun mä oon vihainen

*A: well, I speak Kurdish no one understands it so I can say whatever I want for instance when I am mad.*

Furthermore, Pavlenko (2006:134) argues that multilinguals often resort to their first language while expressing strong emotions, especially anger. Moreover, Ahmed reveals that he uses Kurdish

to solve mathematical problems. Studies have shown that one tends to solve arithmetic in the first language one acquires, therefore Ahmed solving arithmetic problems in his first acquired language. In addition, this continues to be the case even if one moves to an environment where one's L1 differs to that of the environment (S.Spelke and Tsivkin 2000).

Moving on with his second speech bubble, English, Ahmed once again explains where he uses it, but this time also assesses his language skills. The speech bubble is located under his Kurdish speech bubble and it says,

'[p]uhun hyvää enkkua. Käytän sitä aina, kun olen ulkomailla'

*'I speak good English. I use it whenever I am abroad'.*

What is intriguing to note is that Ahmed neglects to comment on the fact that English is and has been his second learning language for the six years he has been in school, nor its role in having high skills as he suggests. This realization revealed to me my own pre-conceived notion of CLIL learners perhaps crediting their high skills in the language to the approach. I realized that I was waiting to hear about the role of being part of an English CLIL in the development of his English language skills (more on that in section 5). Arguably, Ahmed's assessment of his English skills could be due to the fact that English has been his learning language along with Finnish since the first grade, therefore, he might take it for granted. Having said that, his English skills must have been rather good prior in order to be able to enroll to a CLIL classroom. Learners must take an exam to display what would be perceived as 'good' English skills in order to be part of the class. What is interesting though is his ability to assess his English skills, a trait all the participants evidently share. Mehisto et al. (2008:20) argue that one of the benefits learners gain from being in a CLIL classroom is the development of metalinguistic awareness. The participants appear to assess their skills constantly as nearly all comment on their skills in each language that they speak. This could also be due to the drawing task as well as they all seem to have spent time thinking of the languages they use, which was part of the task. They also seem to have thought of how, when, where, why and to what degree they use these languages as Ahmed showcases during the interview and through the speech bubbles (Marsh 2012:58). Moreover, learners enhance skills in being able to assess the background of a situation in order to reach the intentional outcome. In addition to that, learners also gain a vast understanding in the mechanics behind how to use languages. All these skills were noted in the participants of the present study. In addition to that, Ahmed's ability



to assess his language skills indicate his awareness of his linguistic repertoire as he claims to know when, how and why to use the languages he speaks. He has shown an understanding of strategically using all the languages depending on the situation.

Ahmed's first mention of English during the interview is when he reveals that he helps his mother learn English. In doing so, Ahmed temporarily takes on the role of a teacher and his mother the role of a learner (Bucholtz and Hall 2005:591), ultimately perhaps changing the role of superiority, in which Ahmed has the superior role due to his advanced knowledge. Additionally, he mentions that he particularly uses English in social media, specifically when he wants to comment on the profiles he follows on Instagram that are in English. Moreover, Ahmed reveals that he uses English while traveling and especially when his father asks him to ask for directions in airports. Surprised himself Ahmed reveals that his father speaks English, which is something that surprised him when he found out. He reveals that he found out about his father's ability to speak English after one day returning home to realize that his father had been helping his mother with English. Ahmed mentions that this was surprising because up to that moment he had been helping his mother with her English course and had the assumption that his father does not speak English as he always asks Ahmed to translate when English is the only language to communicate with. Ahmed mentions that whenever they travel, his father asks him to use English to access whatever information needed. Finally, Ahmed notes that he does not speak English unless the interactant does not speak Finnish.

Ahmed's assessment of his language skills was once again noted as he explained the role and importance of Finnish in his life. His Finnish speech bubble is where his right ear would be, opposite to his Kurdish speech bubble and above his Swedish speech bubble. The speech bubble says,

'Suomea puhun tosi paljon ulkona sekä kotona. Suomenkieleni on tosi hyvä.'

*'I speak Finnish a lot outside and home. My Finnish skill is very good.'*

Ahmed assesses Finnish to be his strongest language as he remarks that it is the easiest to use. In order of proficiency and fluency, he juxtaposes his Kurdish and English skills, but remarks that they come right after Finnish. Finnish seems to be the language he uses the most as he tells that he uses it outside, which he refers to as everywhere but home, and at home as well with his parents. Scontras, Fuchs and Polinsky (2015: 3-4) confirm that this is expected of HL speakers because as

children become more exposed to the local language, their exposure to their heritage language decreases, hence shifting the role of dominance and even proficiency. Ahmed's comments on his Finnish language identity was rather short in comparison to others, which this led me suspect that due to its dominance in skills and usage, he connects it to a larger aspect of his life, therefore perhaps taking it for granted.

Moving on with Ahmed's most recently learnt languages, Swedish and Persian. He started learning Swedish in the fourth grade and has two Swedish classes a week. Swedish is Finland's second national language, however Ahmed's exposure to the language is limited to his classroom. His Swedish speech bubble, which is located under his Finnish bubble and under his right ear, in fact confirms this as it says,

'[r]uotsia en puhu paljon, vaan ruotsin tunneilla'

*'I do not speak Swedish a lot, only during Swedish class.'*

He reckons he also uses it on the rare occasions he visits Sweden or when traveling via a boat to Sweden. He acknowledges that he does not have any feelings worth mentioning towards Swedish. This suggests that his emotions towards the language may be still in their primary stage, therefore he faces difficulties verbalizing his emotions towards or thoughts of the language. In addition, his skills in the language do not match up to the level of others as he projects specific emotions towards all the other languages. I interpret his inability to connect the language with social relations which develop and exist within the parameters of the Swedish language also could play a role in his nearly non-existing emotions towards Swedish. I also suspect that his inability to link the language with anything else than Swedish lessons prevents him from developing meaningful relationships through the language. In comparison to Persian, we can observe that he constructs social relations through this language as well even though he has recently started learning the language. It also seems that his motivation for learning Persian is higher than for Swedish. In his last speech bubble, Persian, interestingly he has positioned it on his entire chest, and it says,

'[p]uhun persiaa isäni kanssa, koska haluan oppia sitä. Puhun sitä enimmäkseen Iranissa.'

*'I speak Persian with my father a lot because I want to learn it. I mainly speak it in Iran.'*

He reveals that he has a tremendous amount of interest in learning the language and does so by speaking with his father and watching television programs in Persian. He goes on to say that, because they visit Iran yearly he needs it there, hence, he has asked his father to teach him Persian. We can note here that once again his father plays the role of the teacher and main provider for learning the language. It is also crucial to note that Ahmed states that it was his own desire, indicating autonomy and displaying his motivation to learn the language. He once again assesses that he needs the language to build and maintain social relations that can exist within this specific skill. This also reveals that one way for Ahmed to learn a language is through social interactions in which he develops a Persian linguistic repertoire (Pietikäinen et al. 2010). He further demonstrates that one can learn a language from watching television programs much like he has developed his Persian skills.

To sum up, based on the drawing, we can see that Ahmed understands how he can use languages to express himself in different situations, which is also what the poststructuralist theory of identity argues. The poststructuralist theory of identity argues that identity is multiple and situational. Through the different languages, Ahmed constructs different linguistic identities that are situation and time dependent. At school, where he spends a great deal of time, he speaks Finnish, English and Swedish mainly. Swedish he admits to use merely in Swedish class and in Sweden, whereas Finnish and English he uses constantly and flexibly at school and his free time. The only language he uses with a clear purpose seems to be his heritage language be it- to communicate with his parents, express anger or convey secrets. This shows that Ahmed is aware of his linguistic repertoire as he strategically uses these different languages to make a better sense and use of his world. Pavlenko (2009:27) argues that

“languages may create different, and sometimes incommensurable, worlds for their speakers who feel that their selves change with the shift in language. Studies in psychoanalysis, psychology, and linguistic anthropology demonstrate that bicultural and bilinguals may exhibit different verbal behaviors in their two languages and may be perceived differently by their interlocutors depending on the language they use in a particular context”.

I asked Ahmed if he felt that there was a change whenever he speaks a certain language, and his response illustrated his understanding of himself as each language speaker. He said he has freedom when he speaks his HL, whereas when he speaks in Finnish, he is more reserved. Moreover, he

associates English with emotions such as happiness and sadness. As Burck (2011) suggests, languages can provide multilinguals the chance or skill to use different languages to express different feelings. Each language seems to enable Ahmed to express himself differently and as he feels suitable. Moreover, as Bustamante-López (2008: 279) argues, Ahmed uses different linguistic identities to represent and express himself. In other words, we can use language(s) to represent ourselves and when we speak multiple languages, we have more means and tools to express our identities, which was demonstrated in Ahmed's case.

#### **4.4. Veton**

Veton is a second-generation immigrant whose parents come from Kosovo. The family selfidentifies as Kosovans. Interestingly, his parents are the only parents who speak Finnish fluently but have persisted on teaching and mainly speaking to their children in their HL. According to Veton, his parents have lived and worked in Finland for nearly two decades. His father is a teacher at a building services engineering company, while his mother is a hairdresser. Veton lives with his parents and older sister.

Starting with Veton's HL, Kosovo, Veton's interpretation of the drawing task is illustrated in the two self-portraits he has drawn. These self-portraits are called 'Suomi (*Finnish*)' and 'Kosovo (*Albanian*)'. Melo-Pfeifer (2015:206) explains that drawings as such display separation between languages but also selves and in these drawings the subject "represents the activation of different languages as being dependent on the context and as deploying the mobilisation of different selves". Melo-Pfeifer (2015:206) proceeds and calls the subject, "a multilingual self". Melo-Pfeifer (2017:48) further classifies such self-portraits under the juxtaposed repertoires that represent different selves and different languages. By doing so, Veton illustrates an awareness of how language use can manifest a different self that still operates under the multilingual identity. Moreover, Veton's understanding of language use is supported by García and Wei's (2014:8) argument that as one engages with others and tries to make sense of one's world one constantly discovers oneself and one's language habits. The self-portraits project his physical appearances; he has a blond hair and a fairly slim body (Wegner 2006). One aspect of identity is one's style, much like one's language one's style can reveal a ton about a person. How one dresses projects certain ideologies, and in this example, Veton shows how his dressing conveys a message of being an active child and someone who pays attention to fashion due to ideas asserted by parents (Wegner

2006). What is interesting is that there is a clear distinguish between the drawings. The drawing of himself as an Albanian speaker demonstrates cultural and practical aspects that he has chosen to point out (García et al. 2017:13). In his drawing of his Albanian linguistic repertoire, he has a rose t-shirt, blue jeans and black shoes. He appears to have a smile on his face as his lips appear to be pointing upwards. He explains that he has a t-shirt because it is rather warmer in Kosovo than in Finland. As for the jeans, he has drawn them to illustrate a culturally understood phenomenon. He reveals that his mother has taught him the importance of looking good when visiting Kosovo from abroad. I also gathered that it is rather important to show that they have succeeded abroad.

V: koska yleensä pitää olla näyttää hyvin kun tullaan eri maasta kosvoon ja sit pitää näyttää @hyvältä@

V: because usually one must look good when one comes from another county to kosovo and one must look @good@

This showcases that it is quite important for the parents to pass on their heritage language and culture to their children. This is highlighted when Veton points out that his parents speak Finnish fluently, therefore they could have arguably spoken to him Finnish only. Instead, his parents seem to have emphasized the importance of teaching their HL as he states that he rarely speaks Finnish with his parents. This is confirmed by the fact that he merely speaks English or Finnish at home for specific reasons; otherwise, their sole mean of communication is Albanian. He admits that he rarely speaks Finnish with his sister, otherwise he does not mention speaking Finnish at home. As for English, interestingly, the reason why he speaks English at home is for his own pleasure or entertainment. He explains that his mother's English is poor, therefore he likes to talk to her in English for a good laugh. He laughingly reports that her pronunciation is a little bit odd. Veton's superior language skills and playful mockery of accents showcased easiness and confidence in his ability but also a playful approach towards languages.

Veton has had formal education on his heritage language, however due to conflict with scheduling he stopped attending the class. It appears that he has and continues to acquire his HL from his parents. Additionally, since the input and output of Albanian is limited to certain resources compared to Finnish and English, it seems that it is important for his parents to speak to him in Albanian. As mentioned earlier, based on my observations he seems to be linguistically gifted and

I deduce one reason for this could be due his strong base in his first language. According to Cummins (2001:3), “children who come to school with a solid foundation in their mother tongue develop stronger literacy abilities in the school language”. In fact, Cummins (2001:3) argues that bilingual children tend to have a stronger technical understanding of language and greater mental flexibility as they have more language-processing practice through their primary school years. I noted during the ethnographic observation that Veton used his other language skills from his linguistic repertoire to help him learn Swedish, for instance. During a Swedish class, pupils were learning new vocabulary. Veton was quick to deduce and learn that the Swedish word *fisk* was equivalent for the English word *fish*. Strategies such as these were also encouraged in another class where learners had to learn to look beyond language barriers to deduce what new words in unfamiliar languages could mean. Learners were instructed to use any previous knowledge they have from their other linguistic resources during the lesson. Learners had to guess at times, what the unfamiliar words in an x language could mean using their knowledge in all the languages they speak. The teacher instructed learners to use such connections when facing new words in order to develop skills that can ease their language aptitude. Learning such techniques can even speed up the process of learning a new language. People who speak multiple languages tend to subconsciously develop such techniques (Cenoz and Todeva 2009). Veton did extremely well in guessing most of the words, especially in Spanish, and when these words were taught, he was able to pick up the newly learnt words rather quickly. By the end of that class, I told Veton that his skills in learning a new language are remarkable, to which he replied, ‘joo, mä tiiän (*yeah, I know*)’. It was astonishing to see how his mind worked in a rapid pace to utilize all the information he had to guess the words. This could also be explained through García, Johnson and Seltzer’s (2017:13) argument that such incidents are examples of speakers of multilinguals finding ways to create “linguistic and cultural knowledge across languages and cultures”. They argue that this is one of the results of translanguaging in which multilingual speakers use their language repertoires to make meaning of their surroundings and in this case resorting to what they already know from different language features and employing it in a new one.

There are other personal, societal and sociocultural benefits to developing one’s HL, as well. Those who have developed their HL have a greater understanding and knowledge of cultural values, ethics, and manners, which further enhances their interactions with others, and benefits society overall. Arguably, this skill seems to generate positive sensations and give him confidence

about his ability to learn new languages all along while also motivating him to learn new languages. Veton seems to take advantage of his already existing skills from his linguistic repertoire but also continues to expand his linguistic repertoire. Moreover, another intriguing thing, which he reveals during the interview, is that regardless of what language is used during mathematics class he always solves problems in Albanian. Interestingly, other participants also mentioned that regardless of whether they are doing their homework at home or sitting in a class taught in Finnish or English, they always end up counting in their HL as well (S.Spelke and Tsivkin 2001).

Veton's second and last self-portrait is of him as a Finnish speaker. In this self-portrait, Veton is wearing relaxed sporty clothes. He is wearing a black and green sweater with a script that says "NY", black sweat pants and Adidas sneakers. During the three weeks of observation, his style was indeed reflected in this particular drawing. In this drawing, his face features a straight and closed mouth, which indicates a rather emotionless expression. I asked him whether he is happier in the Albanian portrait but he said he was not sure why he drew this particular self-portrait with an expressionless face compared to the smiley one in the Albanian self-portrait. Finnish plays a major role in Veton's life as he uses it the most and nearly everywhere else but home. Besides school, he also uses it amongst his friends and even in his beloved hobby, football. He reckons that out of all the languages he speaks Finnish is the easiest language to use because he uses it the most. He reveals that when he is amongst friends with whom he only communicates in Finnish, he jokes in Finnish, understandably, but he rather jokes in Albanian when he is amongst Albanian speakers even though Finnish is also part of their linguistic repertoire. According to Bell (2007:27), it requires a tremendous amount of cultural and linguistic knowledge to be able to joke in that language, provided that, Veton seems to have such knowledge in Finnish and Albanian. As Veton also remarks himself, humor tends to be sensitive to the participants and context as well (Bell, 2007:28). As a matter of fact, he reveals that he often tends to think in both languages, which could be the reason for why he drew only two portraits and why he jokes in these two languages. One could argue that since these two languages are the ones he uses the most, therefore, it would make sense that he predominantly identifies with these two languages and considers them to largely be part of his linguistic repertoire. Based on the drawings, Veton has only included these two languages but English is his second learning language and I have noted to be of high level, however, he has not included it in the task. He shows clear understanding of the task by drawing

himself as these languages speaker but does not include English to be part of his linguistic repertoire although it clearly is.

It is rather interesting that Veton does not mention English as part of his linguistic repertoire although it is strongly present at school. In fact, when asked whether he has a favorite language, he tentatively replied, 'englanti (*English*)'. He goes on and explains that this is because he likes the variety of accents in the English language, which he likes to mimic. He admits that English comes easily to him but only after Finnish and Albanian respectively. He reports to only using English at school and when watching YouTube. Based on my observation, Veton's English skills seemed to be on the same level as those girls who extensively use English. However, much like the majority of the boys, he also seemed to prefer to speak Finnish unless he felt pressure from the teacher to use English. I reckon it is not due to lack of skills in the language because Veton emerges as skillful but it may be due to lack of habit of using English unless during class or for his own amusement.

Other languages such as Swedish, German and Spanish are also part of Veton's linguistic repertoire due to different reasons. He had just started learning Swedish at the beginning of the academic year; hence, Swedish is a new language to him. During the ethnographic observation period, I also attended a few Swedish classes to see how the participants acted there. There were other pupils from different classes and the international school side, making the dynamics between learners different compared to their home groups. During the interview, Veton reports that he does not care for Swedish much due to finding the teacher 'liian ärsyttävää (*very annoying*)'. I asked whether he would be less annoyed and bored if, take for example, his home group teacher taught him Swedish, he admits to having struggled in her class as well due to her 'liian vaikea murre (*too difficult dialect*)'. Moreover, other languages that Veton has been able to pick up from his surroundings include Somali. Veton shared that he has many Somali friends whom he plays football with, especially during the summer. He expresses that after spending time with them, he has learnt and understands a bit of the Somali language. He says that since playing football with Somalis he has been able to pick up a few words such as *warya* and *abbas*, meaning "hey you" (Lehtonen 2015:161) and pass respectively. This once again illustrates his ability to learn new languages from his environment whether it is intentional or not. It also supports the notion of one's linguistic repertoire developing through social relations. As a consequence, the skills he develops manifest also in these social relations. To be more specific, Veton uses Finnish and at times also



Somali when he plays football with his teammates and friends respectively. Moreover, Veton also has friends with whom he speaks Finnish, English and Albanian.

As mentioned above, Veton benefits from high language skills in multiple languages. His HL language identity illustrates the importance of parents taking agency in teaching their children their native language and also the culture of their country. This strong base has arguably helped him in developing high skills in other languages. His remarkable metalinguistic awareness enables him to develop his language skills and repertoire easily. Moreover, he showcases a playful and effortless approach to language(s).

#### **4.5. Irina**

Irina, who was born and raised in Finland, comes from a family of five, a mother, father and two sisters. Irina introduces herself as a 12-year-old half Russian. Irina explains that her father's origins are from Russia while her mother's are from Finland, she is hence half Finn and half Russian. Irina's answer immediately points out an arguably important part of identity, nationality. As Irina further explains her family origins she also identifies her mother to be more Russian rather than Finnish. Irina's answer brings light to the multilayered concept of identity, which has not been discussed in the present study due to the chosen narrow focus of identity i.e. identity expressed through language. How one identifies with a country and the group identity of the country is a large and complex question in identity, which cannot be explored in this study. In Irina's statement, we can see that identity can be categorized according to nationality and characteristics. Some national identity characteristics can be deduced by one's actions and manners.

Starting with Irina's interpretation of the drawing task, she has drawn four self-portraits to represent her linguistic repertoire. Like Ahmed, she has also first written the four languages she speaks; 'suomi (*Finnish*), englanti (*English*), ruotsi (*Swedish*) and venäjä (*Russian*)'. Each language has its own flag drawn next to it. Irina has also written all her remarks in Finnish probably because the instructions were given in Finnish and our interaction always took place in Finnish. Moreover, Irina has written the following phrases in all the languages, 'Thank you! Hello! What's up?'. According to Melo-Pfeifer (2015:205), when multilinguals manifest their linguistic repertoire in forms of separate languages with each its own flag, it indicates that the subjects perceive themselves as a whole that operates in separate multiple languages and rather than merging all these languages, they separate them and use them under such premises. To be more

specific, her drawing falls under Melo-Pfeifer's (2017:50) category of *juxtaposed repertoires* in which one's linguistic repertoire is performed through different selves and languages. It must be noted that the effects of how the questions were worded could have affected how the participants understood the task. It might have encouraged them to think of each language separately and hence the participants drew separate selves to represent each language identity. This however was not the case with all participants, some drew specific situations in which they use language, and therefore, illustrating that (language) identity manifestation is contextual.

Beginning with Irina's self-portrait as a Russian speaker, she has a smiling expression and her eyes display a strong gaze that seem to project joy as well. She has her hair tied in a braided ponytail. The text says,

‘(Спасибо! привет! КАК ТЫ?)’

‘[t]hank you! Hello! How are you?’.

Irina's facial expressions differ in all the self-portraits and this leads me to believe that she has carefully tried to project her emotions towards the languages or at least how she feels when she uses the language. This is later confirmed when Irina explains that her joyful expression in the drawing is driven by the joy she feels for knowing how to speak Russian. What becomes apparent in her comments is that speaking Russian is not a given, but is rather something that she works hard on, hence regards it as an achievement and takes so much joy out of it. Irina reveals that her relationship with the language is somewhat complicated and multifaceted. As happy and relieved as she is when she speaks the language, she quite often feels frustrated. She admits that it is not her strongest language and her writing skills are poor. She even confesses to having used Google translator to properly write the phrase in the drawing, indicating her limited writing skills and further enhancing her insecurities about her skills in the language. Moreover, Irina's frustration and discouragement with Russian deepens due to its complicated grammar. She interestingly uses an analogy of it being physically heavy that she has to drag with and it weighs her down.

I: koska se on ärsyttävää @uggh@ koska se on niin monimutkainen ja niin paljon kaikkea mitä täytyy tietää tai mitä täytyis muistaa ja tälle ja sit mä vähän niiku vedän sitä sillee perässäni hehe

*I: because it is annoying @uggh@ because it is very complicated and there is a lot to know or remember and so and then I kind of drag it behind me hehe*

Irina reports that she has had brief formal education in Russian but due to her dislike of the teacher's pedagogical approach, she stopped taking lessons. She accounts that the teacher taught very little in class and gave tons of homework, which ultimately lead to the learning to take place at the mercy of the learners and their parents. Essentially, this means that she primarily learnt and continues to learn Russian at home, where she mainly uses Russian. All these characteristics of her Russian skills fit the notion of a HL. Russian is the most widely spoken minority language in Finland, but it is not one of the official languages (Kelleher, 2010:1). Moreover, Irina's ability to understand the language seems to be at a higher level than her production ability (Polinsky 2014). Polinsky (2014:6) emphasizes that in order for HL speakers to develop all language skills, they must receive a formal education in the language. Irina's poor writing skills and struggle with grammar could be explained through her minimum formal education on the language.

At home, Irina reports that their linguistic repertoires as a family mainly consist of Russian and Finnish. She discloses that her father has poor skills in Finnish, hence he mostly communicates in Russian. This means that Russian is the only language through which Irina and her father can construct and develop their father and daughter relationship/identities. He does however try to communicate in Finnish at times she reveals. Although she does not disclose, it seems that her parents mainly communicate in Russian as she mentions that her parents do not speak English nor does she mention any other language being spoken in their household. This is an example of how they as a family communicating within the parameters of Russian due to her father's linguistic repertoire. As Finnish is also her mother tongue, Irina says that she speaks half Russian and half Finnish with her younger sister. Irina explains that since her younger sister, who is still learning both languages, often needs to mix both languages in order to communicate with her. This showcases four things. Firstly, it supports the notion of languaging in which that it is a continuous process where one continually finds ways to understand and express oneself as well as to communicate with others (García and Wei 2014:8). Second, both sisters and their father illustrate translanguaging between languages from within their linguistic repertoire in order to make full meaning of their immediate environment or world (García and Wei 2014:22). Finally, this also highlights an awareness of the younger sister's linguistic repertoire, as she seems to know what her capabilities and limitations are in perhaps both languages as she navigates between the two. Similarly, Irina must moderate her Russian and Finnish in order to successfully communicate with

her younger sister, which inevitably displays that language use is sensitive to the capability of the interactant.

As noted above, it is nearly impossible to speak of Irina's Russian language skills without mentioning Finnish as she seems to also use Finnish when she speaks Russian. It is important to note that I am referring to Finnish as her mother tongue because Finnish is one of the official languages of the society she lives in, hence her exposure to the language exceeds beyond her home unlike her exposure to Russian. Finnish is also one of her learning languages, making its chance to develop also academically higher. As a matter of fact, she juxtaposes English and Finnish as her strongest languages and ahead of Russian. In her Finnish speaking self-portrait, which is the first drawing, Irina has her hair open and a gleeful expression as well. She states that the delight she feels comes from a sense of relief that resonates in the easiness that comes from speaking Finnish. Above the Finnish flag, she has written,

'Kiitos! Moi! Mitä kuuluu?'

*'Thank you! Hello! How are you?'*

Aside from using Finnish at home with her family, she uses it at school with her classmates and friends as well. This suggests that Irina mainly builds and develops her social identities (daughter, sister, and friend) through Finnish. Much like Ahmed, Irina also had comparatively less to say about her Finnish language identity. She only made few remarks regarding the language but other than that, her comments on the language were rather minimal. Having said that, she emphasizes that she uses Finnish the most and that it is extremely important for her.

I: (.) no suomi on mulle sillee tosi tärkeä kieli koska niinku mä käytän sitä koko ajan

*I: (.) well Finnish is for me like extremely important language because like I use it all the time*

She reasons this with having to live in Finland and Finnish being one of the official national and local languages. She deduces nearly what all participants have also remarked, they speak Finnish the most because it is how they make sense of their overall surrounding that mainly functions in Finnish. Finnish is the language through which they understand the culture in the society they live in and are part of. Finnish seems to be the language through which they feel sense of belonging and fitting, therefore making their Finnish language identity extremely crucial. Moreover, her remarks regarding Finnish were different to other participants. Unlike any of the other participants,

Irina comments that Finnish is somewhat limiting and even boring when compared to English. She claims that English is a more colorful language and provides more opportunities to express things. Evidently, Irina thinks that Finnish is a boring language due its lack of diversity in terms of providing enough alternatives to express matters in a versatile way. This perception of both languages is ought to affect how Irina uses both languages. For instance, she reveals that she rather thinks and feels that she can express herself best in English.

Moving on with a language she says she identifies with, English. English has and still plays a major role in Irina's life not only because it is and has been her second learning language since the first grade as well but also because of its strong presence outside school. In her self-portrait of an English speaker, Irina once again expresses happiness. She reflects that she is very happy in the portrait because it is easy and even speaks it 0.01% better than Finnish. This made me wonder whether she feels that she can express herself best in English, but she replies with hesitation in her voice that she does not know but she is sure that it is at least not Russian. She guesses that it has to be a tie between Finnish and English, which is understandable as she uses these two languages the most. She adds that at times she might even find herself knowing how to explain a word in English but not in Finnish. Irina also comments that English enables her to express herself in a more diverse way. English seems to provide versatility and opportunities for her to also use in situations during which she wants to exclude others. For instance, she uses English at home when she wants to show emotions of anger because no one will understand her there.

I: sit mä oon yleensä sillee niiku sillai tosi iloinen koska se on niiku tosi helppo ja sillee et mä pystyn ehkä jopa vois sanoa et mä osaan sitä niiku silleen nolla pilkku nolla yks prosentti enemmän kuin suomea et mä osaan siitäki tai sillee jos mä niikun just täytyy selittää joku sanaa suomeksi sit mä osaan sen sanaa sillee selittää enkuksi mut en osaa suomeksi selittää sitä

*I: then I am usually just like very happy because it is very and like I can even maybe even say that I know it like zero point zero one percent better than Finnish that I know of it or like if I like have to explain a word in Finnish then I know the word like explain in English but not know how to in Finnish explain it*

In comments such as these, we can see the importance of place and the people occupying the same space much like in Ahmed's case with this HL. In her usual home circumstances, where her parents and younger sister are, she can freely use a language that is not part of their linguistic repertoire to express feelings that she wants to exclude them from. One could argue that one could detect her anger from her tone but one cannot understand the origin nor the reason for the anger if one does

not understand the language in which it is manifested. Furthermore, Irina continues to say that she uses English a lot in her free time as well. Irina credits her preferred thinking language to be English because of the many English-speaking shows she watches. In addition, she reports that using English with some of her classmates gives them the advantage of speaking freely in other places. They use English to isolate themselves from the linguistic repertoires of the people around them in order to avoid being understood. Irina is another participant who actively uses languages to create barriers between them and other people. She uses languages to communicate with others but she also creates circumstances for her and her friends who share similar linguistic repertoires to isolate others. This choice shows that Irina and her friends are not only aware of their linguistic repertoire but also of those in their surroundings. One could argue that they cannot know for sure that they are excluding others but it is certain that they act as if. It is important to understand that what is relevant for the present study is the motive for Irina's linguistic choices. As a consequence, Irina's decision shapes her surroundings and linguistic repertoires. As discussed, identity can manifest in belonging and isolating. Here, Irina and her friends belong to a group of certain linguistic identities whereas those who do not understand are being excluded.

Y: eli te puhutte enkkua keskenään jos ootte jossain muualla vai

I: niin yleensä=

Y:=miks=

I:=ettei kukaan muu ymmärrä

Y: a:::

I: tai no siis välillä siis niiku tehdään jotain ruotsii siihen väliin koska me osataan sitä tosi vähän ruotsii mut niin

*Y: so you speak English amongst each other if you are elsewhere or*

*I: yeah usually=*

*Y:=why=*

*I:=so no one would understand us*

*Y: a:::*

*I: or well so sometimes so like we do some Swedish in between because we know it very little Swedish but yeah*

Irina's last self-portrait is of herself as a Swedish speaker. In the drawing, Irina's face seems to express discomfort. She discusses that the unpleasant feeling comes from her inability to understand why she has to learn Swedish. She wonders where she would need it as she does not live in Sweden, but she rationalizes that it is the second official language, therefore, she has to learn the language. Having said that, this justification does not seem to be enough to motivate her

to learn the language. As Dörnyei (1994: 273) remarks, motivation plays a major role in one's language aptitude. Lack of motivation can dictate one's willingness to make an effort in learning a language. Irina began learning Swedish already in the fourth grade and has Swedish class twice a week. Irina's exposure merely extends to her Swedish class, therefore making it hard to develop her Swedish skills outside school. She assesses that her Swedish skills are poor, which according to her, could be due to the teacher's decision to teach either in a slow or rapid pace. She remarks that all of her classmates have also criticized this and noted this to have slowed their progression in the language. In addition to that, she estimates that the disturbances, which often take place during class, also disrupt her learning and concentration.

To sum up, one could see that Irina's relationships with the languages she speaks are multilayered. She associates joy and ease with English and Finnish, whereas with Swedish and Russian she connects frustration. She recognizes the need for learning Swedish but her motivation to learn the language appears to be low. She also understands that the society she lives in operates in Finnish, therefore, she constructs her understanding of that society and her close relations in Finnish. On the other hand, her preference of English enables her to understand her own ideologies and perhaps manifest them to herself at least. Finally, Irina understands the importance of speaking her Russian in order to develop and maintain familial relationships, take for example, her relationship with her father, which has and continues to be constructed through Russian.

#### **4.6. Amina**

Amina, who was born and raised in Finland, reports that Arabic, Finnish, English, Swedish and German are all part of her linguistic repertoire. Amina, who is the only member of her family who was born in Finland instead of Iraq, is the youngest of four children. She lives with her parents and her older sister. At home, the family uses their heritage language, Arabic, to communicate with one another. Once again, how the participants understood the drawing task varied from one participant to another as some drew self-portraits while others drew situations in which they use the language in question. Amina is one of two participants who drew situations in which she uses each language. As I examined and analyzed Amina's narratives, I came to understand how she like Ahmed associates all the languages she speaks with her social relations. In fact, she also builds and explores her social relation through her linguistic repertoire.

Starting with her HL, Arabic, Amina drew a social setting that illustrates when and with whom she uses Arabic. To portray her Arabic language skills, Amina drew three figures in a car. The first figure is a male figure standing behind an open door in the driver's side. The second character is a dark-haired female figure sitting in the passenger's seat and the last one is another female figure sitting in the back seat. All three figures seem to be smiling, and the drawing is called 'Arabia/Iraqi (Arabic/Iraq)'. Amina has named all of her drawings in Finnish. As I took a closer look at her drawing, I realized that all the figures appeared to have gleeful expressions. I asked, whether she is always happy when she speaks Arabic, Amina's positive reply, 'joo (*yeah*)', and the drawing of smiling faces indicates that she has positive feelings about this specific language. Arguably, the joyful expression could also be an indication of the nature of her familial relationship and the nature of their interaction through this specific language. Amina describes that the manifestation of her Arabic language identity surfaces mainly during family gatherings. She says,

'um: mul tulee ekaksi arabiasta niiku e: automatkaa tai matkaa sillee koska me sillon puhutaan tosi paljon yhessä esimerkiksi niiku ruokapöydässä'

*'um: the first thing that comes to me regarding Arabic is a road trip or a trip because that is when we talk a lot together or for example in the dining table'.*

Through the interview and the drawing, it quickly becomes clear that Arabic plays a major role in Amina's life as she associates many aspects of her identity and relationships with it. She builds, understands, forms, reaffirms, and negotiates her familial relationships through Arabic. In other words, Amina's certain identities or social roles such as being a daughter, cousin and sister seem to be shaped, negotiated and manifested through this language (Archakis and Tzanne, 2009:341). In addition to that, Amina's case confirms García and Wei's (2014:109) statement, one way to understand how speakers of more than one language use languages is through their social relations. She reveals that whenever she visits her distant family, she speaks a lot of Arabic. As García and Wei (2014) remark, in Amina's case, speaking Arabic is a social practice that is embedded in her distant familial relations as well. In order to continue and further be able to communicate with her family and relatives, Amina reports that she wants to develop her Arabic language skills. She observes that her limited ability in writing and reading restricts her possibility of communicating in a well-rounded manner. Furthermore, Amina's assessment of her limited skills showcases



awareness of her Arabic skills. She goes on to say that Arabic is the only communication language she can use with her relatives due to lack of other means and languages to communicate with them, therefore she cannot use her other language skills to communicate with them. Like many participants, Amina has never had any formal education on her heritage language, which is how she explains her inability to properly write in Arabic. She points out that she has received an informal tutoring from her brother-in-law, where she practices writing and reading with the help of Latin/Roman script. As illustrated by Amina and most of the participants, parents and family can function as sole resource for learning their HL. Moreover, the tutoring she receives from her brother-in-law in Arabic can also be regarded as taking the position of a ‘teacher’ and a ‘learner’ respectively. Similar to other participants, Amina also mentions that her HL is ‘se on vähän vaikeata (*a little difficult*)’, but her positive feelings towards the language are noted once again when she expresses that it is however ‘mut sitä on kiva puhuu (*nice to speak it*)’. She speaks of it fondly and her motivation to expand her skills in it further enhances her positive feels towards Arabic. We can see how Amina makes meaning of her Arabic involving world and shapes her experiences through her skills – be they limited at time.

Another language Amina uses at home is Finnish. At home, Amina sometimes speaks Finnish with her mother because she helps her learn the language, indicating that her mother does not speak Finnish fluently. She also says that her father speaks Finnish poorly but does not disclose whether she also helps him with Finnish or even speaks to him in Finnish at all. This could result in the children teaching their parents the local language and often even interpreting for them when needed. Budría and Pablo (2014) warn that this can have bad influence as parents may rely too much on their kids to interpret for them, resulting in the parents not learning the local language as fast. Moreover, she says that her sister, who according to Amina, speaks over ten languages and loves languages, often helps her with languages. Amina seeks for help from her sister especially during language exams by revising and prepping. This illustrates that Amina is not the only one who takes a role of a ‘teacher’ in the family, her older sister also plays that role. It is perhaps disputed from Amina that their parents have played the role of ‘teacher’ since the birth of the children by teaching them to speak their HL, however Amina does not disclose that fully in the interview.

Amina’s most used and arguably strongest language, Finnish, plays a major role in her life.

Amina's conception of herself as a Finnish language user is tightly associated with her school, which was also noted in her drawing. Moving on to the second drawing, Amina drew a building under which the word 'school' is written and above the building, the word '[s]uomi (*Finnish*)' is written. Interestingly both words are written in the two languages she uses in school, English and Finnish. One could argue that even though she clearly states that when she thinks of Finnish, she thinks of school, she may also think of English just as much, but she does not mention this during the interview. It is only manifested in her drawing and actions but not in her own words. After all, English is her second language of learning. Amina reveals that she mainly uses Finnish at school, where most of her social interactions with friends take place. Moreover, the significance of Finnish in her life becomes more apparent during the interview. Amina comments that she usually tends to think in Finnish, making Finnish a driving force in how she understands her world and thoughts, arguably. Its strong presence and force is further highlighted when she discloses that, in fact, she even dreams in Finnish. Moreover, when I asked her if there was a language through which she preferably expresses herself, Amina answered, 'Suomi (*Finnish*)'.

Y: vapaa-ajalla okei jos tavallaan sun pitäis miettiä sitä et millä kielellä sä ilmaiset ittesi parhaiten esim jos me oltais käyty tää haastattelu enkuksi luuleksä et sä sä oisit voinut ilmaista ittesi paremmin vai suomeksi sä pystyt ilmaisemaan ittesi paremmin vai esim arabian kielellä  
A: mä en oo kauhean varma e:: varmaan suomeksi varmaan

Y: during your free time okay if you had to think of in which language you express yourself best for example if we had done this interview in English do you think you could have expressed yourself better or in Finnish you can express yourself better or for example in Arabic  
A: I am not quite sure e:: probably Finnish probably

However, Amina sounded hesitant, hence, I wanted to ask that question in different ways just to reensure that she understood what I wanted to ask. Keeping her words in mind, I asked Amina whether she knows what the word *identity* meant and she said, 'ei (*no*)'. I explained that identity means understanding who we are and how we express ourselves, so I asked her once again, if she had to imagine the word identity, which language would be next to it, she replied,

'[englanti] on varmaan helpompaa tai jotain mä osaan kertoa itsestäni paljon enemmän ja paremmin'

'[English] is probably easier or something I could tell more and better about myself'.

Amina's hesitation could indicate a couple of things, a) Amina cannot tell in which language she can best express herself, or b) both; Finnish and English are her strongest languages through which she expresses herself the most. This, however, displays the complexity of one's linguistic repertoire as Amina's case showcases that it can be diverse, and the proficiency of the languages can vary. Arguably, Amina could feel that the resources of both languages are somewhat equal and as Blommaert and Backus (2011) argue, plurilinguals tend to use their repertoire freely without any barriers in order to express their ideologies.

Moving on to perhaps the second most used language by Amina and one of her favorite school subjects, English. Amina once again drew situations in which she uses English. The first part of the drawing entails a phone showing an application of Instagram. The application shows what appears to be various Instagram profiles with one profile showing a picture of a girl and a heart. One could assume that it is her profile and has liked a picture hence the heart on the profile. The second picture in the drawing is of a laptop displaying YouTube. Amina explains that she associates English with social media (Instagram and YouTube). She describes that she often watches English speaking YouTubers due to the variety in selection compared to the Finnish ones. Moreover, she mentions that while she primarily speaks Finnish with her friends, she also speaks English with some. These friends, who go to the International part of the school, find communicating in English easier, therefore, Amina speaks to them in English. This conscious decision from Amina to speak English to them indicates her awareness of her and her friends' linguistic repertoire, their linguistic identities and skills. Furthermore, what indicates Amina's ability to constantly assess her language skills is when she consciously practices to be better at the languages she speaks during her free time. For instance, she comments that when she feels the need to practice English, she uses English with her friends in social media. This conscious choice to speak English in order to speak it better indicates their ability to assess their English language skills and take measures to better their skills. Amina shows an understanding of much like how identities are developed through language in different social circumstances, she can similarly develop her linguistic repertoires by constantly practicing with others (García and Wei's 2013:8). Additionally, this shows her understanding of language use is that it is social and develops in interaction.

Swedish is the most recent language Amina has started learning. Like many of the participants, she also began learning Swedish at the beginning of grade six. Interestingly, she did

not have a drawing of her as a Swedish language user or a situation in which she uses the language like she has done with all other drawings. She says that the reason for not having a drawing is because she did not know how to draw ship, which is what she associates with Swedish. She says they often go to Sweden via a ship, therefore she mostly associates Swedish with space. One could argue that Amina's lack of drawing her Swedish linguistic repertoire is due to its lack of formulation or even existence. She seems to be in the process of developing a relationship with Swedish or the existence of Swedish in her linguistic repertoire is minimal. As mentioned in the analysis of the ethnographic observations, Amina's process to guess what 'glass' meant in Swedish was clearly done through her metalinguistic awareness of the English language, which is known to be part of multilinguals' skills. What also suggests lack of formation of personal connection with the language, hence resulting in non-existing strong relationship is the lack of an example of social interaction during which Swedish is used. Amina talks about how she uses and develops all other languages in social interactions or relating them to situations during which the language is also how she understands and manifests her ideologies (e.g. Finnish). Amina's relationship with the language or lack thereof could possibly be explained through its short existence in Amina's life.

In order to understand Amina's linguistic identities better, I asked her to tell me in which language feels most expressive and comfortable enough to use humor. Amina affirmatively says that she does so in Finnish. This I interpret to be due to a couple of things, one of which that a) she was born and raised in Finland hence understands the culture and context of Finland, and b) she uses humor amongst her friends with whom she mainly communicates in Finnish. Bell (2007:27) suggests that for one to understand and use humor one must have a high understanding of culture and linguistics. Bearing this in mind, it seemed relevant to ask the participants in which language(s) they prefer to convey humor. Bell (2007:28) further explains that for humor to achieve what it intends to do; participants ought to have "much more than knowledge of linguistic forms". This reinforces the notion that humor much identity requires attention of nuances in language skills and culture. The construction of humor resembles the construction of identities and language use, meaning that it is also context, time and culture dependent. Many things attribute to how humor is conveyed or constructed. Bell (2007:28) argues that

“[c]ontextual factors, such as time, place, and participants, as well as variations in culturally situated background knowledge, all influence the way we speak and understand each other, and these are constantly in the process of being negotiated and constructed in and through social practice”.

I noted Amina joking with her friends in Finnish on multiple occasions. For instance, during a mathematics class, in a slightly excited tone she told her friend, Emilia, ‘*kato mä osaan matikkaa! (look I know math! )*’. This happened after Amina correctly solved some tasks after encountering some difficulties. Having said that, during the ethnographic observation, to be more specific, during a Swedish class, I noted Amina joking with her friends. During the class, the teacher asked the class ‘*vad är klockan (what time is it)*’ in order to revise how to tell time in Swedish. Amina’s response amongst her friends was ‘time to go home’, to which her classmates reacted with laughter. The class happened to be the last one for that day and the pupils appeared to be tired as some of them took their time to come in and even complained that they wanted to go home. Amina’s response shows that she understands the semantics behind the teacher’s question, however, she chooses not to respond in an expected way, which would have been to tell time in Swedish. By breaking this social norm and in result causing her classmates to laugh, Amina uses English to convey humor, which can be analyzed pragmatically. Amina shows understanding of contextual factors, such as time (last class from of the day), place (school), participants (her friends) and the culturally situated background (a teacher asking a question to revise a learnt issue). She acknowledges that what is culturally expected of her is to properly answer the teacher’s question providing she knows the answer (semantics), however she does not. It must be noted that the reason for her to reply in English could be that she may not have had the linguistic resources to say it in Swedish as she has studied it for a short period and also the learning language is English. Having said that, one could argue that she could have also used Finnish to deliver the same message, but she did not. We can see that this incident clashes with her own perception in which language she conveys humor or tells jokes. Amina also shows that in order for her comment to convey humor, it required a shared multilingual repertoire and cultural understanding of humor (Muhonen 2013:78).

Finally, the last drawing was a representation of German. Amina began studying German in the third grade. Amina’s drawing of her German language skills was once again of a situation and place. The drawing is actually a memory of something that had taken place short before the interview took place. As mentioned earlier (see section 3), the class had gone to Berlin on a school

trip. The drawing is a moment of when Amina and the rest of the class were visiting the East Side Gallery. In the drawing, Amina and two of her classmates are watching over some art gallery in the East Side Gallery. She says that she really likes German and she associates it with German class and the country, for instance, their school trip to Berlin. According to her, these are the only settings in which she uses German. She explains a situation where she spoke to an elderly in a subway. In her words, she reports that she speaks German poorly, however, the elderly person praised her German skills. This situation seems to have left a positive feeling on Amina as she felt the need to refer to it and it seems to have enhanced if not rejuvenated her motivation for the language.

To sum up, we can see that Amina uses all of the languages with certain people in certain situations for a specific purpose. Her multilingual environment allows her to practice and evolve her linguistic identities in a diverse manner. Finnish seems to be the most dominant language in her linguistic repertoire and perhaps life as well. While English is an equal contender for being her most dominant language, Arabic seems to hold a special place for her. Due to her skills still developing in Arabic, we can see that her skills have and continue to restrict and limit her chances of communicating freely, and therefore expressing herself and manifesting her identities through the language. We can see that the trip to Berlin has rejuvenated Amina's passion for the language. I did however wonder whether Amina jokes with her parents or relatives that communicates solely in Arabic with. If she feels that she can convey humor through Finnish mainly and through English as observed during the ethnographic observations.

#### **4.7. Hiba**

Much like nearly all participants, Hiba was also born and raised in Finland. Hiba's parents have lived in Finland for seventeen years, and her only and older sibling was born in Iran. Her sister is 20-years-old, and has been living on her own for a couple of years. Hiba's drawing of her HL, which she has labelled as 'oma äidinkieli (*mother tongue*)', is of her family sitting around a dining table. Her parents are sat at both ends of the table while the sisters sit next to each other. All appear to be smiling. Hiba says that at home they mainly speak Persian with one another, however, they do communicate in Finnish as well sometimes. Also, like most of the participants, her exposure to Persian is limited to her family and home. She reveals that while she understands and speaks Persian fluently she can only write a few letters in Persian. She reports that when she uses Persian

when texting with her family but she does so using Latin alphabets. Being fluent in speaking and understanding but not writing or reading is not thought to be out of ordinary for HL speakers, however, she is still very much part of the Persian community (Polinsky 2014:1). Her speaking and understanding skills are in a higher level in comparison to her almost non-existing reading and writing skills. Moreover, much like Ahmed, Hiba has picked up Turkish because it is part of her father's linguistic repertoire and as a family they watch Turkish television shows.

Hiba's drawing of her Finnish identity is of her and her two friends hanging out. Hiba She says that she mainly uses Finnish to communicate with her friends. Finnish seems to play a big role in developing and experiencing her friendship but also in that it is one of her favorite and dominant languages. In order to find out more about Hiba's linguistic identities, I asked her in which language(s) does she normally think. She replied,

*'(3) um joko suomi tai englanti varmaan suomi mut molemmat sillee kun mä oon aika hyvä molemmis mut persiaksi myös kun se on mun oma äidinkieli mutta jompi kumpi niistä joko suomi tai englanti'*

*'(3) um either in English or Finnish but both as I am pretty good in both but in Persian also since it is my own mother tongue but either Finnish or English'.*

Understandably because these three languages are predominately her most used languages and the first two she acquired. Additionally, she uses these languages daily whether at home or school. Moreover, Hiba's other drawings of the other languages she speaks, Swedish and Spanish were of her sitting in a classroom surrounded by classmates staring at a teacher explaining something on the white board. These drawings suggest that Hiba sees these languages being mainly practiced and spoken at school. She had started Spanish on the 4<sup>th</sup> grade and started Swedish on the 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

As for social media, Hiba says that she usually uses Finnish and English (with those who only speak English). Also, she points out that she watches a lot of English-speaking shows. She boasts that since she is in an English class, she rarely uses subtitles while watching Englishspeaking shows. However, she reports that she does use subtitles when she watches Spanish shows. This is an example of how her English and Spanish language skills vary from one another. Her English is at a higher level than her Spanish, hence she rarely needs aid in understanding it as opposed to Spanish. Hiba's assessment of her skills also is shown in her actions.

Hiba seems to reflect on and assess her language skills constantly. She seems to know which languages are easy for her or which skills she still lacks. For instance, when asked how she

feels or what she thinks of all the languages she speaks, she once again confirms that she is very good in English and knows how to speak it well. Similarly, with Swedish, she affirms that although she has just begun learning it, she already understands it quite a bit. Furthermore, she asserts that she is very pleased with choosing Spanish and that along with English, they are her favorite languages. Interestingly, she says that her Finnish used to be better because in the fourth grade her grade was 9/10, however, it had dropped to 8/10 after and regardless of her effort to bring it back to 9, she could not. She does not disclose the reason for this but based on her tone, it seems to bother her. Based on her tone, I then asked her whether she has any insecurity when it comes to Finnish. She answered hesitantly that she sometime feels insecure especially amongst friends who speak Finnish very well. This makes her feel that she still has a lot to learn. This once again showcases her ability to assess her skills and while it seems to bother her it seems to drive her towards working harder to improve her skills. This was also portrayed in her report of working hard to levitate her grade to a better grade. This also shows her self-criticism (as eight is considered to be a good grade) and desire to improve her multilingual linguistic identity; a character and desire that all interviewees seemed to share. Hiba explicitly spoke of ways to develop her language skills in all the languages she speaks. Furthermore, she says that she sometimes speaks English and Spanish to some of her classmates. She adds that the reason for speaking Spanish is to become better at it, especially during exams. This phenomenon seems to be common for some of the participants, they can speak in an x language if they feel the need to practice more.

H: niin niin enkku espanja niin ne on lemppareita ja sit suomen kielikin mut mul mun mielestä tyyl  
nelosluokal aika hyvää suomen kieli mut nyt sit se laski aika paljon tai no mull oli ysi todistuksessa mut sit  
se laski kasiin niin mä yritin taas nostaa sen välitodistukses mut se oli silti kasi

Y: joo okei onks tavallaan sulla niiku epävarmoja niiku fiiliksiä sit suomen kielestä et sulla on selkeästi tosi  
vahvoja niiku positiivisia niiku tunteita esim espanjaan ja enkkuun koska sä varmaan koet et ne on tosi  
vahvoja ja mielekkäisiä mut miten sit sen suomen kanssa et onko sulla niiku epävarmoja fiiliksiä vai H:  
joo umm no jos joskus mul tulee sillee niiku et mä en osaa niiku esim kyl mulle joskus tulee mut kyllä mä  
sillee sinänsä osaan suomen kieltäki mut sit joskus mul tulee esim tunnilla tai esim jos mun kaveri puhuu  
joka puhuu tosi hyvin suomen kielt sit mul tulee semmonen fiilis tiss et apua ja tälle heeh Y: et sulla on  
paljon opittavaa sinänsä

H: joo↑

*H: well well English Spanish well they are my favorites and then Finnish also but I think sort of in the  
fourth grade I had very good Finnish skills but now then it dropped quite a bit or well I got nine in my  
report card but then it dropped to eight then I tried once again to levitate it in the midterm card report but  
it was still eight*

*Y: yeah okay do you sort of have insecure like feelings then in Finnish because you appear to obviously  
have very strong feelings like positive like feelings for example towards Spanish and English because you  
probably feel that they are very strong and pleasant but how then with finnish do you uncertain feelings or  
H: yeah umm well if sometimes I have a moment that during which I don't know how to for example yeah I  
do sometime feel that yeah I sort of know Finnish as well but then sometimes I have for example during*



When compared to others, Hiba seemed to take her school grades more seriously. Her commentary on wanting to get high remarks on the languages she speaks showcase her constant evaluation of her skills and progression. She appears to adapt languaging, therefore perhaps examines her deterioration in her grades critically. While Hiba's linguistic repertoire seem to be of decent skills according to her assessment and grades, she seems to enjoy learning languages and working on constantly developing them. Hiba's concern of her grade in Finnish is a widely spoken of concern amongst L2 Finnish speakers. I had a discussion with their teacher about this concern and noted that she also shares this concern as she has noticed that the learners' vocabulary is expanding at a slower rate when compared to native Finnish speakers. She said that she tackles this issue by having learners read more during class and at home.

#### **4.8. Jenny**

Jenny is a 12-year-old girl, whose mother identifies as a Finn and father as English. Apart from her father, she, her mother and older sister were all born and raised in Finland. Jenny's mother works as a personal assistant and her father is a student. At home, the family speaks Finnish and English. Jenny's linguistic repertoire includes Finnish, English and Swedish. These three languages have evidently shaped her language identities in ways that have shaped her social relations. She has demonstrated in her self-portraits the social settings in which she uses all the languages she speaks. She has drawn three different images that include her and others with whom she uses the language. What can be concluded is that she realizes that there is one self (one Jenny) who considers the languages she speaks separate entities but all operate in one linguistic repertoire (Melo-Pfeifer 2017:48).

According to the drawing and Jenny, she mainly uses English at home with her father. Due to her father being from England and as Jenny remarks, his poor Finnish skills, Jenny mainly uses English to communicate with him. Jenny's drawing of her English linguistic repertoire, which is under the name of 'englanti (*English*)', is of a female figure and a male figure. The female figure with brown hair, which resembles her actual looks and is supposed to be a self-portrait of Jenny, is shrugging her shoulders at her father, the male figure. Jenny has written 'what's for dinner' as part of a dialogue she is having with her father in the drawing. Her father, who seems to be smiling, is also shrugging his shoulders. Their shrugged shoulders do however differ from one another as

Jenny's seem to express eagerness and mild frustration while her father's seem to express amusement that signals lack of knowledge or inability to answer Jenny's question. This drawing illustrates her understanding and association of her English language repertoire, but perhaps also gives a glimpse of her daily dialogue with her father. Interestingly, she remarks that he might at times reply to her in Finnish when she asks him something in English. This reveals that although their main communication language is English, communicating in Finnish is also an option.

Moreover, while Jenny thinks that her father's Finnish skills may not be as diverse as his English, he seems to be the initiator of communicating in Finnish. Jenny does not disclose the motives for this, however she reports that she discourages it. She explains that she finds it unnatural to speak in Finnish with her father or matter fact, anyone, whose mother tongue is not Finnish. Jenny could not explain the reason for this, even though she realizes that most of her classmates are not native Finnish speakers, regardless of their fluency in the language. During the ethnographic observations, I noted Jenny mainly communicating in Finnish with her non-native classmates on multiple occasions. It is uncertain whether making errors is the reason for her discomfort in talking in Finnish with non-natives or the courtesy of speaking to someone in a language they are most comfortable expressing themselves. Jenny was one of the rare participants that created barriers between languages as she rarely translanguaged. She either spoke fully in Finnish or English.

Much like all participants, Jenny has always been in a CLIL classroom as well. This means that her excessive exposure to English extended to school and in fact to her hobbies as well. She likes to read and is passionate about live music. She categorizes going to watch live music as one of her hobbies and mentions that she does it as often as she can. In addition to that, she likes to listen to pop music and whatever is 'in'. Jenny has no preference in which language she likes to listen to music, but the artists she listens to are Finnish and English-speakers. Additionally, she uses the likes of Snapchat, Instagram to communicate with others and rarely Facebook, which she mainly uses to play games and to check photographs her mother posts of her. She reveals that she plays the games in English but uses other applications in Finnish and English. She explains that she mainly uses Finnish but uses, for instance, memes in English. This could merely be due to English memes being more available in comparison to Finnish. Interestingly, Jenny reports that she rarely speaks English with her friends despite the fact that they are all in the same CLIL classroom. She tells that they might use a few words here and there but besides during English

class, they rarely speak English to one another. Further, she comments that they use English due to the pressure asserted by their teacher. She remarks,

J: nii:: mut sit niiku emmä tiä mist se tulee joskus sit kun [opettaja] joutuu sanoo pari kertaa niin sit me kyllä puhutaan se varmaan vähän unohtuu ja sit niiku ei jaksa vaikka suomi on vähän vaikeampaa jopa mullekkii mut suomi tulee sieltä se on vähän huono joka ikiseltä mut se vaan tulee sieltä esim sit kun englannin kielessä ihka pikkaisen pitää miettii saattaa vaan johtuu ettei me vaan jakseta puhuu koko ajan englantii et se on helpompaa puhuu suomea

Y: okei meneeks se niiku tavallaan englannin käyttämiseen enemmän ajattelu tavallaan aikaa vai toisin ku suomee

J: joo tai sit kun pitää ajatella ku englannis on se eri kirjoitussääntöjä kun mitä suomessa on

Y: joo

J: niin pitää vähän miettiä miten se mennyt aikamuoto menee sit se vähän rasittaa ehkä niin mä en jaksa

*J: yeah:: but then like I don't know where it comes from sometimes then when the [teacher] has to note a couple of times but then we do speak it but it just gets forgotten and then like we don't have the energy Finnish is a little bit harder even for me but Finnish just comes out of there it is bad for all of us but it just comes out of there for example in English we have to think a tiny it could be that we just don't have the energy it is easier to speak Finnish*

*Y: okay does English kind of require more thinking and sort of time unlike in Finnish*

*J: yeah or then when I have to think in English it is different the writing rules unlike in Finnish*

*Y: yeah*

*J: yeah I have to think how the past tense goes then it is a little draining maybe I just don't feel up to it.*

Jenny reason not speaking in English due to having to spend time and energy in trying to produce grammatically correct utterances. Interestingly, Jenny mentions that everyone in the class struggles with speaking grammatically correct Finnish as well, however, it does not matter as much as it does in English. She notes that Finnish is difficult even for her, indicating that Finnish is her first language unlike the majority of her classmates. This is rather interesting as the pressure to produce grammatically correct English more than Finnish could be due to the being part of a CLIL classroom, where it is part of the curriculum to learn the content in English as well. On another occasion, Jenny once again expresses frustration when she remembers an incident in which her father corrected her grammar, which he rarely apparently does. Jenny's frustration stemmed from the fact that she knew the correct form, however had merely made a mistake. She adds that it is even more upsetting to commit errors while knowing the form. Furthermore, she denounces that she has to speak English, therefore the pressure to speak it correctly is higher than it is in Finnish. Other participants also noted this; their teacher encourages them to use English as much as possible in order to learn everything in English as well to fulfill the requirements of a CLIL class. During the ethnographic observations, it was noted that the teacher often spoke in English even though

the pupils would ask and answer in Finnish. This persistence often lead to learners eventually speaking in English to the teacher. The impression I got during my ethnographic observations, learners seem to be very comfortable in speaking in English whenever necessary, but their primary communication language seem to be Finnish. I often noted that they spoke in Finnish while communicating with one another and especially during recess.

Jenny seems to associate Finnish with school as her drawing of her Finnish linguistic repertoire is of an example related to school. In the drawing, Jenny once again has drawn a similar figure of herself to the one in her English linguistic repertoire, but in this specific drawing, her facial expression expresses emotions of panic or terror. Her mouth is open and her hands are openly tilted towards the other female figure in the drawing, which appears to be smiling, to illustrate despair. The drawing is labeled 'Suomi (*Finnish*)' and Jenny says, 'mitä tuli läksyys (*what was for homework*)' and 'koska, en varma tehny (*because I probably didn't do it*)'. She laughingly explains that it is a typical example of recess because she often forgets to do all of the homework and has to confirm in order to avoid getting a marking for not doing her homework. Jenny was perhaps one of the girl learners who was nearly always noted to use Finnish while interacting with her classmates. She rarely translanguaged unlike the majority of the girls in her class. Moreover, apart from using Finnish in school, Finnish plays a bigger role in her life. She acknowledges that it is her strongest language because she predominately thinks and even dreams in Finnish. She does note, however that depending on the person she interacts with in the dream, she might use English as well. This reinforces the notion of language use depending on the linguistic repertoire of others. Jenny also seems to prefer to express herself in Finnish and identifies with Finnish more than with English. Jenny's report that she resorts to Finnish in order to make sense of her own thoughts and world is further highlighted when tells that she often immediately resorts to Finnish when she finds her struggling with Swedish. This is rather intriguing as some of the other participants admit to confusing other languages such as Spanish, German and English with Swedish.

In her last self-portrait, Jenny has drawn an incident from her Swedish language identity. The drawing is called 'ruotsi (*Swedish*)' and it includes two female figures. The first figure, Jenny, has her hair open and hands thrown out in the air with widely open mouth and eyes. The gestures seem to express horror-like emotions while the other female figure, the Swedish teacher, has her arms thrown out towards Jenny and her face seems expressionless rather but her arms indicate desire to help. According to Jenny, the text says 'ursäkta, får jag låna toaletten (*Sorry, can I use*

*the toilet*)’ she laughingly describes that she has no idea why she has written that as she never excuses herself to the restroom during Swedish class. One could argue that compared to the previous drawings that include actual examples of situations where Jenny uses the language, in this particular situation, Jenny had problems projecting situations in which she fully uses Swedish. Her choice to include the horror she feels when it comes to the language is perhaps a projection of her emotions during her Swedish class.

Similarly to Irina, and Ahmed, Jenny started Swedish in the fourth grade. She assesses that her Swedish skills are in an intermediate level as they keep improving throughout the years. Further, she self-assesses that her first year went well but she lost motivation in the fifth grade, which caused deterioration in her skills. Jenny’s reporting is a testimony to the role of motivation in learning a language, especially a language that is not in your immediate settings. Motivation also plays a huge role in the amount of time and effort language learners put in learning a new L2 (Dörnyei 1994). Jenny’s lack of motivation affected her language aptitude causing a perhaps not so successful term in regards of developing her Swedish skills. It must be noted that Jenny does not specify the consequence of her lack of motivation apart from having a lower grade compared to the previous and current time in respect of when the data was collected (May 2017). However, she assures that her motivation has gone up in the sixth grade, hence helping her perform better. She assesses that her understanding of the Swedish language is far better than her ability to produce it, which could explain to why she uses the least. Having said that, amongst her friends, Jenny points out that she mixes all these three languages. She reveals that while Finnish is their primary language of communication, at times they might start a sentence in Swedish until they can no longer communicate in the language or then ‘*use English words*’ that ‘*sound Swedish*’. She laughingly explains that they say an English word but make it sound Swedish.

J: mä sanoisin et me heittellään vaan pari sanaa joskus on semmosta me aloitetaan ruotsiksi se lause mut sit me ei osata sitä sanastoo kokonaan ruotsiksi mut me ruvetaan niiku englannin sanoji mitkä niiku kuulostaa ruotsinkieliseltä hehe

Y: hehe eli lisäätte siihen vaan randomii kirjaimii vai i: hehe vai jotain tuollaista

J: nii:: hehe sanotaan englanninkielen sanaa mut me sanotaan semmottii ruotsiksi hehe

*J: I would say that we throw a couple of words sometimes it is so that we start in Swedish the sentence but then we don’t know the vocabulary entirely in Swedish but then we like English words that like sound Swedish hehe*

*Y: hehe so you add just random alphabets or i:: hehe or something like that*

*J: yea:: hehe we say an English word but then we say like in Swedish hehe*

She does not fully explain how this works in practice but one could assume that they try to use intonations and pronunciations to sound “Swedish”. She imagines that this has caused some confusion amongst others who may hear them as they often speak loudly. Someone who speaks English and/or Swedish may understand what they are saying or what they are doing, but understanding from her talk, they do it when they are surrounded with people who do not have these linguistic repertoires. She adds that she does not recall when this started but that it has been going on for a while. As I had noted that most of her classmates had started Swedish at the beginning of the sixth grade, I asked whether she does this with them or with those who started taking Swedish on the fourth grade, she replies, with the latter respectively. It seems that regardless of the limited exposure Jenny has to Swedish, she and her friends try to use it outside class as well. As Jenny herself admits, her vocabulary is limited. Moate and Szabo (2018) attribute this to “creative potential” when discussing the attributes of language awareness, which Jenny and her friends illustrate through their understanding of ‘how words sound’. Moate and Szabó, (2018) argue that when learning language children learn to mimic language but also “improvise with the language(s) they hear around them. Ears, minds and tongues become acculturated but language also provides the means for novel contributions, personal intonations, collaborative endeavours and new insights.”.

To sum up, Jenny’s language use during the ethnographic observations seemed to correlate with creating barriers between languages or rather her minimum practice of translanguaging indicated so. This was perhaps further enhanced when she said that she rarely translanguages between English and Finnish with her father. Having said, Jenny’s remarks on using Swedish like sounds when trying to speak Swedish suggests otherwise. Furthermore, Jenny’s approach to language use illustrates a relaxed and playful approach especially when there is no pressure to speak grammatically correct like in Swedish, however, she feels pressure and frustration when speaking English.

#### **4.9. Zamir**

Zamir, the only participant who was not born in Finland, moved to Finland with his family three years prior to the data collection. He lives with his parents and two older sisters while the fourth and eldest sister lives in a different city. His family self-identifies as Kosovans and as Albanian

being their mother tongue. Zamir is the only participant who has spent the majority of his life living in a society where his mother tongue is also one of the official and local languages, therefore I am referring to his first learnt language as his mother tongue. Unlike the rest of the participants but more like Irina and Jenny, Zamir's exposure to his mother tongue was not restricted to his parents nor to home but his exposure extended to the society and his immediate environment as well.

At the end of our interview when I asked Zamir to freely explain in his own words his drawings he laughingly says that the drawings are '*vähän outoo (kind of strange)*'. Zamir's drawings are colorful and rich in details. I was immediately intrigued by his drawings because as I took a closer look into his drawings, I immediately realized that he had drawn different looking self-portraits that represent his own understanding of himself as an x language speaker. What quickly becomes apparent is that drawing self-portraits had enabled him to "explore questions of identity", and of linguistic identity in each drawing (Thomson and Hall 2008:146). If we were to take self-portraits as a reflection of how one sees oneself, Zamir's self-portraits, which are different and filled with details, are a reflection of his own understanding of himself as an x language speaker (Wegner 2006:1). However, Zamir looked different in all the drawings and mainly looked like himself as an Albanian speaker. What becomes apparent through the interview is that Zamir perceives himself as a multilingual self, however he distinguishes between the languages and himself as that language speaker. According Melo-Pfeifer (2017:48), such self-portraits under the juxtaposed repertoires that represent different selves and different languages. By doing so, Zamir illustrates an awareness of how language use is in fact dependent on factors such as time, interactant(s), history and social settings (Dufva et al. 2011). Moreover, Zamir's understanding of language use is supported by García and Wei's (2013:8) argument that as one engages with others and tries to make sense of one's world one constantly discovers oneself and one's language habits.

Starting with his Albanian self-portrait, Zamir chose to draw traditional clothing to symbolize his patriotism and feelings towards his mother tongue. His physical appearances seem to resemble his actual appearances, brown hair and eyes, therefore making his self-portrait. The drawing illustrates his own thoughts and feelings towards his mother tongue, which he self-identifies as patriotic. In addition, this can immediately be detected from his self-portrait as an Albanian speaker. In the self-portrait, Zamir identifies his clothing to be traditional Albanian clothes, and what quickly becomes apparent is that the clothing projects his patriotic feelings. The

clothing: qeleshe (a type of hat), tirq (long pants) and a xhamadan (traditional vest) are a representation of his connection to not only his nation, which could arguably be his *origins*, but also to his mother tongue. He remarks that when he speaks Albanian, he perceives himself as an Albanian patriot.

Z: mä vaan um: mietin mä kuvittelen itteni niinku olemaan hirveän albanialainen patriot kun mä hehe kun mä puhun albaniaa ja se on aika kiva

Z: *I just um: imagine myself as being extremely Albanian patriot when I hehe when I speak Albanian and it is pretty nice.*

Furthermore, Zamir gleefully reports that this feeling is ‘*pretty nice*’. Compared to the rest of his drawings and explanations, this drawing does not seem to aspire to be anything because indeed, it is already everything it aspires to be. His short and positive explanations indicate a linguistic identity that is perhaps more settled than the rest of his linguistic identities. He does not mention any insecurities about his language skills which he does with the other drawings, however he has a concern or fear. Zamir’s only concern about his Albanian skills is the fear of losing it. He says that his fear would be to go to Kosovo and not be able to speak Albanian because he has forgotten the language. He fears that if that were to occur, he would feel embarrassed. One could argue that Zamir’s fear of losing face is not merely due to losing his Albanian skills but also losing an identity he built in his home country, hence making this also a matter of one’s identity. Busch (2012) argues that one’s “linguistic repertoire may not only include what one has but also what one does not have, what one was refused but is still present as desire”. One could argue that as proud as he is in his Albanian linguistic identity he is also in his Albanian identity that is clearly manifested through his Albanian linguistic skills.

In order to further understand his linguistic repertoire, I asked him which is the language he uses to solve mathematical problems and when he encounters a discourse he has a hard time understanding. He explains that he vividly remembers his grandmother teaching him how to count, multiply and did so in Albanian. Therefore, until this day, he understands and processes arithmetic through Albanian (Spelke and Tsivkin 2000). Further, he tells that he tends to rely on his Albanian skills when encountering a phenomenon he does not understand.



Y: okei ja jos tavallaan jos sä oot koulussa ja sulla on semmonen teksti mitä sä et ymmärrä sanotaan vaikka se teksti on suomen kielellä niin miksi kieleksi sä ensin käännät sen sun päässäsi tai millä kielellä sä tavallaan yrität sen ymmärtää  
 Z: no: um: tavallisesti albaniaksi  
 Y: okei eli sä turvaudut aina niiku ensin aina tavallaan niiku albaniaan  
 Z: niin

*Y: okei and if kind of if you are at school and you have a text that you don't understand what it says and the text is in Finnish then to which language do you translate it in your head or in which language do you try to understand it*  
 Z: well um: usually to Albanian  
 Y: alright so you always resort to like first to kind of Albanian  
 Z: yeah

While Albanian is what the family identifies as their mother tongue, Zamir reports that English has nearly just as a significant role in their household. This is due to all children having always attended an English based curriculum school or CLIL classrooms, and their mother teaching English. As a consequence, English has been and still is vividly present in the lives of nearly all family members, making it one of their primary communication languages. The dominance of the two languages is further enhanced as he assesses that he often tends to think, express himself and understand his immediate world (i.e. building and expressing identity) in either language. This illustrates Zamir's conscious awareness of his own capabilities in both languages.

Continuing with his self-portrait of an English speaker Zamir laughingly says,

'mä en tiä miks mä piirsin itseäni tuommoseksi ku e: mä kuvittelen rikkaaksi ihmiseksi kai hehe'

*'I don't know why I drew myself like e: that as I imagine myself as a rich person I suppose hehe'.*

He reports the reason for imagining himself so is because of how he uses English and what he wants to portray with the language. He says,

'um: koska kun mä käytän enkkuu mä yritän käyttää niinku hienoin enkku mitä mä pystyn sanomaan et esim en käytä mitään niinku hirvee tavallasii sanoja mä käytän jotain mitä sä voisit kuvitella et on esim business ihminen @sanaa@ business mies kai se sana niin ja koska mä yritän kuulostaa fiksummalta

*um: because when I use English I try to use like the most sophisticated English I can say for example I don't use like regular words I use something you can imagine that is for instance a businessman @word@ businessman I guess is the word yeah and because I try to sound smart*

To explain what he means, let us take a closer look at his drawing. In this particular drawing, Zamir is wearing an old-fashioned top hat and sitting with his legs crossed in what seems to be a comfortable chair that seems to be perfectly designed for his body. He has his right hand on a monocle and his left hand on a table about to sip on what seems to be a tea cup. This portrait that

seems to be of a different era is rather interesting as it not only illustrates how Zamir sees himself when he uses English but also how he wants to be perceived and possibly how he wants to be in the future as the self-portrait indicates aging. As Busch (2012) once again comments, linguistic repertoire can also embody what one wishes one's linguistic repertoire to be. The image he portrays via the language displays perhaps his own desires and perception of an English speaker. He wants to sound smart hence he uses what he believes to be "sophisticated" vocabulary or jargon that a businessman would use. Even more this can be seen from the way he is dressed and his presence in the drawing. The old-fashioned top hat, the chair and the monocle suggest a wealthy educated male (Hentea 2013). Hentea (2013:214) reports that many famous "authors", "film-makers", "philosophers", and "visual artists" were users of monocles. Zamir does not explicitly explain the reasons for the monocles, however, one could assume that if the primary purpose of the monocle was to correct Zamir's sight, he would have most probably drawn eye glasses as all of his drawings seemed to be planned with purposeful details. Thus, his particular choice of the monocles indicate that they serve a specific purpose. The monocles could represent the intelligence and desire to sound smart to which he aspires. Furthermore, the sofa and the way he is dressed suggest wealth. Zamir's own analysis of his English skills indicate that he has analyzed his linguistic capacity and hence deduced that forming this businessman-like identity will manifest an identity of an intellectual rich man. As shown by this and the rest of his drawings, Zamir shows strong signs of being aware of his linguistic identities. Zamir seems to have the ability to analyze and project the emotions and ideologies behind every drawing, even though he may not explicitly explain his perceptions and ideologies.

Moreover, when asked which language(s) he uses in social media to which he specifies to WhatsApp, Snapchat and YouTube, he responded that he often uses English in order for everyone to understand. As to whom he means by everyone, it is hard to tell nor does he disclose. One could assume that he interacts with people whose linguistic repertoires may differ from one another and he therefore uses English as a lingua franca. Conscious linguistic choices such as this affirm Zamir's richness in his linguistic repertoires as he acknowledges that he has the capability to communicate comfortably within three languages; Albanian, English and Finnish, therefore gives others the courtesy to decide which language to use. This also reinforces Zamir's ability to switch between different linguistic identities in order to moderate with his surroundings. Furthermore, he does so out of politeness, he says choosing a language to communicate with usually

*'depends on the friends, for instance if they don't know how to speak English properly or don't want to speak English [then] um: I speak Finnish to them so they feel comfortable sort of'.*

'no riippuu tosi paljon kavereista esim jos ne ei tiedä hyvin enkkuu tai ei halua puhuu enkkuu mä puhun um: suomii niitten kaa et niillä ois parempi olo tavallaan'

Zamir continues with his drawings and once again draws a portrait that does not resemble his appearances at all. In real life, Zamir is a Caucasian boy with brown hair and eyes, however his self-portrait as a Finnish speaker is a drawing of a Caucasian boy with blond hair. He expresses that 'tämmöisis paikoissa et ne on niillä on tavallisii olla niinku ihan blondit hiukset (*in these kind of places they are tend to have it is normal to have like absolute blond hair*)', referring to Finland. This prompted me to ask whether he imagines himself blond when he speaks Finnish, he laughingly says, 'joo (*yeah*)'. As Zamir is the only participant who has had a short history in Finland, I think his search for his Finnish linguistic identity is still forming as he associates his linguistic identity with what he has seen and what he aspires to be. This drawing in particular is interesting as it also reveals that Zamir associates Finnish with blond boys. However, the majority of Zamir's classmates identify themselves as non-native Finnish speakers but all speak Finnish fluently according to their teacher. One might argue that Zamir thinks that Finnish only belongs to 'native Finns' or he strives to be native-like and hence the blond hair. This phenomenon could also be explained through Toohy's (2011) *imagined communities and identities theory*. Toohy (2011:4) explains

"for many learners, the target language community is not only a reconstruction of past communities and historically constituted relationships, but also a community of the imagination, a desired community that offers possibilities for an enhanced range of identity options in the future. An imagined community assumes an imagined identity, and a learner's investment in the target language can be understood within this context".

While he has blond hair in the portrait, he says that it is otherwise him. The blond hair could represent nativity in Finnish for Zamir, therefore, his desirable linguistic identity is to sound like natives. Once again, this showcases Zamir's understanding of having multiple linguistic identities and his immense understanding of his linguistic repertoire. This portrait demonstrates that by referring to Finland as places like this and its speakers (boys his age) with whom he identifies,

Zamir has drawn his imagined identity of the community and his investment, which is to potentially be one of the community. Moreover, this could be what Zamir aspires to (Busch, 2012). This was even more evident in Zamir's drawings of himself as a Swedish and French speaker. Zamir laughingly says that in his Swedish drawing he 'mä muutuun viikingiksi (*transformed into a Viking*)'. He explains that Swedish feels '*very strange that it feels extremely outdated*' which is why he feels like a Viking.

Z: um: e: um: mä en tiää se on niinku niin outoo kieli mulle et se tuntuu et se ois ihan sairaan vanhanaikaista kieli ja sit koska se on ruotsalaista heti tulee mieleen viikingi

Z:um: e: um: *I don't know it is like so weird language for me that it feels like it is extremely old-fashioned language and then because it is swedish right away [I] think of Vikings*

I discovered during the interview that Zamir had begun learning Swedish only a few months prior to the interview. This can be traced perhaps to his detachment and hesitation from the language. His thoughts on the language do not seem to be emotional but rather superficial. His skills in the language seem to be just forming, which is understandable due to the little time he has studied it. This can be noted as Zamir explains that he wants to speak Swedish well enough 'mä voin puhuu sitä ilman yhtään onglemii (*to speak it without any problems*)'. Similarly, with his French portrait he states that his understanding of himself as a French speaker is only the French speaker he seeks to be. He drew himself with a moustache wearing a black and white striped t-shirt, a wool Beret hat, and holding a baguette in his hand. Zamir explains that this is his idea of what a French boy looks like as he has seen being portrayed "in all French movies". When asked if this is what Zamir aspires to be, he hesitantly replied 'yes'. It appears that Zamir's desired language identity plays into the stereotypes of native speakers. Due to his hesitation I then asked, does Zamir have multiple different identities in all these languages, Zamir laughingly replied, 'that would mean I have had personality issues'. Interestingly, Zamir says personality issues in English. This is important to note as Zamir explained at the beginning of this section that when using English, he tends to use 'smart words' to indicate intelligence. This is an example of that but this also reveal that while Zamir has drawn different portraits of himself as x language speaker, he does not believe that has different identities in all these languages. He consciously associates all the different languages he speaks with something and in all the languages he seems to have different linguistic identities but

he himself does not see it that way. It could be so that Zamir thinks that each language represents a certain identity, however, he does not seem to identify with all of them just yet.

Z: hehe eeh ei niin niin mulla on vaan et um: mä haluan olla niinku näissä kaikissa vähän tuollainen ihminen et se osaa ranskaa tosi hyvin en halua mitään baggett mun kädessä koko ajan et mä osaan suomea hyvin et mä voin puhua suomalaisten kaa tosi hyvin et mä osaan ruotsii kun mä tarviin sitä mä voin puhua sitä ilman yhtään onglemii ja sit albaniassa jos mä menisin albaniaan mulla oli mua ei nolottais ehkä mä oon unohtanu sitä kieltä ja sit se englantilainen koska mä haluan et musta tulee semmonen sivistynyt ihminen

Y: okei onko sulla nyt kieli tai tavallaan identiteetti mikä on sulle tärkeintä

Z: se tärkein ois niinku mul-mulle ois tärkeintä varmaan se englantilainen koska se ois sivistynyt ja sillä ois paljon rahaa mut mun perhees jos tavallaan mietin mun perhettä et albanialainen mä en jatkais mun perheen perintöä

*Z: hehe eh no well well I just have that um: I want to be like in all these a bit like this person that he speaks French very well I don't want any baguette in my hand all the time so that I know speak Finnish well enough that I can speak with Finnish people very well that I know Swedish because I need it I can speak it without any problems and then in Albania if I get to Albania I had I wouldn't feel embarrassed maybe I have forgotten the language and then the English because I want to become such sophisticated person*

*Y: okay do you have a language or identity that you consider the most important*

*Z: the most important would be for m-me the most important probably the English because he would be sophisticated and have a lot of money but in my family if I have to sort of think of my family then the Albanian I wouldn't continue my family's legacy*

At school, Zamir speaks English, Finnish, Swedish and French but never Albanian even though he has classmates whose mother tongue is Albanian as well. Based on the observations, apart from during Swedish and French class, Zamir seems to use more English than Finnish during classes. This could be because he has learnt and spoken English for a far longer period, hence making it a more natural language to him. For example, during mathematics, they were going through equation. They seemed to have gone through the issue in Finnish but were learning for the first time in English about equation. One student appeared to struggle with the issue and asked from his classmates sitting next to him 'what is n?' Zamir replies, 'it is like x'. The student shook his head to illustrate confusion. Zamir attempted to clarify and said, 'se on (.) semmoinen numero mitä et tiedä(it is (.) such a number that you don't know)'. At this point Zamir paused for a second and did not know what to say. Matti was following the interaction and saw that the student could not understand Zamir's explanation and decided to step in and said, 'se on tuntematon numero (it is an unknown number)'. During another mathematics class, the teacher was teaching in Finnish and Zamir realized that he did not have his book with him so he asked if he can follow what the teacher is explaining from a classmate's book. The girl agreed and put the book between them, however, Zamir could not see properly and said to the girl 'can we do it this way, it is easier'. Such incidents

in which Zamir resorts to English first was noted on multiple occasions. Zamir's Finnish skills were extremely impressive given the amount of time he had spent in Finland at the time of the data collection. It is rather understandable that he resorts to English because it was his second language and he has a longer history with it. Also, García et al. (2017:14) argue that learners can use translanguaging in order to stay active during class rather than get discouraged when they are limited by their skills. This is not to say that his skills are limited, however, one could argue that due to his longer history with English, it rather comes easier than Finnish.

As we can see, Zamir's drawings and tales explore his linguistic identities in all their diversity, intricacy and multiplicity. Albanian and English undoubtedly are the languages through which he understands himself and what he aspires to be. They are also the languages through which he has built and continues to form his familial relations. When in these two languages, Zamir seems to find his aspiration to be a sophisticated, intelligent rich man, he also finds his patriotic self through his family's legacy, as he remarks. His Finnish, Swedish and French skills appear to be still forming and developing. His drawings of what he considers natives or model speakers for the languages manifest his desire to reach their level. Zamir's visual drawings showcased different cases of language identities and identities in general. His already existing language identities and the identities that he aspired to illustrated the multiple layers of identity. It also showed conflicts that one could have when it comes to identity or how one perceives and projects identity.

## 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

As our understanding of language and language use changes and evolves within the parameters of languaging, translanguaging and plurilingualism, our perception of what a language is and how it is taught should shift as well. Similar to how poststructural modernism further expanded the notion of identity of it being a continuous process that is subjected to change, evolve and do with respect to one's settings, languaging has challenged our perception of language learning/acquisition towards being a constant process that enables people to first develop their language and linguistic skills and second find ways to communicate without pressure or limitations. Furthermore, plurilingualism expands the notion of linguistic repertoire, disclaiming languages as separate entities. Plurilingualism enables speakers that have skills in multiple languages to translanguage, therefore, advocating for agency, breaking barriers between languages and emphasizing fluid usage between languages and language features. Consequently, our perception of language(s) could perhaps be slowly explored and researched then under the premise of how plurilingual speakers use, adapt and expand their linguistic repertoire. The premise of one using one's whole linguistic repertoire requires primarily the ability to have a metalinguistic awareness of language then secondarily use language features accordingly and grammatically correct.

The main purpose of the ethnographic observation was to observe a culture of an environment that celebrates multilingualism and encourages fluid usage of languages and language features. The major findings of the ethnographic observations confirmed this as the participants comfortably and effortlessly switched between languages and language features in an environment that also encourages such practices. The school's environment and circumstances allowed the participants of the study to maneuver between language features to express themselves without any limitations (García, Johnson and Seltzer 2017). This ultimately challenges the notion of communicating within the barriers of 'one' language and instead using all language skills one possesses to make meaning of one's world. Moreover, the present study confirmed that when plurilinguals translanguage or are part of a CLIL classroom, they tend to have a high metalinguistic awareness (Cenoz and Wei 2014). The participants seemed to have high awareness of their language and linguistic skills, further enhancing their understanding of appropriate language use (style, register, tone), but also that language features from different languages can be used freely as long as done appropriately. The metalinguistic awareness enabled them to understand the

mechanics of languages and how to use language features to make full meaning of their surroundings. As cited in Kalaja and Pitkänen-Huhta (2020) the recent NCC (2014) acknowledges language awareness and has implemented it into the curriculum by encouraging that all subjects ought to be considered as a resource for learning and developing language. The notion of language being everywhere in a school was seen in the CLIL classroom daily. Since the NCC has emphasized language awareness with little information and guide on how teachers can develop such skills in their classrooms, doing more research on this type of schools that actively practice such skills can be further explored and research in order to provide tangible tools for teachers. Language awareness, linguistic identity and repertoire, plurilingualism in schools need more research to be done on them in Finland due to the NCC's goals for language learning heading towards such direction. (Kalaja and Pitkänen-Huhta 2020).

Moreover, the present study aimed to voice how young multilingual learners expressed their multiple and versatile linguistic identities. In doing so, it also aimed to understand how they perceived and used language(s) in different situations in order to see how they explored and expressed their identities or social roles. One of the main findings of the present study was how the participants explored and developed social relations and identities through languages. This became apparent through their HL as the importance of learning and speaking their HL was strongly linked to their desire to develop their familial relationships. For example, most of the participants use their HL to construct and develop their familial relations. It seemed significant for most participants to be able to evolve in their HL skills in order to continue to construct and maintain relationships with close and distant family members. Their relations to their HL varied but most of them seemed to feel joy and pride in knowing how speak it. For instance, some of the participants strongly associated their HL with their home, families and countries of their origins. In addition, this particular language identity was tied with certain cultural, geographical and social spaces as well as situations. Similarly, nearly all of them stated that their Finnish linguistic identity is the most present and active because of school, friends and society. Some of them also stated the importance of speaking Finnish in this society, indicating that they use it to navigate and find their place in this society. Furthermore, all of them use Finnish amongst their friends. (Kouhpaenejad and Gholaminejad 2014).

Furthermore, the participants have shown that language use can be expressed through language identity and language awareness that are illustrated through their perception of



themselves as an x language speaker. Using their visual drawings they illustrated awareness of their linguistic identities but also projected how they perceive themselves and project these identities. Their visual drawings revealed how they perceived each language but also their relations to these languages and how they self-identify as each language users (Melo-Pfeifer 2015, 2017). Also, this study aimed to understand how the participants use different languages to belong to, or isolate themselves from, other groups and social norms. Societal effects appeared to impact the participants' language use but the participants appeared to exercise agency in their choice of language(s). For example, Ahmed using his HL in situations where others could not understand displayed an active agency in how and when to use repertoire in order to benefit from one's language skills. On the other hand, Zamir showcased through his visual drawings that language identity can be manifested in form of a desire to aspire to something, in his case native-like. Moreover, humor is something I noted during the ethnographic observations and something I asked the participants during the interviews as I wanted to see whether the participants felt more comfortable expressing humor in a certain language and what were the reasons behind it. Humor requires a sophisticated understanding of culture as well as language and arguably a sense of one's identity as it can be strongly linked to identity. Most of the participants seemed comfortable joking in Finnish and English but mainly Finnish which I deduced was due to the surroundings functioning primarily in Finnish as well their understanding of the Finnish culture was a common dominator in their interactions. Much like identity and language use humor is also dependent on time, space and context. Furthermore, humor presents a great opportunity to explore identity and language identity further. Humor can have different purposes such as creating a relaxed atmosphere, therefore, provides room for exploring.

Finally, exploring and researching languaging, heritage language, plurilingualism and translanguaging is still a fairly new concept here in Finland, but desperately needs more attention to be brought to as second-generation immigrants that are perhaps trying to find their place in this pro monolingualism society. Moreover, positive perspective on the linguistic and versatile skills of young second-generation immigration that are born and raised here is desperately needed to further expand the notion of plurilingual speakers in this society. Also older generations that are slowly making it to universities and can get their voice heard ought to provide personal and subjective insights in order to allow their stories to be told by someone who experiences this society the same way they do rather than their stories being told by 'native' members of society. Further

research could be done on these same participants to further explore their linguistic identities and languaging process in all the languages they speak. All the participants seem to have a playful approach to languages, which is normal to young people, thus it would be interesting to carry out this study years later. It would be interesting to perhaps interview them as adults to see how they perceive their linguistic identities as adult plurilinguals. As mentioned above, there has been some research and the most recent one being Kalaja and Pitkänen-Huhta (2020) in which similar topics and phenomenon were researched. This study is relevant in that it a) illustrated how one's environment can shape how and modify one's language use and linguistic identities and enabled young plurilingual speakers to voice their fluid language use that mainly showcases the playfulness of language(s).

Like any study with its limitations, this present study had some limitations as well. There are a few things I would have liked to have done differently or should have taken into consideration during the data collection that could have benefited the present study more. First being, I would have asked for permission to also include the visual drawings in order to also visually illustrate their understanding and projection of their linguistic identities and language use. Furthermore, each method of the data collection could have been more and further explored but due to the limitation of the present study the focus on the research questions was crucial. Collectively the three methods supported the purpose of the present study well, but due to deciding to focus on linguistic identity and language use in developing social role and one's identity, the focus in analyzing the participants' responses had to be on language, language use and linguistic identities. Second, the age of the participants presented challenges while conducting the interviews in attempts to not lead their answers. Also, the questions of the visual drawings (what languages do you speak and draw a picture of you using the language) were perhaps (mis)leading in how the participants interpreted the questions and projected their understanding of the questions. Third, I would revise the question of '*where do you come from?*' as it presented challenges in its presumptuous positioning of belonging to a certain place/country and also being a native of a certain language. It is essential to discuss the assumptions behind that question. In a world that is divided by nations, ethnicities, nationalities and languages, it is natural to assume that one belongs to or identifies with one nation, ethnicity, language and home. By doing so, we put ourselves and others into permanent identity positions with very little regard to the fact that the way we identify with or not is always time-, place- and context-dependent. Fourth, I wanted to emphasize the individuality of the participants,

hence wanted to analyze their interviews separately to highlight their experiences and unique language identities. However, some themes overlapped hence in the future thematic analysis (which was considered heavily) could be a good way to avoid such overlapping and repetition.

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## Appendix 1. Interview guide

### Kysymykset

1. Kerro minulle kuka sinä olet
2. Kerro enemmän sinun taustasta/ jotain perheestäsi, mitä kieliä puhutte kotona?
3. Oletko syntynyt missä?
4. Kerro minulle miltä sinun normaali arkipäivä näyttää
5. Mitä sä harrastat? Mistä tykkäät?
6. Mitä kieltä sinä puhut?
7. Mitä kieliä käytät koulussa?
8. Mitä kieliä käytät kotona? Entä vapaalla ajallasi?
9. Montako kieliä puhut päivässä?
10. Mitä kieltä käytät sosiaalisessa mediassa/ whatsappi/snäppi/?
11. Kenen kanssa puhut mitä kieltä? Kavereiden/ perheen kanssa / koulussa?
12. Osaatko kirjoittaa kaikki osaamiasi kieliä?
13. Mitä ajattelet kun kuulet sanan “monikielinen” ? / mitä siitä tulee mieleen?
14. Koetko olevasi sellainen ? Jos, et mikset? /Oletko sä monikielinen?
15. Missä tilanteissa käytät kutakin kieltä?
16. Millä kielellä ajattelet?
17. Millä kielellä näet unta?
18. Mitä tunteita sinulla on kutakin kieltä kohtaan? Miltä se enku tuntuu? Mistä tykkäät ?
19. Miltä tuntuu jonkun kielen käyttäminen? Helpolta/vaikealta? Miks?
20. Jos oot tosi vihainen/iloinen mitä kieltä käytät?
21. Onko joku kieli, jota käytät mielestäsi eniten? Miksi?

Piirrä itseäsi x kielen käyttäjänä. Piirrä kuvan kaikista käyttämistäsi kielistä.

## Appendix 2. Table

Categorization of the interviewees using their pseudonym names.

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Place of birth</b>	<b>Mother tongue/heritage language</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>
Amina	Finland	Arabic	Girl	12
Hiba	Finland	Persian	Girl	12
Veton	Finland	Albanian	Boy	12
Zamir	Albania	Albanian	Boy	12
Edona	Finland	Albanian	Girl	12
Irina	Finland	Russian	Girl	12
Ahmed	Finland	Kurdish	Boy	13
Jenny	Finland	English	Girl	13

### **Appendix 3. Abbreviations**

HL – Heritage language

L1 – First language

L2 – Second language

NCC – National Core Curriculum

COE – Council of Europe

#### **Appendix 4. Transcription signs**

- . short pause
- .. long pause
- (.s) longer pause with seconds marked
- emphasizing something
- Y: interviewer
- X: initial of interviewee