Plurilingual experiences in family and education in regional Australia: A synthesis from three perspectives

Submitted by:

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In loving memory of my Mum Eva Hänni (1951-2018),

a plurilingual herself and an enthusiastic learner of languages.

Abstract

The changing nature of Australia's population has resulted in increased linguistic intermarriage over the last few decades. This case study investigates heritage language (HL) maintenance within linguistic intermarriage families, where one parent is an immigrant with a heritage language (HL) as their first language, and the other is of Anglo Australian origin and/or a speaker of English as a first language. It reports on the use of HLs in regional Australia at home and in school, in particular in Languages classrooms. It also reports on how parents, children and teachers of Languages experience plurilingualism for themselves as well as within their families and in educational settings. In addition, it examines plurilingual children's perspectives of their HL ability and use, as well as their perceived identities as plurilinguals. Collating parents', children's and Languages teachers' perspectives on HL transmission and maintenance at home and in schools reveals multiple perspectives on plurilingualism in regional Australia.

An interpretivist approach was adopted for this study in recognition of multiple linguistic and cultural realities that the research participants are likely to represent. The interpretivist research paradigm assumes that reality is constructed through socially developed meanings and experiences, and that multiple realities exist. The methodological approach, in the form of a qualitative case study, is based on the principles of suitability in relation to the potential of the embedded single case study and the value of the method in educational research. The language acquisition and maintenance theories, discussed in the literature and the proposed research questions, produced themes to help understand HL use and maintenance, the ecologies of the plurilingual families and reasons for sharing and maintaining HLs. The key ideas from these theories, for example Fishman's reversing language shift and Cummins' BICS and CALP models, accommodate different views of plurilingualism, language learning and language maintenance. Four central themes emerged from the literature and data as organising principles for analysis: reasons and motivations for heritage language maintenance as perceived by the participants, family language practices, Languages in education and language repertoire. These themes, like the embedded units/groups, are permeable throughout the study to allow a holistic view on the plurilingual experiences of all participants and across different contexts and of all participants.

Online questionnaires and in-depth interviews were used with all participant groups to understand plurilingual experiences at home and in school. The findings identified that the maintenance of HLs in regional Australia is largely limited to the home domain. Parents

perceive the development and maintenance of HLs as their responsibility but acknowledged that potential input from educational settings could be beneficial for HL maintenance. Parental, as well as child participants' reasons for HL maintenance concentrate on communication between family members, identity building, academic and cognitive benefits, and various social and life choices. Children experience their plurilingualism as an advantage in different contexts and generally feel well supported despite the remote location and lack of large language communities. The findings further identified that there is tension between Languages teachers' approaches towards plurilingual students in their classrooms and the plurilingual orientation recommended in the Australian Curriculum: Languages.

The application of the three perspectives on plurilingualism in regional Australia revealed a gap in relation to language development and maintenance between the two sets of participants, namely teachers of Languages and schools and members of multilingual families. The findings encourage the promotion of plurilingualism as part of the Languages teacher's role; it is recommended that this is initiated in professional learning and development for teachers of Languages to support linguistic intermarriage families in regional Australia.

Keywords: plurilingualism, heritage language maintenance, linguistic intermarriage families, teacher of Languages, Languages classroom, regional Australia

Certification

I certify that the ideas, experimental work, results, analyses, software and conclusions reported in this thesis are entirely my own effort, except where otherwise acknowledged. I also certify that the work is original and has not been previously submitted for any other award, except where otherwise acknowledged.

Tina Ursula Dettwiler-Hänni 30th November 2022

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Prologue

I was born and raised in Switzerland. I spoke Swiss German with my family, my friends and in the community, I heard Standard High German on the radio and through picture books, and I started reading, speaking and writing it as soon as I attended school. French was taught from Year 3, in Year 6 I started to learn Latin and in Year 8 I started to learn Ancient Greek. After transitioning to another school, I was finally taught English at the age of 17. My then boyfriend, now husband, was born in the UK but was raised in Switzerland. Because he had strong ties to England, he decided to study there, and I followed him after finishing teachers' college in Switzerland. After a few years, we moved back to Switzerland to start a family.

When I was pregnant with my first child over a decade ago, the question of bringing up bilingual children suddenly arose. Many years overseas, dual citizenship and a fondness for the English language and culture convinced my husband and me to take on the challenge of bilingualism in the family. Over a decade, three children later and following a move from central Europe to Australia and back, we are now living a multicultural and multilingual life.

I observe how my children easily switch from Swiss German to English depending on whom they talk to, and how easily they managed to communicate in German with their German tutor while living in Australia. Also, I can see that while they are interested in Swiss culture, they also feel at home with the culture in Australia.

Our family is just one of many multilingual families who chose Australia as their new home country for a while. My interest in researching how the many multilingual families and their plurilingual children in the New England Tableland Region of New South Wales live their plurilingual lives, and particularly how language is maintained in connection with school, is both a deeply personal matter and one that I am certain could provide insights for others. I hope to address both of these motivations in the study reported in this thesis.

Chapter 1. Introduction

> There are, perhaps, a great many kinds of languages in the world, and no kind is without meaning. Corinthians 14:10 (Holy Bible - New English Translation, 2019)

The phenomenon of what has variously been termed *multilingualism*, *bilingualism* and *plurilingualism* has shaped humanity for millennia (Baker & Wright, 2021). While these terms represent varying perspectives (discussed in 1.1 below), they share a common interest in understanding how people use multiple languages in their everyday lives. There are around 6,800 known living languages in the world, and this number is small compared with the presumed 20,000 languages that existed ten thousand years ago (Crystal, 2014). The rapid decline in the number of active languages[1] worldwide, including in Australia, is of concern in terms of linguistics diversity (Romaine, 2006); however, the proportion of the world's population who are plurilingual is expected to increase in the next few years (Grosjean, 2021). Considered globally, plurilingualism is indisputably the norm rather than the exception (Baker & Wright, 2021; Grosjean, 2021). To highlight this distinctive phenomenon, for the purposes of this thesis and for reasons described in the next section, the term *plurilingualism* has been chosen from among the many terms representing the use of two or more languages.

1.1. Definition of terms

To understand plurilingualism in the context of this study, several key terms and distinctions need to be defined, while acknowledging that there are different interpretations of these terms throughout the linguistic and education literature. The terms are defined below in a way that serves the purposes of the study reported in this thesis, and that reflects their use by key researchers.

Monolingualism is the ability to use only one language actively (Ellis, 2007).

The **monolingual mindset** is a term first coined by Clyne (2005, p. xi). For people and structures with a monolingual mindset, monolingualism is the norm. The monolingual mindset

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[1] An estimated 60% to 90% of the around 6,800 world languages are at risk of becoming extinct in the next 100 years, with the loss of a language every two weeks. Crystal, D. (2014). *Language death*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139106856

is the origin of the myth that there is no space for other languages other than English in the Australian Curriculum and that learning and knowing other languages distracts from learning and knowing English (Clyne, 2005).

While the term **bilingualism** seemingly simply refers to the use of two languages, the term has been explored and conceptualised in various ways for many decades (Baker & Wright, 2021; Grosjean, 1982, 2021; Valdés, 2015). Baker and Wright (2017, p. 17) review the literature to propose eight aspects which impact on the development and maintenance of bilingualism.

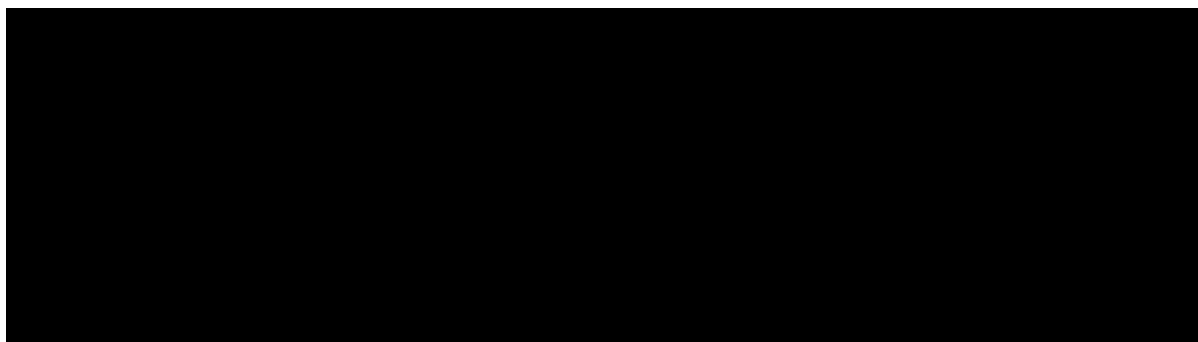
- productive competence and receptive ability in each language (García, 2009; Valdés, 2003)
- the use of each language in different contexts
- the balance of the languages
- the age when the languages are learnt (De Houwer, 2009; Valdés, 2015)
- the development of bilingualism
- the culture that influences the life of the bilingual (Bhabha, 2004)
- the context of the life of the bilingual (i.e. wider community, school)
- elective bilingualism (Valdés, 2003).

Likewise, Grosjean (2010, p. 22) defined bilinguals as "those who use two or more languages (or dialects) in their everyday life". This view was shared by Valdés (2015), whose focus is on functional competence in more than one language. Baker and Wright (2021, p. 22) embed these views in their definition of bilingualism, which differentiates between the two receptive skills of listening and reading and the productive skills of speaking and writing. Many languages are only spoken, so their use is restricted to speaking and listening. This is an important factor when looking at the different domains of language use where different language skills are needed, such as the difference between language use at home and in educational settings.

Studying the ways bilinguals use their languages has led to the identification of different types of bilingualism. There have been many attempts to categorise the many different ways of being bilingual demonstrating that bilingualism is a complex phenomenon (Baker & Wright, 2021; Barnes, 2006; Grosjean, 1982; Hoffmann, 2001).

Individual bilingualism was viewed by Valdés (2003) as being on a continuum between two (or more) monolingual language stages, A and B (Figure 1.1).

Figure 1-1 The bilingual continuum (Valdés, 2003, p. 36)



Valdés' illustration of the bilingual continuum (Figure 1.1) was extended by Hornberger (2008) to incorporate different contexts for using each language. Bilinguals tend to be more dominant in one language, but this may vary depending on the context (Hornberger, 2008; 2016).

The **balanced bilingual** has native[2] proficiency in two languages. It is an idealised view but in previous decades has been used to research the possible cognitive advantages of being bilingual (Baker & Wright, 2021; Peal & Lambert, 1962; Valian, 2015). In contrast, in Figure 1.1 Valdés illustrates the continuum of the bilingual mode as a scale of varying strengths in language A and language B. For example, a recently arrived immigrant can be represented as Ab (dominant in the HL and in the beginning stage of learning English). On the other hand, a third-generation bilingual can be represented as Ba (dominant in English and still somehow proficient in the HL). According to Valdés (2003, p. 98), "the difficulty for researchers in defining bilingualism precisely is that there are many different conditions and situations". Valdés excludes the balanced bilingual AB. This exclusion illustrates that truly balanced bilingualism is an ideal vision and rarely a reality, which is also argued by Ellis et al. (2018, p. 18).

When the concept of plurilingualism was introduced into language education in Europe in the early 1990s, the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) established a clear distinction between **multilingualism** and **plurilingualism** (Piccardo, 2019). *Multilingualism* is defined as "the knowledge of a number of languages, or the co-existence of different languages in a given society" (Piccardo, 2018a, p.

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[2] While the term *native* has acquired connotations of deficit views of language use that are explicitly countered within translanguaging theory, the term is used in this thesis straightforwardly for participants speaking a language as a primary, first language.

5) and *plurilingualism*, as “the interrelation and interconnection of languages” (Piccardo, 2018c, p. 7). In addition:

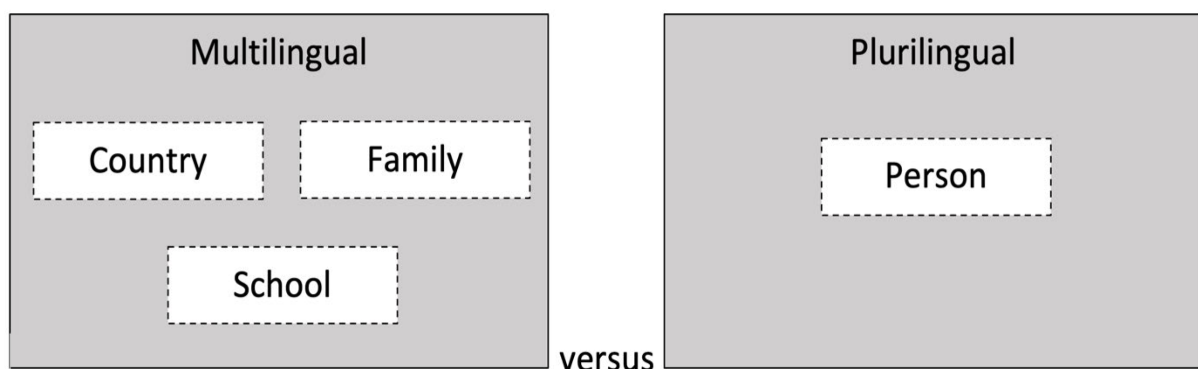
> whilst in multilingualism there is no focus on relationships between languages or flexibility in the use of different languages, in plurilingualism the relational principle is at the core (Piccardo, 2018c, p. 7).

The CEFR further notes that “[p]lurilingual and pluricultural competence refers to the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication” Ellis et al.’s (2018, p. 18) description of the term expands the CEFR definition in a way that has been useful for this study:

> Plurilingualism acknowledges that language competence is fluid and dynamic; that it increases with use, or with involvement in new domains; that it retreats with lack of use, is open to regeneration, and is always subject to the social and personal demands of the speaker’s community. It does not demand “perfection” (as if such a state could exist) and it enables the speaker to be framed as a competent speaker of an additional language rather than as a failed native speaker.

Historically, the term *multilingualism* was used to describe people who speak more than two languages, but in recent years, the term *plurilingualism* has emerged in the literature, as this word incorporates both notions of bilingualism and of multilingualism, while also extending to the CEFR and Ellis et al.’s (2018) dimensions of the interrelationship between languages and cultures as used by individuals. To simplify the distinction, the term *plurilingual* is now used to refer to a person who speaks more than two languages while *multilingual* refers to a geographic location or an entity like a family, community or a school (Figure 1.2) where different languages are used.

Figure 1-2 Multilingual versus Plurilingual



The term *bilingual* is still commonly used in this field to refer to individuals who use more than one named language in their everyday life and the term *multilingual* is used colloquially for individuals using more than two named languages (Fielding, 2016b; García & Otheguy, 2020; Marshall & Moore, 2013).

The term *plurilingualism* is used throughout the thesis because of its focus on how language users move between different languages, a key concern of this study. The term *plurilingualism* is also preferred because it highlights that language users experiment with linguistic knowledge and sensemaking in different, sometimes newly encountered, languages in, for example, the Languages classroom, a domain explored in this study. Further, the study also uses the term *plurilingualism* to encompass both bilingualism and multilingualism as it relates to individuals, except if the context requires the specific differentiation of multilingualism in families, communities or a country (Figure 1.2).

In the context of English and Welsh bilingual education in Wales, Williams (1994) created the term **translanguaging.** This term describes a pedagogical practice in a specific educational context where speakers can use their full linguist repertoire of two or more languages to communicate (Piccardo, 2019). Furthermore, translanguaging now also includes spontaneous meaning making among plurilinguals in multilingual homes and communities (Lewis et al., 2012). This study draws on the expanded application of translanguaging to contexts outside the classroom, as described in Lewis et al 2012 (2012) and is termed *Universal Translanguaging*. The plethora of literature investigating the different nuances the above terms imply will be further discussed in the following chapter (Literature Review).

There are different terms to refer to non-mainstream languages used by plurilinguals. In this context the term **home language** is restricted to "refer to a non-mainstream language [and] a specific domain of use, the home" (Eisenchlas & Schalley, 2020, p. 28). Various scholars have advocated for the use of the term **community languages** in Australia. For example, Clyne (1991) points out that this term has been preferred (since the 1970s) to terms like *foreign languages* and *migrant languages*, which have been found discriminatory. More recently, Chik et al. (2019, p. 8) assert that the term *heritage* "implies that they are languages of a past that has been left behind".

For the purpose of this study, however, the term **heritage language** (HL) (Fishman, 2014; Polinsky & Kagan, 2007; Valdés, 2005) has been used, as speakers of these non-mainstream

languages are still influenced by different cultures and backgrounds and also because the role of these languages in the community in the New England region is minimal in contrast to larger HL communities in cities. The term *heritage language* describes a minority language used at home or in a community in contrast to a nationally or regionally dominant language (such as Australian English in Australia) (Escudero et al., 2023). A HL can be an Indigenous Australian language, or as in the context of this study, a language spoken by an immigrant and their descendants (Baker & Wright, 2021, p. 336; Valdés, 2001, 2005).

1.2. Motivation for plurilingual research

An exploration of the phenomenon of plurilingualism being the norm rather than the exception led to this current study. My interest in researching multilingual families in a monolingually-minded society is a very personal matter and was reinforced during the time I lived with my family on the New England Tablelands of New South Wales, a regional area of Australia. Australian English is the dominant language of the region, despite the existence of a multilingual community, comprising international students, academics, migrants and Indigenous languages. The still low percentage of languages other than English used in this region (around 12% of the population), compared to cities like Sydney (nearly 36%) (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2021), raised the question of how plurilingual children and their parents live their plurilingual lives in the region. One particular concern was how parents with a heritage language (HL) background in linguistic intermarriage relationships share and maintain their language successfully, especially if one assumes that parents with a HL would possibly default to speaking English with their children when living in the English dominant society. This concern, and its possible tensions are further explained in Chapter 4. A further concern is, whether there is a way of connecting language learning in school to language maintenance at home and in the community.

The current study was inspired by two previous studies: Ellis et al. (2017; 2018, 2019) and Torsh (2018a, 2020a). Ellis et al. studied immigrant families in the New England region, specifically families with young children "before and after the critical point of entry into English-dominant childcare, preschool and school system" (Ellis et al., 2018, p. 21). Torsh (2018a, 2020a) undertook an extensive study of linguistic intermarriage parents from the perspective of the English-dominant partner in an urban setting (Sydney). Likewise, the focus of this study offers insight into children's and parents' plurilingual experiences at home and in the community in a regional area. Moreover, it extends the Ellis et al.'s study by including

primary school and secondary school aged children as participants as well as teachers of Languages[3] in order to explore their potential role in language maintenance in multilingual families.

1.3. Background

As the study of plurilingualism in Australia has grown, so too has the multilingual capacity of the Australian population. The 2021 census provides the following information about linguistic diversity in Australia:

- Over 400 languages are spoken.
- Fifty of those languages are active Indigenous languages.
- Around one fifth (22.8%) of the population speak a language other than English at home, the most common being Mandarin, Arabic, Vietnamese, Cantonese and Punjabi.
- The use of Asian languages has increased dramatically while the use of European languages has stagnated or decreased.

Children and adults with a plurilingual background can contribute to the language potential of Australia and reverse the monolingual orientation of the country. The ongoing question about the experiences of multilingual families and their plurilingual children and how to support the language potential of Australia's population effectively and sustainably is therefore as relevant as ever.

According to the last census conducted in 2021 (ABS, 2021), Australians reported using over 400 languages other than English in their homes. Nevertheless, statistics show that Indigenous languages[4] have a history of drastic decline, and that immigrants' languages, called heritage languages (HLs, see Section 1.1.), in this study, are struggling to survive because maintenance of these languages declines by the second generation (Bradley & Bradley, 2013; Escudero et al., 2023; Leitner, 2004; Schüpbach, 2009). The main factors identified by scholars as impacting the decline of HLs are geographical and cultural isolation from the country of origin combined

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[3] Languages is a subject in the Australian Curriculum and therefore starts with a capital letter like all other subjects. The word *Languages* used in the Australian Curriculum is the name used for teaching languages in addition to English.

[4] The conditions around language use for Indigenous languages are complex and will not be addressed in this study. There is though work being conducted to recover and revitalise Indigenous languages. https://www.arts.gov.au/what-we-do/indigenous-arts-and-languages/indigenous-languages-and-arts-program/national-indigenous-languages-report

with a lack of community support, teaching resources and government support for HL maintenance in educational settings (Cruickshank, Black, et al., 2020; 2018; Escudero et al., 2023; Fukui, 2019).

In that context, the study reported in this thesis was an exploration of the experiences of plurilinguals in the regional setting of the New England in New South Wales, Australia. It explored afresh how children from linguistic intermarriage parents experience their plurilingualism in a social context that is shaped by a pervasive monolingual English language mindset (Clyne, 2005, 2008; Hajek, 2018); and it was also an exploration of the possibilities opened up by plurilingualism within the context of language education and in school settings.

English is the dominant language spoken in Australia, but the census has shown that many people in the New England region also use an HL (ABS, 2021). The heritage languages found in the New England region vary significantly. People speak Asian languages, European languages and also African languages. The reason for these many languages being spoken in the New England is that historically, immigrants from non-English-speaking European countries have settled in this area, followed by waves of migration from Asia, and currently many refugees are being settled in the area as part of the Australian Government Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP) (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2020). For example, a community of Êzîdî refugees from northern Iraq were settled in the region in 2018 (Settlement Services International, 2018).

The families who participated in this study were yet another group of HL speakers. The study identified that in the last few years, following marriage to an Australian (one of the inclusion criteria), parents with an HL-speaking background work in a variety of professions and have made Australia their new home. These families have a background of moving from one country to another, and according to some studies parents who have lived and worked abroad generally have a higher level of education (Leung et al., 2008, p. 1054; Tadmor et al., 2012).

The topic explored in this study is plurilingualism amongst families and children with two or more linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, the aim of this study is to investigate multilingual families and how they experience their linguistic diversity in regional Australia. Specifically, it explored how plurilingual children who are learning a further language in the additional Languages classrooms at school use their linguistic resources in this setting, and how

teachers of Languages, schools and school communities support the families' diverse linguistic repertoires among the children's families.

The many facets of plurilingualism have been the focus of many studies, generating a vast literature. The literature review (Chapter 2) will show in more detail what we already know about how plurilingual children experience linguistic knowledge at home and both apply and develop their linguistic resources, such as language awareness, at school. In summary, the literature reveals that plurilingual children in schools often go unnoticed and their linguistic skills have been ignored in educational settings globally (Clyne, 2007, p. 9; de la Fuente & Lacroix, 2015, p. 52; Ndhlovu, 2015).

Nevertheless, it has also been observed that when plurilingualism is recognised and acknowledged in school settings, educational institutions operate with an idealised vision of incorporating plurilingualism into the classroom where another language is being taught. For example, the Australian Curriculum: Languages supports the use of students' full range of linguistic knowledge (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority [ACARA], 2017). Both curriculum documents and the research literature insist that plurilingual resources should be recognised and used not only in Languages but all classrooms in Australian schools (ACARA, 2017; Cruickshank, Black, et al., 2020; Hajek, 2018; Modern Language Teachers Association of NSW, 2019).

For many researchers therefore, challenging the monolingual mindset is now a common and stated means of achieving this goal (Clyne, 2008; Fukui, 2019; Hajek & Slaughter, 2014; Morgan, 2015). Despite the efforts of those developing the Australian Curriculum, it appears that in educational settings plurilingual resources are neglected or unavailable, and so are not fully exploited. My own personal experience in this situation was another reason behind the decision to investigate more closely what is happening in regional New South Wales. In summary, there is a gap between the plurilingual vision, as expressed in the Australian Curriculum, and what amounts in practice to a monolingual reality, a gap that is noticeable in many schools but in particular in regional schools where there is only a small percentage of HL interlocutors.

1.3.1. The Australian Curriculum: Languages

The relatively recently introduced Australian Curriculum includes 14 language-specific curricula in the Languages learning area (ACARA, 2017). The introduction states that students

bring their own linguistic and cultural background and resources to their learning (ACARA, 2017). To date, there have been few attempts to explain how Languages teachers might exploit the plurilingual resources of children in the context of the Languages classroom (Fielding, 2016b; Turner & Fielding, 2020). Nevertheless, children's diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds are recognised in the Australian Curriculum: Languages:

> The Australian Curriculum: Languages is designed to enable all students in Australia to learn a language in addition to English.
>
> The Australian Curriculum: Languages recognises that students bring their own linguistic and cultural background to their learning, whether this is English or the target language or various combinations of languages. The organisation of the curriculum addresses learner background in the target language by providing a number of pathways and entry points of study to cater for background language learners, first language learners and second language learners.
>
> The Australian Curriculum recognises Australia's distinctive and dynamic migration history. Language-learning builds upon students' intercultural understanding and sense of identity as they are encouraged to explore and recognise their own linguistic, social and cultural practices and identities as well as those associated with speakers of the language being learnt (Australian Curriculum: Languages, January 2017 edition).

These statements are reinforced and supported by many educators nationwide, and education system policy makers are now recognising that languages are one of those core capabilities that young people will need in an increasingly globalised world (Modern Language Teachers Association of NSW, 2019; Morgan et al., 2018; Vukovic, 2016). Further, the importance of incorporating plurilingual approaches into Languages classrooms has been debated and researched by scholars in the field for some years as elaborated in the literature review (Chapter 2). In practice, the focal point so far has been on bilingual schools and pedagogies that foreground intercultural understanding. However, now the need to explore more extensive approaches for incorporating plurilingualism to strengthen language education and the school environment more generally is becoming more evident (Cruickshank, Black, et al., 2020).

The Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2017, para. 1) was designed "to help all young Australians to become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens". The Australian Curriculum: Languages includes language specific curricula for world languages and a Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander

Languages (ACARA, 2017). Languages is a learning area of the curriculum and should enable all children to learn a language in addition to English (ACARA, 2017, para. 1).

The Australian Curriculum: Languages categorises students into three different groups: second language learners, background language learners and first language learners. These are defined as follows (ACARA, 2017, para. 3):

> **Second language learners** are those who are introduced to learning the target language at school as an additional, new language. The first language used before they start school and/or the language they use at home is not the language being learnt.
>
> **Background language learners** are those who may use the language at home, not necessarily exclusively, and have varying degrees of knowledge of and proficiency in the language being learnt. These learners have a base for literacy development in the language.
>
> **First language learners** are users of the language being learnt who have undertaken at least primary schooling in the target language. They have had their primary socialisation as well as initial literacy development in that language and use the target language at home. For Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages, first language learners are learners whose primary socialisation is in the language being learnt and who may or may not have yet developed initial literacy.

The Australian Curriculum: Languages (ACARA, 2017) includes as a guide the indicative time allocation of 350 hours for languages education from Foundation to Year 6 and a further 160 hours for each of Years 7 and 8 (NSW Stage 4) and Years 9 and 10 (NSW Stage 5). Nevertheless, education authorities are free to allocate time and to decide on sequences of learning when implementing the curriculum (ACARA, 2017). The New South Wales Department of Education established a 100-hour mandatory language education program "of one language in one continuous 12-month period in Stage 4 or Stage 5" (Griffiths & Ikutegbe, 2018, p. 4). This brief exposure to languages at NSW schools may be related to the argument that "the NSW education system lags the rest of Australia" in language teaching and learning (Baker, 2021, p. 1). Probably for this and other reasons, the Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Association (AFMLTA), a national body, has been engaged by the federal Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) to develop a National Plan and Strategy for Languages Education in Australia which should support the Australian

Government in increasing the uptake of Languages learning in schools (The Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Association, [AFMLTA], 2022).

Significantly for the aim of this study, the field of research in this field is having an impact on curriculum development. The content and wording of the Australian Curriculum is an example of that impact. The wording in the curriculum demonstrates that ACARA is receptive to plurilingual approaches, and so schools could be places where plurilingualism flourishes. However, there is, as mentioned before, a gap between the plurilingual vision and what amounts to monolingual practice, especially in regional areas. The potential value of incorporating the cultural background of multilingual families and the linguistic knowledge of plurilingual children into schools, and more particularly into additional language classrooms, is a field of educational research that is in need of further exploration. As introduced in Section 1.3.1., the Australian Curriculum: Languages suggests that teachers should "cater for background language learners, first language learners and second language learners" (ACARA, 2017, Introduction). The Curriculum further states:

> While the curriculum for languages primarily addresses the learning of languages, this learning cannot be separated from the development of learners' more general communicative repertoires. It is through such a relational and holistic approach to languages education that learners develop their capabilities in knowing and using multiple languages. Learners extend their communicative and conceptual development, learning and identity formation (ACARA, 2017, Student diversity).

Thus, the Curriculum promotes a plurilingual approach in the Languages classroom and describes it as a desirable concept. This suggests that maintaining HLs more sustainably, therefore, could be addressed by connecting language learning in school with sharing and maintaining language and culture at home and in the community. The study's main aim was to gather information about the experiences of multilingual families and their plurilingual children in regional Australia from multiple angles, to identify the ways plurilingual children apply their linguistic resources, and to investigate the role of teachers of Languages in a regional school setting.

1.3.2. Heritage languages in Australia

The presence of heritage languages (HLs) has the potential to contribute to plurilingualism and a multilingual society in Australia. Multilingual families and their plurilingual members account for over 25% of the Australian population.

The role of migrant languages in Australia is complex and a term is needed that reflects this special situation. Therefore, as proposed in Section 1.1. above, this study adopts the now globally accepted and frequently used term *heritage language* (Han, 2017; Joo et al., 2021; Koshiba, 2020; Little, 2019; Polinsky, 2018a; Valdés, 2005; Wiley, 2005; Wilson, 2020). Valdés (2005, p. 411) defined HLs as "nonsocietal and nonmajority languages spoken by … linguistic minorities" and explains that "minorities include populations who are either indigenous to a particular region (e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Australia) … or populations that have migrated to areas other than their own regions or nations of origin". According to Polinsky (2018a, p. 548), heritage language "is typically understood as the language that early bilinguals grew up exposed to at home, before becoming dominant in the main language of their society".

The term *heritage languages* (HLs) as defined by Valdés (2005) and Polinsky (2018b) was used in this study because most plurilingual parents and their children have an "ethnolinguistic affiliation … with varying degree of proficiency in their HLs" (Joo et al., 2021, p. 2). Furthermore, the languages spoken by the multilingual families in this study are those where there are large groups of speakers all over the world, for example German, French and Chinese, and these languages are therefore not under threat of extinction. In contrast, the term *minority languages* is applied to those languages that are only spoken by a minority of people in a global perspective, for example Indigenous languages in Australia (Gorter et al., 2012, p. 6).

As mentioned above, HLs are usually spoken by people in their homes or in communities alongside a dominant language.

> A language qualifies as a heritage language if it is a language spoken at home or otherwise readily available to young children, and crucially this language is not a dominant language of the larger (national) society (Rothman, 2009, p. 156).

HLs are relevant in Australia, especially as there are so many other languages besides English used in Australia (ABS, 2021). To understand the context of the present study, the challenge of defining heritage speakers and maintaining HLs is briefly explained.

Characterising HL speakers as a cohort is not easy, as their language use is "not uniform" (Polinsky & Scontras, 2020a, p. 51). Therefore, it is difficult to establish a baseline which is based on the monolingual standard of a language. HL speakers often receive linguistic input from a small group of speakers of the language, in some cases just one parent, and the development of the HL is consequently more in "flux and less homogeneous than in the homeland" (Polinsky & Scontras, 2020b, p. 7). HL speakers are not exposed to the norms of the language as used in the homeland, but rather to a particular baseline acquired within their immediate home and family (Polinsky & Kagan, 2007).

One of the many examples of HLs in Australia is Italian (Benatti & Tarantini, 2017; Hajek et al., 2022; Mason & Hajek, 2021). Italian dialects used by post-war immigrants and their children are different from the standard Italian taught at school in Italy and in Languages classes in Australia. The differences between such dialects and the standard variety used in the country of origin in the present day may reduce the motivation to maintain the dialect (Benatti & Tarantini, 2017). However, developing HLs through Languages classes in school has the potential to expose children to increased input and a more standard language variety.

This brief overview of HL users shows that the term *heritage language* can be applied in Australia to languages used at home or in the community in contrast to the dominant Standard Australian English (SAE). Nevertheless, the array of different HLs in the Australian linguistic context presents a complex linguistic terrain. The size of the HL group, and the different domains, attitudes and beliefs all contribute to a distinctive setting for this study.

1.3.3. Plurilingualism – a global perspective

For a century and a half, it was a common monolingual-oriented view, that monolinguals are considered superior to bilinguals, even though Goethe (1833) reflected that "the person who knows only one language does not truly know that language" (as cited in Cummins, 2001, p. 17). A body of research in education even considered bilingualism to be detrimental to intelligence. For example, despite campaigning for better teacher education, Laurie (1890) declared that "his [the bilingual child] intellectual and spiritual growth would not thereby be doubled but halved" (Laurie, 1890, p. 16).

In subsequent decades, bilingualism was shown to have had positive effects on the development of intelligence, school achievement, the quality of general bilingual education worldwide and minority language revival, as outlined below. The term *plurilingualism* increasingly appeared in linguistic literature in the 1970s (for example in de Mauro, 1977; Denison, 1970; Tabouret-Keller, 1975). However, plurilingualism was not introduced to language education until the early 1990s. The CEFR "borrowed the term from the French *plurilinguisme*, although the term itself has a longer history in linguistics" (Piccardo, 2019). The brief historic overview of literature discussed below therefore mainly uses the term *bilingualism*, although some aspects certainly include features of plurilingualism.

In the early 1960s in Canada, a nation with two official languages, a comprehensive and seminal study examined "the effects of bilingualism on the intellectual functioning of children and [explored] the relations between bilingualism, school achievement, and students' attitudes to the second language community" (Peal & Lambert, 1962, p. 7). This study challenged previous negative views about bilingualism in Anglophone settings and presented a more positive view of bilingualism, which helped to change the often negative view of bilinguals as effective learners in English-speaking educational settings (Cavallaro, 2005). Peal and Lambert (1962) critically reviewed studies undertaken in the early 20th century and presented a criticism of the way testing was undertaken in these studies and their bias in terms of socioeconomic class and age. In contrast to the predictions of these earlier studies, the Peal and Lambert study found that bilinguals performed much better than monolinguals in IQ tests. This was especially true for nonverbal skills, which they hypothesised were related to bilinguals having developed "more flexibility in thinking" (Peal & Lambert, 1962, p. 14). Peal and Lambert (1962) noted that bilinguals seem to have a more diversified intelligence structure and are mentally more flexible when compared with monolinguals.

In the same decade, Joshua Fishman (1964), a psychologist and linguist in New York, USA, published on the topic of language maintenance and shift. Throughout his life, Fishman continued to research multilingualism, bilingual and minority education, language planning, reversing language shift (RLS) and language revival. In 1991, he presented a model for reversing language shift that comprised eight stages, starting with reconstruction and acquisition of a minority language or an HL and concluding with the language integrated at nationwide levels in contexts such as education and government operations (Fishman, 1991). Lack of success of RLS, Fishman (1991, p. 382) remarks, is a consequence of RLS activity being initiated by" minorities [and] frequently powerless" and of RLS efforts being

"unwelcome testimony to shortcomings of the mainstream" society. It "implies remaking social reality", which as minorities, or 'side stream[5]' (Fishman, 1991), is hard to do if governmental institutions do not see the need.

In the 1970s, Irish-born Jim Cummins, inspired by Wallace Lambert (1962) who examined the effects of bilingualism on the intellectual functioning of children, began extensive research in Canada on bilingualism, bilingual education, second language learning and literacy (Cummins, 1980, 1981a, 1981b, 2005, 2015). In his work, Cummins foregrounds the relationship between educators and students, claiming that "human relationships are at the heart of schooling" (Cummins, 2000a, p. 40). In the same decade, Michael Clyne began investigating language use in Australia and Europe. His research on Australian Census data regarding language use is often still used as a base for current studies. A term coined by Michael Clyne is the 'monolingual mindset' (Clyne, 1991, 2005, 2007, 2008). Clyne (1991) argued that, despite Australia being a nation where many languages are spoken, the mindset of mainstream Australian society is characterised by monolingual thinking. He argued that it is most important to develop Australia's language potential so it be utilised to "spread plurilingualism" (Clyne, 2005, p. 27) and that a high level of competence in at least one language other than English should be achieved by everybody in order to attain a multilingual Australia. An important question posed by Clyne (2005, p. 89), relevant to this current study is about "what constitutes successful transmission of a community language?" (Clyne, 2005, p. 89).

The 1980s produced a number of educational publications in the field of bilingual education. For example, François Grosjean, a French-English bilingual lecturing in Switzerland and the USA, contributed to the fields of bilingualism and biculturalism as well as other domains like modelling language processing (Grosjean, 1982, 1985). Some of his presented results, for example on different language modes, reach into today's world of translanguaging. His findings help to understand how bilinguals process two or more languages in different contexts for example when speaking with monolinguals versus with bilinguals. As a bilingual himself, he raised awareness of the challenges a bilingual person can encounter and strategies to overcome these difficulties (Grosjean, 2001, 2010). Challenges may be languages interfering with each other, for example in terms of a permanent 'accent' or syntactic structures influenced by the L1.

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[5] Mainstream' describes the general, linguistically uniform population, in the case of this study the English speaking, population, while 'side stream' describes users of HLs who are not integrated into mainstream society.

Children especially need encouragement and assistance in overcoming such difficulties either with support from parents or schools (Grosjean, 2010, p. 216), an important aspect in this current study.

In the same decade, UK-based Colin Baker started his career in language planning and bilingual education and edited linguistic and educational material supporting the learning of additional languages, for example textbooks and professional learning material for teachers (Baker, 1988). His publication 'Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism' (Baker & Wright, 2021) is particularly relevant to this study, including general information regarding bilingualism and multilingualism, educational issues, bilingual classrooms, identity and personality, globalisation and assimilation. Baker's (2017) research suggests that bilinguals have specific advantages, for example, controlled attention to language processing and the social use of translanguaging. However, Baker's (2017) findings show that mainly bilinguals with well-developed languages have a higher probability of showing positive effects.

In addition, Australian Joseph Lo Bianco is respected globally for his expertise in language planning and combining language policy with the academic study of language in a practical manner, work that continues to this day (Lo Bianco, 1987, 2021; Lo Bianco & Slaughter, 2009; Normand-Marconnet & Lo Bianco, 2015). Surveying the use of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, see Section 1.1.) in Australia indicated that the CEFR has not yet gained ground in Australian educational institutions, although it has received some positive responses from educators. Lo Bianco initiated to stimulate discussions about the roles and limits of the CEFR amongst Australian academics and teachers of Languages, many of whom were unfamiliar with this framework, and suggests that the CEFR is a valuable tool in language education and could be incorporated into "educational measurements procedures" in Australia (Normand-Marconnet & Lo Bianco, 2015, p. 302).

Further studies on the topic of plurilingualism were conducted in the 2000s. New York based, Cuban-born Ofelia García investigated and developed the term *translanguaging*, a term which Baker translated from its Welsh origin *trawsieithu* (Williams, 1994, 1996). García has had a significant impact on our understanding of the complex language practices of plurilingual children in the 21st century (García & Fishman, 2010; García & Wei, 2014). She has worked with experts like Fishman and Baker and has drawn on their experience and knowledge to develop understandings of plurilingualism and translanguaging. She has pledged to protect and develop HL use and advocated for fairer assessments and a more appropriate bilingual

education that would give voice to all children, no matter their home and community language practices. Translanguaging in her view "does not in any way correspond to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named languages" (García & Kleyn, 2016, p. 14). Introducing translanguaging theory into practice was part of a state initiative in New York. García and a team of researchers were able to build an understanding of how translanguaging theory and practice transformed each other (García & Kleyn, 2016). García's approach to translanguaging is explored in more detail in Chapter 2.

The brief overview of the history of bilingual and plurilingualism research shows that plurilingualism is a part of every multilingual society and affects its social and educational institutions and will be further discussed in the Literature Review in Chapter 2.

1.4. Scope of the research

The more recent attention on plurilingualism in education and linguistic circles has been sparked by the introduction of the term in the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001). The many terms that have evolved in the literature around the same time to talk about multilingualism, bilingualism and translanguaging demonstrate that over the last few decades there has been an increasing awareness of and interest in this linguistic field. Also, there has emerged a need to approach the issues that affect the social and emotional aspects of the language use of individuals and communities. While plurilingualism has been a long-term feature of societies many nations have maintained plurilingual language use into modern times, for example Swedish in Finland, Catalan in Spain or Switzerland, noted for its "institutional multilingualism and the plurilingual attitudes of individuals" (Piccardo, 2019, p. 184). Also, other nations have revived their multilingual language use, for example the use of Welsh in the United Kingdom (Williams, 1996). Thus, the use of more than one language was and is part of contemporary societies and is an element of culture and therefore a concept entitled to be incorporated into language education.

The sustainability of plurilingualism of individuals in regional Australia is consequently a core concern of this study and the question arises about how feasible it is to develop and maintain plurilingualism in regional areas of Australia. For example, this study explores whether it is feasible to develop literacy skills in HLs, and maintain languages so children have the opportunity to be plurilingual in an area where there are only small language communities or even just individual speakers of a HL.

What happens to children's use of HLs in and out of school is the question which initiated the study reported in this thesis. This question was first raised by Fishman (1996) who argues that schools, families and communities have to "take a concerted effort" (Fishman, 1996, p. 1) to foster language transmission. Thus, this study is designed to enable examination of experiences of multilingual families, plurilingual children and teachers of Languages in regional Australia and explores the kinds of efforts that are needed to maintain HLs in contexts quite different from the large multilingual metropolises of previous research (see Chapter 2). Not only does the context differ, but many families in regional Australia have one, in many cases monolingual, English-speaking parent, which places the responsibility for HL transmission on the shoulders of one plurilingual parent and presents an inevitable challenge (Yates & Terraschke, 2013).

Participants in this study included three stakeholder groups, not only parents and children but also teachers of Languages. Teachers of Languages are by no mean the only people in the school system responsible for language development. Integrating HLs into the Languages classroom can be challenging and, in fact, research shows that English teachers might have more of an opportunity to integrate HLs and therefore bear more of the 'institutional stake' (Turner, 2019b). However, the decision to focus on Languages teachers only was motivated by personal interests being a Languages teacher myself and the very specific responsibilities for Languages teachers listed in the Curriculum (ACARA, 2017).

Three main questions were explored in the study: how and why parents share and maintain HLs in regional Australia, how children experience being plurilingual at home and in school and how Languages teachers perceive their role in accommodating plurilingual children's linguistic knowledge and skills at school. Studies have been undertaken globally on language maintenance, language shift and language loss (Fishman, 1964, 1996, 2001; Kheirkhah & Cekaite, 2015; McCabe, 2014; Spolsky et al., 2008; Tatar, 2015), and there have also been studies on language use in different areas of Australia (Chik et al., 2019; Ellis et al., 2018; Fielding, 2015; Fukui, 2019; Karidakis & Arunachalam, 2016; Leitner, 2004; Morgan, 2015; Morgan et al., 2018; Piller, 2014; Weinmann & Arber, 2016). However, little attention has been given to the complex relationship between multilingual families, plurilingual children and Languages teachers in a regional setting like the New England region. Thus, the aim of this study was to investigate experiences of multilingual families and their plurilingual children in regional Australia from multiple angles and to identify the ways plurilingual children apply their linguistic resources, including at school, which led to the inclusion of an investigation into the role of Languages teachers in a regional school setting.

1.5. Thesis outline

Section 1.1. defined terms that have significance in this study. Section 1.2. and 1.3. have illustrated why this study has been used to explore the relationship between the three stakeholder groups of participants. Specifically, it was revealed that a gap exists between the plurilingual vision of the Australian Curriculum and monolingual practice in school, a gap which is especially noticeable in regional areas. In addition, the role of the Australian Curriculum has been briefly explained as well as the scope of the research.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of plurilingualism worldwide, and in Australia in particular, including how a plurilingual orientation has impacted language education curriculum documents. A review of the literature also reveals the gap between ideal curriculum goals and the reality at home, in the community and in classrooms.

Chapter 3 presents the research methodology adopted to undertake the study, as well as the design of the project. A mostly qualitative framework with an interpretivist stance was employed, as well as an embedded single-case design. The embedded single-case design incorporates three units of analysis in the design: parents, children and teachers of Languages. Embedded single-case studies rely on mixed methods research to analyse the different units (Yin, 2018). In this study, the embedded units were analysed using the following research methods: questionnaires (qualitative/quantitative) and in-depth interviews (qualitative).

Chapters 4 to 6 present the findings, observations, and analysis of each of the three units: parents of plurilingual children (Chapter 4), plurilingual children (Chapter 5) and the language teachers of plurilingual children (Chapter 6). Relationships and connections with the other units are incorporated into the analysis in each of these chapters.

Chapter 7 concludes with a discussion, synthesizing the findings and the perspectives presented in the previous chapters. It demonstrates how plurilingual children's experience, knowledge and skills are incorporated into schools. These evaluations may provide support for future guidelines regarding language teaching and cultural awareness in educational institutions, and they also provide insights into the range of stakeholders who have an interest in plurilingual children's contributions at school, including parents and families, community language providers and curriculum writers.

In conclusion, this chapter has presented an overview of the study reported in this thesis. It has illustrated the motivation for researching plurilingualism in the New England region. It provided background information on plurilingualism in this region amongst linguistic intermarriage families, their children, and educational settings. Further, it defined terms relevant to this study from the field of linguistics as well as from the Australian Curriculum: Languages. Additionally, the chapter revealed the participants of this investigation, namely the three stakeholder groups: parents, children and teachers of Languages. Findings emerging from the study will be presented following the literature review and the methodology chapter.

Chapter 2. Literature review: Plurilingualism in Australia and around the globe

This chapter comprises a literature review that provides an overview of plurilingualism globally and in Australia. The review considers the experiences of multilingual families and plurilingual children and links them to educational settings in regional Australia. It reveals the gap between the ideal goals of plurilingualism in schools as stated in the language education curriculum and what happens in classrooms in reality.

2.1. Introduction

The field of research into bilingualism and plurilingualism is vast. For many decades, research has been conducted, under the term *bilingualism*, on, for example, the cognitive and linguistic benefits of bilingualism, the psychological models of bilingual language users, language maintenance and shift, and the socio-political aspects of bilingualism.

Historical studies from around 1900 to the 1960s tended to diminish the cognitive and social benefits of bilingualism; in fact, the use of two or more languages in daily life was viewed by some as being indicative of "mental retardation" (Goodenough, 1926, p. 393) because the user needed to resort to the non-dominant language for some communication. Consequently, parents were often advised to use one language only with their children (Baker & Wright, 2021). Many of these early studies have since been demonstrated to be poorly conceived and inadequately conducted, and more recent research has shown the many cognitive, social and personal benefits of bilingualism (Douglas Fir Group, 2016; O'Brien, 2017; AFMLTA, 2022; Valian, 2015).

2.2. Plurilingualism - globally and in Australia

Australia, like other Anglophone countries[6], has become the multilingual society it is today, in large part as a result of immigration from all over the world (ABS, 2021). Nevertheless, the significance and effects of plurilingualism are different in every multilingual society. The brief overview in Section 1.3.3. shows that scholars worldwide are aware of plurilingual issues. The

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[6] Anglophone monolingualism is an artefact of European invasion/settlement. The Australian continent has been a multicultural setting for millennia.

subsequent review demonstrates that Australian society too has, though reluctant, begun to address the change from Anglophone to structured multilingualism.

Cruickshank, and other Australian scholars, maintain that Australia is multicultural but neglects its multilingual capacity (Cruickshank, Black, et al., 2020; Hajek, 2018; Ollerhead & Baker, 2019, p. 146). While this statement may be an exaggeration and does not apply to every Australian and Australian institution, it reflects the reality lived by many Australian plurilinguals, and indicates that further research and political will to support Australia's multilingual capacity are still needed. Reflecting on his years of research practise in this area, Hajek (2018) observes that the monolingual mindset of the wider Australian society is still relevant and is constraining Languages as a core learning area in the Australian Curriculum.

In a challenge to the monolingual mindset in the context of language learning and education Hajek (2018) proposed that the DECODE strategy is one means for addressing this challenge. Hajek developed the DECODE strategy from a number of research projects focused on community language and language learning in education and his longstanding work in language education (2020; 2019; Hajek & Slaughter, 2014; 2019). As part of the strategy, he appeals for high quality teaching staff who have the capacity to explain the benefits of language learning, build students' language proficiency, create opportunities for them to use their language knowledge and generate a desire for language learning. Likewise, Morgan (in Morgan et al., 2018) in a recent discussion paper published by the AFMLTA (Morgan et al., 2021), argues for a greater commitment of time to language education, and increased support from governments, education departments and professional associations. Alongside the intellectual and practical resources available in Australia, studies in linguistic diversity have the potential to support the essential actions needed both in education and at government level to adjust the language imbalance and illustrate good practice in dealing with the complex phenomenon of plurilingualism (Morgan, 2015).

Further, Australian studies in language learning and plurilingualism have been conducted in recent years by researchers in the field of language education and linguistics, for example Ruth Fielding, Hanna Torsh, Lynda Yates, Elisabeth Ellis and Ken Cruickshank. Fielding (2011, 2015, 2016a, 2016b) has contributed to our understanding of bilingual and bicultural identity, multilingualism in Australian urban schools and students' plurilingual resources (see also Fielding & Harbon, 2013). Some of her findings relevant to this study are that plurilingual children use their home language as a resource in school contexts where other languages are

used and develope learning strategies which build on their plurilingual experiences. Torsh (2018a, 2018b, 2020a, 2020b) studied linguistic intermarriage parents and investigated the challenges of raising bilingual children in Sydney. Her research found that parents seek ways to support their plurilingual children's HL learning but encounter a lack of institutional support for HLs in compulsory education. Similarly, Yates et al. (2013; 2012) researched the successes and stresses of HL mothers in linguistic intermarriage relationships, while Ellis et al. (Ellis & Sims, 2017, 2022; Ellis et al., 2018, 2019) explored maintenance of multilingualism in families in a regional Australian setting. Core findings from Ellis et al.'s (2018, p. 1) research included that "families struggle, facing extra pressures brought on by isolation from other speakers of the home language, that extended family relationships, often crucial to bilingual acquisition, can be problematic and not necessarily available for language support, and that the demands of work and study exacerbate the problems of isolation". Cruickshank et al. (2020) have been working extensively on language education in multilingual contexts and on language education in the school curriculum, adding considerable value to the understanding of multilingual families in Australia. A key recent finding is that low SES students have "little to no access to language education beyond the mandatory 100 hours" (Cruickshank, Black, et al., 2020, p. 163). The studies into plurilingualism in Australia cited above are important in the context of this study as they provide an overview of various aspects of plurilingualism but also show that there is a potential to explore more facets of this phenomenon.

For this reason, a review of relevant literature demonstrates that there is a research gap in the area of plurilingualism in regional Australia.

This chapter reviews the literature on two key elements in the life of plurilingual children: plurilingualism in family (Section 2.3) and plurilingualism in education (Section 2.4). This exploration will focus on the following issues:

- HL use and maintenance in families and communities
- HLs and language shift
- plurilingualism and identity
- teachers of Languages
- models used in education to support plurilingualism
- current curriculum and policies related to Languages teaching.

The reviewed literature falls into the categories of either evidence-based theory building or practice-oriented studies and teacher support.

2.3. Key element 1: The plurilingual child in the family

Most plurilingual children draw their linguistic knowledge from a multilingual family; thus, it is important to situate this study in what is already known about multilingual families in Australia. The focus of this section is therefore to explore a range of different factors shown to impact multilingual families in regional Australia, including language shift, reasons to maintain HL, and identity.

Accommodating the advantages and challenges of an HL with the dominant language is a challenge the plurilingual child faces daily. These advantages and challenges are also recognised by researchers. In an educational setting, findings by Heugh and colleagues (Heugh et al., 2019, p. 20), for example, demonstrate that "it is possible to use two languages in a 'dual-medium' approach … to achieve academic success". Further, Joo (2021), a qualitative study to gain in-depth understanding of HL learners, has found that HL learners' perspective plays a vital role, while Ellis et al. (2018) have verified the title of the study, by pointing out that isolation is one of many challenges faced by immigrant families living in regional Australia. This is also supported by Pauwels' (2005) paper on the role of the family in HL maintenance. Pauwels (2005) discusses the challenges immigrant parents face trying to pass on the HL to their children as further discussed in 4.3.4.

The various challenges faced by students using an HL at home and in the community may emerge from the different kind of languages spoken in the family, the sibling constellation, the age and order of acquisition, the cultural background, the global acceptance and awareness of the languages and the constant threat of language loss or shift. The advantages of plurilingualism for children are that they achieve greater "mental flexibility, a superiority in concept formation, a more diversified set of mental abilities" (Barac & Bialystok, 2011; Blom et al., 2017; Morgan et al., 2021; Peal & Lambert, 1962, p. 20) and enhanced aspects of cognitive function and process (Baker & Wright, 2021; Bialystok et al., 2012; Higby et al., 2020; AFMLTA, 2022, p. 11; Valian, 2015). Furthermore, bilinguals can ideally associate with an identity that is influenced by two or more languages within two or more cultures (Grosjean, 2010; Park, 2021; Pavlenko, 2006). The plurilingual child may not be aware consciously of all these advantages and challenges. Every multilingual family, however, has the potential to adapt

in such a way that children can learn to navigate their own perspective, value the heritage of the languages they know, and use their linguistic knowledge to their advantage.

2.3.1. Multilingual families

This section examines some of the factors relevant to understanding a child's plurilingual experience in the family setting. The multilingual family in this study is defined as a family who uses two or more languages in their everyday life. However, language practices differ in each multilingual family. What works for one family may not work for another, and circumstances may even vary within a family due to children's personalities and their position among siblings (Saunders, 1982). How families plan their approach can be analysed in terms of a *family language policy* (FLP). According to Wilson (2020, p. 137), "it is essential for parents to strike a balance between the necessity and desire to develop the HL, and a child's unique sense of linguistic and cultural identity" when planning and undertaking a FLP. Further, Piller (2018), although mainly positive about FLPs, raises some concerns around a correct implementation of FLP and the outdated view of bilingual parenting being the responsibility of the mother.

According to King et al. (2008, p. 909), a FLP "takes into account what families actually do with language in day-to-day interactions; their beliefs and ideologies about language and language use; and their goals and efforts to shape language use and learning outcomes". For the purposes of this study, the term has been extended to *family language planning and practise*. This term reflects the statement above, but it is more aligned with the way parents adapt strategies for raising children plurilingually and is less fixed than the term *policy*.

When examining *family language planning and practice* the literature suggests different methods for HL maintenance. One method parents use is the one person one language (OPOL) approach. Many parents separate their languages deliberately and strictly to keep the languages apart, while others mix them (Diskin-Holdaway & Escudero, 2021; Rosenback, 2015) (as described 4.3.1.). Interestingly, in a study carried out by De Houwer over ten years ago, 76% of children had become active bilinguals when the one parent used two languages, 74% had become bilingual when parents used the OPOL approach and nearly 60% had become bilingual when a mixture of the two approaches had been used. Because the most important factor in maintaining HLs appears to be consistent language (De Houwer, 2007, 2020). The minority language at home (MLAH) method may therefore be a better option. De Houwer's (2007)

survey study of multilingual families in Belgium found that children had the highest success rate (96.92%) of becoming plurilingual when this approach is implemented (De Houwer, 2007, p. 419). A third method is the 'time and place' (T&P) approach (Fogle, 2013). The T&P approach means that parents separate the languages used with the child either by time or by place, or both. In contrast to using different languages simultaneously, as illustrated in above methods, parents may decide to use the approach of sequential bilingualism approach. This means, for the child to become plurilingual, the languages are introduced one after the other (Baker & Wright, 2021). Thus, parental input patterns play a large role in helping to "determine whether bilingually reared children will actually speak two languages or not" (De Houwer, 2009; 2020, p. 11). Regardless of the approach parents use, translanguaging, as will be further discussed in Section 2.4.1.3, has the potential to produce active bilinguals regardless of the approach parents use.

A parent's attitude towards their own language is an extremely important factor in determining whether children experience language shift or maintain the HL (De Houwer, 2007; Harding-Esch & Riley, 2003). The parent's attitude towards the language is possibly vital when living in a rural community, as they may have, for example, only small children for company as described in Harding-Esch and Riley (2003, p. 82). Diskin-Holdaway and Escudero (Diskin-Holdaway & Escudero, 2021) conducted a survey with multilingual families. There findings show that raising children in their own language makes migrant parents feeling good, on the other hand if feeling pressured to use their non-native language it is making them feel less secure.

Also, the educational background of the parents has an impact on how languages are maintained and learned. Families and communities differ in attitudes towards educational practices, and knowledge of these practices can provide insights into how children learn, negotiate and access literacy at home and in a school setting (May, 2013). According to Oriyama (2012, p. 179), who collected data from parental questionnaires, data on freestyle writing, a written test and statistics on aspects of Japanese literacy among Japanese heritage school-aged children, "book reading is essential in the development of literacy", and watching TV helps in the acquisition of "learning a wider range of registers in context". While book reading is a commonly accepted method for language development, watching TV is less well-understood; however, according to Oriyama (2012), watching TV programs is helpful in literacy development, vocabulary knowledge and learning the sounds of the language, especially in an environment where language input is limited. Other issues that can affect HL development are parents' attitudes,

knowledge and support of their children's way of learning, access to teaching materials in their language, parents' financial capacity to buy learning materials and attitudes towards the language and culture (Guskaroska & Elliott, 2021; Iwaniec, 2020; Shen & Del Tufo, 2022; Tsushima & Guardado, 2019).

2.3.2. Language shift and loss

Maintaining HLs among plurilingual children in the family requires a positive attitude towards the HL and language support from parents as described in the section above. Likewise, heritage culture support in school and in the community are important too (Chik et al., 2019; Fukui, 2019; Oh, 2003; Verdon et al., 2014). Karidakis and Arunachalam (2016) found that families living in remote areas in Australia are more likely to shift to English than those living in urban areas. Therefore, failure to maintain HLs inevitably leads to language shift in families and the eventual loss of HLs in individuals. Clyne (2005) examined census data over several decades (Clyne, 1976, 1991, 2001; Clyne & Kipp, 1996) and Karidakis and Arunachalam (2016) extended this research using the 2011 census data. They found that families living in remote areas in Australia are more likely to shift to English than those living in urban areas. However, census data only portraits a momentary situation. And while this summarised data is intriguing, there needs to be more detailed evidence. Therefore, it was relevant to this study to raise awareness that language shift is a gradual and mostly subconscious loss of the ability to communicate in the HL (Karidakis & Arunachalam, 2016, p. 16; Torsh, 2020a, p. 34). According to these authors, language shift occurs most commonly in domains where HLs used to be spoken on a regular basis, for example in church and social communities and at home. Closed communities such as these in which one language and culture is dominant are decreasing due to social mobility (Fishman, 1991, 2001). However, online learning resources, social media and frequent home visits allow HL users to potentially maintain their HL and slow down language shift (Forrest et al., 2020).

In the context of the home, language maintenance requires a daily exchange, but many parents encounter difficulty in sharing the family language with their children, especially if only one parent speaks an HL. Consequently, the children start to use the more dominant language and lose their HL (Eisenchlas & Schalley, 2019; Fukui, 2019; Romaine, 2006; Verdon et al., 2014).

A few decades ago, Fishman (1991, 2001) investigated reverse language shift and the support of minority languages like Yiddish. He questioned whether efforts to reverse language shift

should be undertaken at all, but he also linked the destruction of languages to destruction of identity; therefore, he argues that language as a resource should be developed and augmented (Fishman, 1991, p. 4). In Australia, HL shift in pre- and post-war immigrants has been found to occur over three generations (Fishman, 1966; Fukui, 2019; Lieberson & Curry, 1971; Spolsky, 2004), and the shift to English monolingualism within a few generations is a fact to this day (Cruickshank, Black, et al., 2020). The cause lies in the failure of second-generation parents to maintain the HL with their children (Lam, 2011; Ortman, 2008). While the first generation is dominant in the HL and the HL is the language used primarily by the HL parents at home, a shift occurs when the second generation starts school. Even though they may continue to use the HL at home, they often become dominant in English during their schooling years (Cruickshank, Black, et al., 2020; Fukui, 2019).

Globalisation, superdiversity, intragenerational assimilation, intermarriage or moving away from the cultural community "contribute to a shift to English" (Ellis et al., 2018, p. 19; Meissner & Vertovec, 2015; Pavlenko, 2019). According to Kouritzin (2000), family language shift towards the majority language is the major contributor to HL loss. The reasons are complex and differ from one family to another. Firstly, in Australia there are different language shifts occurring with different languages (Clyne, 2005; Schüpbach, 2009). For example, Dutch and German speakers tend to speak English at home more easily as these languages are closely related linguistically, that is, they are more cognate with English, while languages like Vietnamese and African languages are preserved longer in the home setting; therefore, the country of origin and language cognate status is a factor in language shift (Clyne, 2005). Secondly, the length of residency in Australia affects the use of the HL. A newly immigrated parent with low proficiency in English tends to use the HL with the children more readily, while a parent with high proficiency may be more inclined to use English instead of HL vocabulary (Leitner, 2004). Further reasons are the support provided for linguistic diversity and the kind of reception different languages receive in Australia. While not hugely relevant to this study, the discrimination against immigrants and asylum seekers that has occurred at various times in Australia's history has likely resulted in HL speakers being less inclined to make a language shift because of this unwelcoming reception or, conversely, it may have caused speakers to switch to English for assimilation reasons (Clyne, 2005). More relevant for this study is the fact that the shift away from a HL is twice as common outside metropolitan areas than in cities

(Clyne, 2005; Ellis et al., 2018). This affects immigrants and refugees[7] currently settled in regional areas (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, 2020; Piper, 2017, p. 18), and already affects plurilinguals living in regional Australia. For bilingual families in regional Australia, Ellis et al. (2017, 2022; 2018, p. 33; 2019) have shown that "the absence of other speakers, lack of institutional support in regional Australia, and lack of family support can mean that these families perhaps have greater challenges than some who live in more densely populated and multicultural areas". Thus, the study reported in this thesis is designed to add further insight into language changes in regional Australia and possible ways of strengthening families in their endeavour of raising plurilingual children.

2.3.3. Motivational aspects of heritage language use in the family

As this section will show, motivation is an important aspect in sharing, learning and maintaining languages. The term *motivation* has a very broad range of use and this thesis has therefore focused on the use of this term in various studies on HL use within linguistic intermarriage and immigrant families. Ellis et al. (2014, 2017) conducted in-depth interviews with families to establish parental motivations for raising children bilingually in the New England region. The results of this study presented four key themes relating to family motivations to maintain HLs: families want to 1) create a sense of belonging (family, culture, community), 2) create a competitive advantage for their children in the future, and 3) improve learning through the school years, but 4) families found it hard, despite the motivation, to stick to the FLP (Ellis & Sims, 2014). McCabe's (2014) study explored experiences of immigrant parents from central Europe in the US with HL learning and use with their children. Similar to Ellis et al., McCabe conducted in-depth interviews with parents and found different types of motivation: HL for communication with extended family overseas, HL as a major piece of cultural heritage and ethnic identity, and thirdly academic, cognitive, and social benefits of HL maintenance. Collectively, these studies suggested that there are different motivational factors that support maintenance of HLs at home. These factors ranged not only from the opportunity to communicate with grandparents and relatives, the value placed on cultural and ethnic identity, perceived academic and cognitive advantages but also social benefits for the future.

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[7] Immigrants often have more resources to maintain HLs (visits to home country, online language classes) while refugees are restricted in access to such resources.

Motivations for language maintenance arise from personal experiences and develop into goals. "[T]o establish parental motivations for raising children bilingually in regional Australia in the absence of a co-located speech community" was the main purpose for Ellis and Sims (2014, p. 28) to undertake a longitudinal study in the bush. Furthermore, as shown by Lambert (2008), children and parents' motivations to maintain HLs are similarly important and essentially influence HL use in families, intrinsic motivations emerge from a deep personal interest or self-motivation (Lambert, 2008). In contrast extrinsic or instrumental motivations are aligned with trying to achieve "external and material awards" (Lambert, 2008, p. 26), such as employment opportunities. While sharing and maintaining HLs most often lies with the parents, "eventually, children will also need to be self-motivated to preserve the family language as a personal area of endeavour" (Lambert, 2008, p. 26). With the support of other studies in this field, mentioned above in this section, the current study sought to support and increase the findings on motivations for HL maintenance.

2.3.4. Plurilingual children and their identity

Shifts in language use, from an HL to a dominant language, shape the language user's identity. Toohey and Norton (2002, p. 116) have noted that "contemporary applied linguistic researchers have been drawn to literature that conceives of identity not as static and one-dimensional, but as multiple, changing and a site of struggle". Further, Lawler (2014) even suggested that describing identity is not possible with one single definition. Regarding identity in connection with plurilingualism, it is important to understand that plurilingual children and their identity development are not only influenced by their family but also by educational experiences (Cummins, 2000a, 2000b; Fielding, 2016a).

One factor influencing the motivation to use HLs in the family is the sense of belonging, being a member of a community and culture (Ellis & Sims, 2014). Children's feeling of connection to their background languages and cultures is an important, if not most important, aspect of their identity (Fielding, 2011; Park, 2021, p. 5). Since a person's identity comprises emotions, a plurilingual person might therefore live in two different emotional worlds and cultures and develop a dual linguistic and cultural identity (Grosjean, 2010; Park, 2021, p. 2479). Park (2021, p. 2479) conducted semi-structured interviews and found that participants choose to use Korean within their Korean communities as the English language lacks the linguistic features such as honorifics.

Plurilingual children have to cope with the challenges of learning more than one language and living with different cultural backgrounds, which can mean there can be highs and lows in their personal identity (Grosjean, 1999, p. 8; 2010, p. 116). At some stages in their life, children may choose not to identify themselves with their linguistic and cultural background but at others, they may need to be able to draw on all their "linguistic heritages" to find their place and identity, as described by Kouritzin's (2000, p. 312) autoethnographic account of raising a bilingual child. Identifying with more than one language and culture is fostered by living with and using multiple languages; hence, the supportive role of the parents, and schools, in this process is vital for guaranteeing the success of maintaining their plurilingualism in family and educational settings (Fielding & Harbon, 2013).

Children's identity development is most often based on family and community input (Fishman, 1996, p. 88). Parents' own identities therefore play a vital role; however, parents too can feel confused and lost if they are restricted to using their HL only with people who are close to them, placing their identity under threat as experienced by participants in case studies conducted by Harding-Esch (2003). For example, they might not feel comfortable using the language with their children in public and therefore tend to neglect communication in the HL with their children at home too. Other parents may deliberately have a "secret garden" (Harding-Esch & Riley, 2003, p. 81) just for themselves, which means they do not share their linguistic heritage with their children and therefore also do not pass on to their children a dual linguistic and cultural identity and a sense of belonging to another culture apart from the main culture of the country where they live now.

2.4. Key element 2: Plurilingual children in an educational setting

This section explores the ways the education setting can support plurilingualism and how the educational setting is connected to the goals of multilingual families. Nevertheless, while many studies have explored multilingual families in Australia, only a few have addressed the connection to school.

2.4.1. Language acquisition and maintenance theories

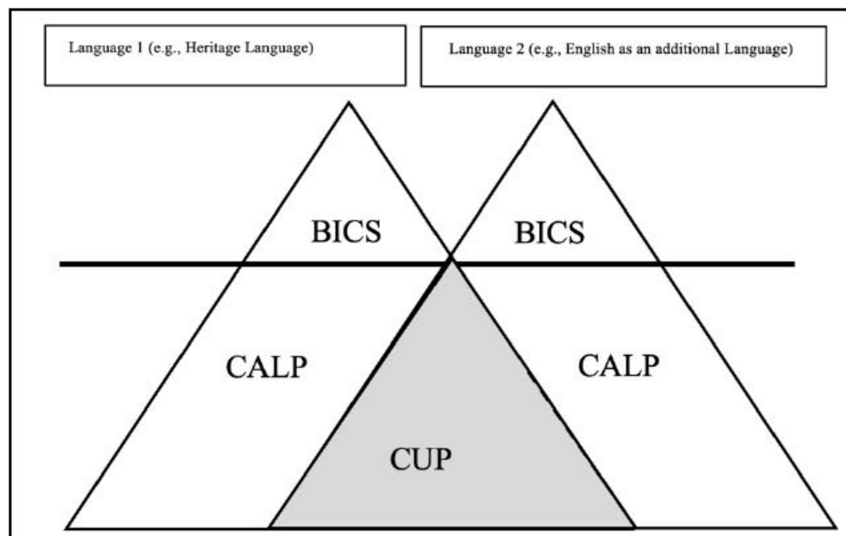
In the field of language acquisition, language learning and teaching and general language use there are numerous theories. This study draws on the following three theories:

- Cummins' models of basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) (Cummins, 1979a)
- Fishman's theory on reversing language shift (RLS) (Fishman, 1991)
- Translanguaging theory (Baker, 2001; García, 2008; Williams, 1994).

2.4.1.1. Cummins' BICS and CALP model

Cummins (1979a) introduced the dual-iceberg model for second language learners, which distinguishes between Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). BICS involves everyday interpersonal communication in social situations. Cummins (1981b, p. 23) describes this as "cognitively undemanding" everyday interpersonal communication. He also highlights that "a child's command of the 'visible' BICS (in L1 or L2) can give a misleading impression of overall linguistic proficiency" (Cummins, 1981b, p. 24). CALP focuses on academic language proficiency needed for literacy and academic contexts (Cummins, 2000a, p. 57; 2008, p. 489). The Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP) model suggests that cognitive and academic proficiency underlies performance in multiple languages, supporting the development of CALP (Cummins, 1981b, p. 25; 2000a, p. 57; 2016, p. 940).

Figure 2-1 Dual iceberg model adapted from Cummins (1981b, p. 24)



Cummins' (1976) threshold hypothesis suggests that there is a minimum level of proficiency in each language that needs to be attained for positive cognitive and academic effects to occur. Cummins' (1979b) interdependence hypothesis emphasises the idea that languages are not isolated entities in the bilingual mind but are interconnected, and the knowledge and skills

developed in one language can transfer to and support the development of the other language. However, it is important to note, that children with English as a second language need at least five years before they reach the threshold of English CALP and teachers need to understand that children may be fluent in English BICS but they are still developing their CALP dimension (Cummins, 1981b, p. p. 27).

Critics, including Flores (2020), Halbach (2012) and Bunch (2021), have challenged Cummins' BICS and CALP theory, highlighting its oversimplification of language acquisition. Cummins (2016, p. 943) himself acknowledges the model's limitations, recognizing that language development is a multifaceted process influenced by cultural factors, individual differences, and socio-economic context. Critics argue that the model may not fully capture the complexity of language learning, oversimplifying the interplay between interpersonal communication skills and academic language proficiency. Still, Cummins' work has an important role to play in understanding the maintenance of plurilingualism.

Cummins' application of the term CALP is heavily focused on academic aspects of language learning. In line with the application in this study to the general development of literacy and cognitive academic skills of HLs, Cummins' hypothesis and models inform the analysis of this study. The idea of a threshold is important to the present study because it suggests that children who are acquiring a HL at home alongside English, would need to reach a certain proficiency level in that HL to reap the full benefits of bilingualism, particularly if that HL were to also be encountered as a medium of instruction in an education setting. It will therefore be of interest to see how children's HL proficiency (as perceived by child, parent and teacher participants) aligns with their assessment of plurilingualism as a net benefit, and in terms of the ways these benefits are experienced. (see for example Chapter 4 Section 5).

2.4.1.2. Fishman's reversing language shift theory

Fishman (1991) focused on reverse language shift in minority languages that were at risk of disappearing, like Navajo in the US, Maori in New Zealand and Aboriginal languages in Australia, he also argues that the concept can be adapted for languages that are spoken in the countries of origin but are HLs in other countries, like Spanish in the United States or Italian in Australia.

Fishman's (1991) RLS theory is applied on "individual cases of threatened languages" (Fishman, 2001, p. 463) and posits that language shift can be reversed if language communities

(or individual speakers) first establish a 'priority of functions' for their threatened language and then establish a 'priority of linkages' between these functions (Fishman, 2001, p. 17). Possible functions and linkages are elucidated in the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS), which sets them out as eight key stages. Fishman stresses that the core of the RLS theory is to be directive, implicational and to actively promote and implement HLs. He advises that "the movement from one stage to another is totally a result of self-directed activity" (Fishman, 2001, p. 465).

Fishman (Fishman, 1991) notes that "Australia is often overlooked in reversing language shift discussions but, actually, some of the most interesting and contrasted processes and policies are to be encountered there" (Fishman, 1991, p. 252). Australia has a rich but also complex sociolinguistic constellation made up of three groups: the Indigenous category, with all its varieties, the 'settlers' British and Irish English and the immigrant group arriving from the middle of the 20th century onwards (Lo Bianco & Slaughter, 2009). Since then, many linguists, policy makers and educators have tried to fight the "anglified mainstream" (Fishman, 1991, p. 252) by accomplishing many noteworthy projects to maintain HLs. While the term *reversing language shift* (RLS) is not a widely used term in the education literature on language learning, efforts were and are still being made to value all languages and language diversity to address Anglophone monolingual predominance. Lo Bianco and Rhydwen (2001) display how RLS may be a user's manual but that there are difficulties in categorising Aboriginal languages on the GIDS. They describe revival initiatives which had some success (Lo Bianco & Rhydwen, 2001). These initiatives show that recordings of, for example, body parts, oral history and ceremonial singing and videos for teaching dyeing and weaving help to reconstruct languages, stage 1, and support language acquisition, stage 5. Studies on language maintenance among Indigenous communities continue and show that family and schools play a vital role (Mahboob et al., 2017; Verdon & McLeod, 2015) which support Fishman's claim that following the stages provide a way of reconstructing and maintaining a HL with the support of family, community and school.

Clyne (2001) also considered Fishman's RLS model for HL use in Australia. Similarly, to Fishman (1991, p. 255), Clyne recognises that Stage 8 is not relevant for community languages "as their heartland lies outside Australia" (2001, p. 366). Further, he confirms that cultural interaction is increasingly "confined to the elderly and not transmitted to younger people" (Clyne, 2001, p. 366). However, Clyne (Clyne, 2001, p. 367) describes that grandparents increasingly play a vital role in intergenerational HL maintenance as outlined by Fishman in

stage 6 and that an "increasing number of young people, notably middle-class second-generation Australians" intend to raise their children bilingually, for similar reasons illustrated in Chapter 4. Further, community language schools are an example of stage 5, where children have the choice to acquire HL literacy skills (Cruickshank, Jung, et al., 2020). In order to establish such community language schools there needs to be an urge to develop a more formal from of language maintenance and development. Connecting with other HL families builds a vital base for such an endeavour, as suggested in stage 6 (for example Matsui, 2022). Regarding stage 4, there a number of non-government schools offering languages. Roman Catholic schools tend to teach Italian as a second language, which, however, is no longer "identified" with a local community, and Lutheran schools often teach German as a HL (Clyne, 2001, p. 372). Languages other than English are taught in many primary and secondary schools and Clyne (2001, p. 374) notes that there are great differences in language provision and shares Fishman's "scepticism that language programs in Yish[8] schools contribute to long-term language maintenance or to RLS". In Australia stage 3, 2 and 1 are hardly visible. They may though include, for example, family business run by immigrants, and governmental programs to utilise cultural and linguistic resources (Clyne, 2001, p. 376). Further, the Special Broadcasting Service[9] (SBS) provides multilingual and multicultural radio and television services for free and an example for stage 1 includes the issue of public notices in a range of HL. SBS as well as multilingual notices mainly "satisfy the needs of some first generation groups and [is] not an incentive for RLS" (Clyne, 2001, p. 381).

2.4.1.3. Translanguaging

Translanguaging is a term created by Williams (1994) in the context of English and Welsh bilinguals in Wales. Baker (2001) introduced the term to the English-speaking world in his work on bilingualism and García promoted the term across the world largely due to her work on bilingual education policy and practice in the United States, especially the education of children of Hispanic background (García, 2009; García & Kleyn, 2016; García & Otheguy, 2020; García & Sylvan, 2011). The terms *code-switching* (Grosjean, 2001, p. 2) and *translanguaging* (García & Wei, 2014; Heugh et al., 2019) have been used to describe the switching between languages,

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[8] Fishman used X and Y to refer to HLs (Xish) and a dominate language (Yish)

[9] Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) provides multilingual and multicultural radio and television services in Australia.

sometimes within the same sentence, used by plurilinguals depending on the situation. Codeswitching, an "external view" (García & Kleyn, 2016, p. 14) of language, looks at how and why people change languages; García in an interview with Grosjean stated that translanguaging is "going beyond named languages and taking the internal view of the speaker's language use" (Grosjean, 2016). This ability to activate or deactivate languages may have an influence on the additional language classrooms as the child is used to using more than one language. Plurilingual children already have unconscious awareness of language structure so are naturally more open to new language structures; they also have the capacity to consider a variety of approaches simultaneously in order to resolve linguistic problems (Kharkhurin, 2008, p. 234). Therefore, if teachers value plurilingual talents, both teacher and students "experience a sense of empowerment" (Cummins, 2015, p. 104) and language repertoires in specific domains become more flexible.

Two different types of translanguaging are relevant to this study: spontaneous translanguaging and pedagogical translanguaging. Plurilinguals use the resources of their linguistic repertoire to translanguage spontaneously. Spontaneous translanguaging most often takes place in a multilingual setting such as within the home domain and within bilingual communities, for example, Hispanic communities in the USA. According to García's (2009) findings, "[i]t is impossible to live in bilingual communities and communicate among multilinguals without translanguaging". Spontaneous translanguaging can also take place inside the classroom and can therefore be used pedagogically by the teachers. Pedagogical translanguaging is "a theoretical and instructional approach that aims at improving language and content competences in school contexts by using resources from the learner's whole linguistic repertoire" (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022a, p. 1). It goes beyond accepting or promoting the flexible use of plurilinguals' languages (Cenoz & Gorter, 2020, 2022a, 2022b). Translanguaging embraces the natural linguistic repertoire in varying degrees of different languages. Pedagogical translanguaging or intentional translanguaging holds a pedagogical advantage in applying the use of languages to, for example, class discussions or pieces of writing (Rafi & Morgan, 2022a, 2022c), language biography exercises or intentional code-switching strategies (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022a; Gorter & Arocena, 2020). The aim of pedagogical translanguaging is to activating students' linguistic repertoires so that they can benefit from their own plurilingualism (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022a, 2022b). The natural advantages of spontaneous translanguaging become more intentional. Especially in classrooms were 'English only' for example is lifted, students as well as teachers benefit from being able to exchange ideas in more than one language. A temporary but

intentional access to another language improves students understanding. Pedagogical translanguaging provides ways to connect with other cultures and literature which then helps students to produce for example texts in English with a much higher level of understanding (Rafi & Morgan, 2022b).

2.4.2. Plurilingual language education in Australia

For many years Australian linguists and educators have criticised policy makers and the government for neglecting their responsibilities in relation to plurilingualism in schools and communities (Clyne, 2005, 2008; Go8 (Group of Eight), 2007; Lo Bianco, 2003). More recent studies by, for example, Hajek (2018), Chik (2019) and Choi (2018) have indeed demonstrated that these resources are still not address but rather neglected and ignored. The criticisms address the neglect of the linguistic resources and linguistic potential that already exists in Australian communities (Chik et al., 2019; Hajek, 2018) and the decline in hours spent on learning a second language in schools in certain states (Choi & Ollerhead, 2018). More specific concerns regarding the implementation and impact of language policy on student learning experiences have also been addressed in the literature over the last decades (Baker, 2021; Fukui, 2019; Hajek, 2018; Lo Bianco, 2003; Lo Bianco & Aliani, 2013). For example, it previously has been claimed that mainstream teachers are ignorant of plurilingual issues and of the consequences of this ignorance for students, both personally and academically (Cummins, 2000a; Lee & Oxelson, 2006), while in recent years teachers are "striving to overcome their worries" of having multiple languages in their classrooms (Cunningham, 2018).

Australia has undergone a significant change in the last 50 years regarding language education. While language education seemed to have had a rather high status in the 1960s, the status, according to some, has rapidly declined over the last few decades (Griffiths & Ikutegbe, 2018). In the 1970s, language education "moved away from elite languages taught for elite reasons at high school" to "community languages taught for community purposes in primary schools" (Griffiths & Ikutegbe, 2018, p. 3). Japanese and Chinese language learning has increased participation, although most students of these languages are heritage or first language speakers. Further, there are also significant differences in provision and participation rates and years of learning each language across states and territories (Morgan et al., 2021). Nonetheless, the Department of Education has engaged the Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations to develop a National Plan and Strategy for Languages Education Australia (AFMLTA, 2022).

Teaching an additional language in English-speaking countries is still viewed from the perspective of teaching a group of monolingual students (Fielding, 2022; García & Sylvan, 2011). This is one important aspect of why education is ineffective in delivering an appropriate 21st century pedagogy in language teaching (Hajek & Benson, 2020). Furthermore, some critics feel that formal education is accelerating the death of many languages, with 'linguistic genocide' (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000) occurring every time Indigenous or minority language children are educated exclusively in a dominant language (Cruickshank, Black, et al., 2020). According to Cruickshank et al. (2020), plurilingual children have a five in six chance of losing their HL by the time they finish school, which means plurilingual children becoming monolingual is often a consequence of attending school. A similar statement was made especially clear in an SBS report entitled *Our Languages, a National Resource in 'Terminal Decline'*, wherein the authors describe "the collapse of Australia's multi-lingual ambitions" and the turning of plurilinguals into monolinguals (Feneley & Calixto, 2016, para. 10). In a more recent article, Australia is called "a graveyard of languages" (Fukui, 2019, p. 3), which implies that the state of multilingual Australia is at risk in educational settings.

2.4.3. Language learning potential

Australia finds itself in a state of crisis in regard to language teaching. A series of studies (Cruickshank, Black, et al., 2020; Dabroswki, 2015; Feneley & Calixto, 2016; Go8 (Group of Eight), 2007; Hajek, 2018) indicate that the significant language resources of its population are ignored. This section is a review of language education literature focusing how to make use of plurilingual students' existing language resources as well as factors hindering language learning potential This study was an opportunity to gather further insights into the factors that work for and against plurilingual children being able to exploit their linguistic resources in the classroom.

One way plurilingual children are afforded the opportunity to develop their linguistic resources at school is often via participation in the additional Languages classroom (Ollerhead, 2019). The target language may be their HL, or a completely new language. Fielding (2016b), for example, describes how the knowledge of an HL offers plurilinguals opportunities to apply their linguistic resources to language learning in varied ways by applying linguistic strategies and resourcefulness in language use. In the case that the Languages classroom teaches the HL, it provides the plurilingual child with even broader opportunities to use their linguistic resources and develop the HL.

The effect on plurilingual children of learning a subsequent language has become a widely researched topic worldwide in the last two decades. An experimental study using grammaticality judgements in which Westergaard et al. (2017) investigated the effects of crosslinguistic influence in third language acquisition provided evidence supporting the hypothesis that bilingual children's languages remain active and influence the acquisition of further languages. In comparing different studies on the influence of bilingualism on third language acquisition, Cenoz's (2013) review paper raises awareness that bilingual children are not monolingual speakers of two languages but in comparison to monolingual children have a larger linguistic repertoire and metalinguistic awareness that they bring to bear in learning additional languages. Bartolotti (2017) designed a study on vocabulary learning and found positive effects due to word likeness in plurilingual users learning an additional language. And, de la Fuente's (2015, p. 52) survey of key concepts in the field of third language acquisition also suggests that "the search for similarities between languages is part of the natural process of language acquisition and that teachers should therefore encourage it by reactivating learners' prior linguistic knowledge". These studies have primarily focused on language learning in the additional language classroom, which involved developing metalinguistic awareness, grammar, vocabulary, and cross-linguistic and communication skills. Multilingual families, and the provision of programs such as immersion or bilingual education for children in these families, have also been investigated. In Australia, Fielding has researched plurilingual children in bilingual programmes. She indicates that the "linguistic repertoires are broader and more fluid than exposure to the bilingual programme alone might account for" (Fielding, 2015; 2016b, p. 374). The evidence emerging from this field suggests that plurilingual children have open minds in regard to other languages (Grosjean, 2010, p. 100), are influenced by literacy skills in their HL in regard to reading comprehension (Hopp et al., 2020, p. 148), and can learn additional languages more easily than monolinguals (Rothman, 2015, p. 184).

Teachers and schools need to consider the issue of the shift from the HL to the dominant language by recognising each student's linguistic background when implementing the curriculum (ACARA, 2017). Hence, schools play a fundamental role in determining the experience of plurilingual children in Languages classrooms as described below; the relationship between the child and the teacher directly determines the plurilingual child's learning success or failure at school (Cummins, 2000a; Hopp et al., 2020; Scarino & Liddicoat, 2009). As mentioned before, plurilingual children often go unnoticed and their linguistic skills

are ignored (de la Fuente & Lacroix, 2015, p. 45). A statement by the Group of Eight[10] (2007, p. 7) confirmed this lack of understanding:

> If Australia discovered untapped oil and gas reserves, it would be considered foolish to ignore them. Yet Australia does ignore its language resources.

The Australian Curriculum: Languages notes that language learning cannot be separated from developing more general communication skills and suggests a holistic approach to language learning (ACARA, 2017, Student diversity). A holistic approach would require a strategy to reactivate prior linguistic knowledge and explore differences and similarities between languages to be implemented in every Languages classroom (de la Fuente & Lacroix, 2015; Hopp et al., 2020) and every classroom at every level in every subject (Piccardo et al., 2019). This approach was suggested by Clyne (2005, p. 128) over a decade earlier. Clyne argued not only for using the target language but also for using the community language resources within the school. Cenoz and Gorter (2010, p. 9) and Hopp et al. (2020, p. 158) have also argued for a more holistic approach to language learning, with the goal of their approach being to build bridges between languages and to develop metalinguistic and cultural awareness as a resource that can provide access through different languages. Elorza and Muñoa (2008) correspondingly discarded the native-like plurilingual ideal for a more productive type of plurilingualism as a resource for communicative needs and Fielding (2015, p. 5) argued for a "move towards an understanding of 'superdiversity'". The term *superdiversity* recognises the extent of the cultural and linguistic diversity emerging from decades of migration to Australia of people from a wide range of national, ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds. According to Vertovec (2007, p. 1), superdiversity "is distinguished by a dynamic interplay of variables among an increased number of new, small and scattered, multiple-origin, transnationally connected, socio-economically differentiated and legally stratified immigrants who have arrived over the last decade."

In addition, the work of the 'The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages' (CEFR) in this particular field has the potential to advance Australian linguistic leaders plurilingual ambitions, as argued by Normand-Marconnet and Lo Bianco (2015). Both regarded

[10] The Group of Eight (Go8) comprises Australia's leading research-intensive universities – the University of Melbourne, the Australian National University, the University of Sydney, the University of Queensland, the University of Western Australia, the University of Adelaide, Monash University and UNSW Sydney.

the use of the CEFR as a universal language learning reference document and as a practical resource for supporting language teaching and assessment as it supports transparency and coherence across the entire spectrum of language education. Discussion about introducing the CEFR into Australian education continues (Normand-Marconnet & Lo Bianco, 2015; Read, 2019; Turner & Fielding, 2020); although, the CEFR has been found inappropriate for Australian educational settings. According to the Modern Language Teachers Association of NSW (2019, p. 2), it is "at this stage not applicable to the Australian context".

The lack of acknowledgement of the value of HLs is particularly noticeable in English speaking countries where English monolingualism is often emphasised (Fielding, 2015, p. 21; Kenner & Ruby, 2012). This means that currently in Anglophone schools throughout the world additional languages are taught, developed and implemented for monolingual children. In a paper published by Cross et al. (2022), plurilingual children who have prior linguistic knowledge of either the target language or other languages do not receive input relevant to their level. In this way, HLs are undervalued as a resource for language learning. Multilingual approaches as, for example, proposed by Elorza and Muñoa (2008), where four languages are used in one school, may be challenging in the regional Australian context where many different HLs are spoken. However, the current Australian Curriculum proposes something more flexible, stating that "the curriculum addresses learner background in the target language by providing a number of pathways and entry points of study to cater for background language learners, first language learners and second language learners" (ACARA, 2017, Version 8.4, Languages, Foundation – Year 10). The writers of the curriculum acknowledge the value of HLs, yet the implementation depends on individual schools and teachers.

In multilingual homes plurilingual children learn two or more languages unconsciously alongside each other with no formal instruction. As soon as children start learning an additional language formally at school, they will most likely realise that language learning is a process which involves some effort, for example the effort required to learn the vocabulary and grammar of an additional language. While an HL may help plurilingual children at all levels of language learning, they may not be aware of language learning processes (Westergaard et al., 2017). Languages teachers however, should have knowledge of "pedagogical awareness-raising activities" (Ellis, 2013, p. 454) and use their knowledge to advance children's consciousness of language learning processes. Cenoz and Todeva (2009, p. 278) have argued that plurilingual children receive many "free rides" when learning additional languages in regard to knowledge about grammar, pragmatics, lexicon, pronunciation and orthography because they already know

at least a couple of languages and their specifications. However, precautionary measures are needed as language learning is a complex phenomenon that is influenced by many other factors. Prior linguistic knowledge and awareness of language learning processes remain, however, one variable factor contributing to children's language learning potential.

2.4.4. Languages in education

There have been many different approaches to fostering multilingualism in schooling contexts (Alford & Kettle, 2020). One such approach are specific grants for bilingual primary schools (such as through the Victorian Department of Education Designated Bilingual Program funding[11]). Further, the new curriculum acknowledges multilingualism in the school setting and states that students bring their own linguistic and cultural background to their learning (ACARA, 2017), however with no explanation of how this might be achieved.

One effect of these debates has been that support for plurilingualism has fallen in and out of favour in educational institutions in Australia over time. During the 1970s and 80s, much research was conducted, and many discussions were held to encourage plurilingualism in schools. The influence of Clyne (Clyne, 2007, 2008; Ellis et al., 2010) and Lo Bianco (Lo Bianco, 1987, 2003) on a national level has certainly provoked change in valuing languages in education. For example, the National Language Policy expressed the view "that language learning, maintenance and bilingualism are valuable and necessary to develop not only for the individuals concerned, but also for the benefit of Australia" (Lo Bianco, 1987, p. 4). Also, the AFMLTA in their current report acknowledges that "[w]e must provide for all levels of education, for first or 'mother tongue' languages including Australian First Languages, for heritage, community and revival languages, and for the learning of additional languages, including those traditionally taught for academic purposes, those that are part of our region, and those that are increasingly part of our plurilingual landscape" (AFMLTA, 2022, p. 10).

Progress in this matter was slow and needed to be adapted to the current more globalised society of Australia. The Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) engaged the

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[11] https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-resource-package-srp-school-specific-programs/guidance/designated-bilingual-program

Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Association (AFMLTA) to conduct a project to develop a National Plan and Strategy for Languages Education in Australia. The overarching objective of the project is to support the Australian Government effort to increase the uptake of languages learning in schools. The recent completed project shows that the government is taking the issue of language learning seriously (AFMLTA, 2022). Nonetheless, Ndhlovu (2015) has argued that conversations about multilingualism can be trapped in monolingual thinking, while avoiding the focus on the diversity of language practices. Hélot (2011) used the term *ignored bilingualism* in an interview based on her research in the context of immigrant children where their home language was not sufficiently addressed and recognised (Hélot & Laoire, 2011). The term *ignored bilingualism* is relevant to the study reported in this thesis, not because of the challenges children might have in developing proficiency in the language of school but more because children's HLs are not being recognised and therefore the children's plurilingualism is being ignored. In multilingual societies "language education does not happen in a vacuum", so taking on board a more flexible plurilingual approach to language learning would be necessary to exploit HLs as a meaning-making resource more effectively (Piccardo et al., 2019, p. 19).

2.4.5. Maintaining heritage languages in Languages classrooms

Incorporating different HLs into the (foreign) Languages classroom is a challenge; a further challenge is the maintenance of HLs, specifically from the point of view of language classrooms and pedagogy. Polinsky and Kagan (2007) state that:

> The challenge for the teaching profession is to find pedagogical solutions relating to minority learners based on current linguistic research, a task that clearly has additional practical significance. (Polinsky & Kagan, 2007, p. 384)

When an HL is being taught at school, Languages teachers can adjust the children's language goals and support them in achieving these goals by providing more challenging work to match the child's level as, for example, the practice-based study by Hopp et al. (2020) suggests. In a much more structured study based on identifying features of HLs in phonology, morphology and syntax, Polinsky and Kagan (2007, p. 390) argued that HL learners have an advantage over anyone else studying the target language from scratch and that they will achieve "near-native linguistic and sociocultural fluency" much more easily. Supporting the use of HLs in the classroom was also discussed by Gay (2018, p. 89), who examined whether teachers have any

plan to ensure plurilingual children are accommodated. She argued that accommodating and supporting HLs benefits children academically and socially: "[C]ompetency in more than one communication system is a strength, a resource, and a necessity to be cultivated for students living in pluralistic societies" (Gay, 2018, p. 95). Gay raised the question about whether children with a HL background should be taught to become literate plurilinguals, thus developing mainstream English while also developing the HL to attain an academic level.

The overview above has provided an account of how the globalisation of the economy and the multilingual and multicultural foundation of Australian society has inspired writers of the Australian curriculum to include students' linguistic and cultural background knowledge. The practical significance of this inclusion needs to be supported from within educational institutions and endorsed by parents and Languages teachers (Scarino & Liddicoat, 2009, p. 13; The Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Association, 2022). Learning an additional language at school is one of the many possibilities for making Australia more multilingually and multiculturally aware and for more accurately reflecting the existing diversity of the community (Mayfield, 2017). Australia has taken advantage of having the world's *lingua franca*, English, as the dominant language, while the urgency of incorporating other language backgrounds into the linguistic capital of the country is acknowledged in the curriculum. The question of the 'how' remains. Endorsing HLs and recognising HL speakers' skills is one way of using a national resource. While HL users might not be "unchartered territory" anymore, there is still potential to explore HL speakers' linguistic and pedagogical resources (Polinsky & Kagan, 2007, p. 389). Therefore, the curriculum has untapped potential to make Australia more multilingual and multicultural using the already existing resource of HLs.

2.4.6. Teachers of Languages

The implementation of the curriculum and the administration of Languages classrooms rely extensively on teachers[12] of Languages. Languages teachers teach individuals in a multilingual classroom; "singularities in pluralities" as García (2011) describes it. This is an accurate picture for most classrooms today, and a future aim for the Languages classroom could be to support

[12] While it would be very useful to consider how teachers of other curriculum areas might include heritage languages in their classrooms, this is beyond the scope of the current study.

children in their HL rather than teach the target language only (AFMLTA, 2022). However, through surveys and interviews, Lee and Oxelson (2006, p. 456) reported on 'teachers' attitudes towards their students' HL maintenance' and found, that "a common misunderstanding among teachers is that only teachers who are proficient in the student's HL can support students' HL maintenance". Thus, achieving this complex goal requires language teachers to be passionate about their subject, able to motivate students, willing to further their own knowledge and to be a "cultural mediator" (Gay, 2018, p. 52) and have "a multilingual stance" (Turner, 2019b, p. 279). Further, Lee and Oxelson (2006, p. 468) emphasise that "the most valuable practice teachers can take up in encouraging the maintenance of HLs is to let their students know that they value their language through verbal comments".

The connection between pedagogies used by teachers, and their own personal language histories and identities has been explored by Ellis (2013, 2018) who argued that exploration of a teacher's own relationship with languages is necessary. Teachers have to engage with their own "linguistic repertoires" to find out how to exploit them in the additional language classroom (Ellis, 2013, p. 446). Further, Ellis asked whether teacher's "linguistic identity" should be "incorporated into the language education systems" (Ellis, 2018, p. 4). She argued that almost every language teacher is plurilingual and that these plurilingual experiences of individual teachers shape Languages classroom practices, consciously or unconsciously (Ellis, 2018, p. 2). This current study has further investigated the relations between teacher identity, language repertoire and teaching practices.

The Languages teacher contributes in a range of ways to the plurilingual student's language learning. Possible suggestions may be that the teacher takes responsibility for conducting a culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2018). They dedicate themselves to valuing the plurilingual child in order to allow dialogue between teachers and students and for plurilingualism to be recognised as the norm in today's society (Paris, 2011). In addition, schools could possibly work in tandem with families and communities to protect HLs (Cruickshank, Black, et al., 2020; Fishman, 2015). Consequently, the teaching of languages develops cultural understanding by teachers, children and the whole school community (Gay, 2018).

A plurilingual approach is not necessarily a solution for successful learning in additional languages. Children who refuse to use previous linguistic knowledge and who lack the motivation or the flexibility to approach an unknown language may not succeed at learning the

additional language taught at school. Thus, plurilingual approaches are not an asset for such children per se as findings from a study on Languages teachers' beliefs about multilingualism and the use of a multilingual pedagogical approach in the third-language classroom suggest (Haukås, 2016). In such cases, the teacher plays a vital role, as the teacher has a great influence on the development and enhancement of children's metalinguistic awareness and motivation (Dégi, 2016).

Elements that can help teachers of Languages implement a number of pathways and entry points for languages learners from different language backgrounds have been listed by the European Centre for Modern Languages (Council of Europe, 2018). These are:

- meeting the challenges of classrooms in which there are a number of different languages and cultures
- making use of students' complex language repertoires when studying the core content of the language of schooling (i.e. Australian English in Australia)
- identifying the linguistic resources and potential that students with varying backgrounds bring to the classroom
- developing productive cooperation and a shared vision with teachers of other subjects
- discovering how plurilingualism can become an asset in the context of the language of schooling.

In summary, the ideal vision of incorporating plurilingual children's knowledge in the additional language classrooms may be achieved if teachers are able to implement the suggestions of the Australian Curriculum: Languages, acknowledge their own and the children's linguistic background and resources, and see the value in supporting plurilingual children in their language journey.

2.4.7. Teaching models, programs, curriculum and policies

The final section of this chapter briefly reviews other factors influencing aspects for plurilinguals in an educational setting. These include how languages are taught, how the curriculum influences the teaching and awareness of languages, and how policies guide schools.

Programs that cater for plurilingual children were first introduced in Australia in the 19th century. These have taken on a variety of different formats. For example, German, Italian and Greek are some of the many languages that were taught in bilingual schools when immigrants

from those countries arrived in Australia (Lo Bianco & Slaughter, 2009, p. 18). Some of these programs closed for political reasons (Lo Bianco & Slaughter, 2009, p. 19), but a number of bilingual programs are being introduced into mainstream education again (Turner, 2019b, p. 141). In addition to bilingual schools, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and immersion programs are gaining more popularity in New South Wales and Victoria due to government initiatives (Fielding, 2016b; Turner, 2019b). These programs benefit monolingual background children as well as plurilingual children (Fielding, 2015). The various programs include approaches that aim to help monolingual children to become emergent plurilinguals, as well as approaches that appear to have a benefit in broadening linguistic skills in the HL (Fielding, 2016b, p. 374). For example, Fielding (2016b) found that plurilingual children are able to extend their knowledge and skills outside the classroom and build on existing linguistic experiences to support language learning at home. Regardless of the school's program (i.e. bilingual immersion vs bilingual transition), teachers need to be equipped with a repertoire of skills and methods to be used in different situations and contexts (Adamson, 2008; Heugh et al., 2019). As with language teaching in general, children benefit from different kinds of learning activities, and the pedagogy transitions from being fun and repetitive to more structured and reflective opportunities for learning, while a sense of progression and achievement is also of importance (Porter et al., 2020). These varied approaches account for the fact that no student and teacher, or school, is the same.

Currently there are discussions internationally about the most appropriate practices for teaching HLs and additional languages in general (Choi & Ollerhead, 2018; Cross et al., 2022; Higby et al., 2020; Hopp et al., 2020; Piccardo, 2018b). Australia has followed that trend in evaluation with significant changes in language education policies in recent decades that have been initiated by leading institutions like the AFMLTA, the national body representing teachers of all languages in Australia.

Understanding why languages provision and uptake in schools have remained low despite various governmental initiatives was the aim of a recent report on languages education in schools in Sydney and Wollongong (Cruickshank, Black, et al., 2020). The report explored the reasons for the low attendance of Languages classes, offers solutions for successfully reversing the trend and discusses how low attendance is (not) affecting language education policy makers, as they seem to refuse researched based approaches (Cruickshank, Black, et al., 2020, p. 171). It illustrated how language teachers' professional status in New South Wales urban schools depend on a variety of factors like the perceived status of languages taught in the local school,

funding, and timetable structures but also the teacher's feeling of insecurity and lack of power in comparison with teachers of other subjects (Cruickshank, Black, et al., 2020, p. 77). The report also revealed that parental and student perceptions and attitudes towards language study were mixed. While most parents and children had a positive attitude towards languages, they felt that language learning in the wider society is not valued (Cruickshank, Black, et al., 2020, p. 89). Further, regarding community languages the report emphasised that social class and parental support played a vital role in how children embrace language learning (Cruickshank, Black, et al., 2020). The results of this report apply to schools in an urban setting. Similar questions need to be asked about language teaching and learning in regional settings in order that future language education policies remain relevant beyond metropolitan areas.

While recent policy directions are reassuring, linguists and educators continue to express concerns about how the Australian government is approaching the resources of its multilingual and multicultural population (Cruickshank, Black, et al., 2020; Hajek & Benson, 2020). As argued by Choi and Ollerhead (Choi & Ollerhead, 2018), limiting diversity by foregrounding monolingualism still exists despite development of the new linguistic theorising around concepts like translanguaging and plurilingualism (Choi & Ollerhead, 2018). In addition to funding issues, a shortage of qualified Languages teachers is a hurdle for those implementing an ideal language education program in Australia (Dabroswki, 2015). The country is short of teachers with high proficiency in the target languages, and the teaching profession has a low status, which inhibits many young adults from considering this profession (Dabroswki, 2015; Morgan et al., 2018).

Nevertheless, the Australian Curriculum: Languages (ACARA, 2017) refers to the use of the linguistic resources of plurilingual students in a promising manner. Four key groups can influence whether language planning will be integrative, encouraging and applicable (Wiley, 1996):

- official national and state-based government bodies, for example ACARA, the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and the Victorian Government's Vision for Languages Education
- professional bodies for languages like the AFMLTA, supported by key language strategists like Hajek and continued scholarly works of Lo Bianco
- standard-setting schools, such as those where successes have been reported by Cruickshank from the University of Sydney
- key groups in the community, such as parents and family members.

The main focus of policy and curriculum documents has been on bilingualism as a phenomenon in the community and the family and the challenges for maintaining plurilingualism in a dominant language environment. The NSW Languages K-10 Framework/Syllabus (NESA, 2018) accounts for plurilingual students who already have knowledge of an additional language. The framework mentioned above describes all the tasks a plurilingual child has the capacity to do with their different languages, although challenges remain because most plurilingual children are bilingual but not biliterate; a phenomenon visible in many plurilingual children globally (Cross et al., 2022). Consideration of plurilingual children with knowledge of a language that is different from the target language, however, is not apparent in the framework. For that reason, there is a need to explore plurilingual children's experience in the Languages classroom.

2.5. Research questions – addressing the gap

Although extensive research has been carried out on plurilingualism worldwide, including in Australia, no single study exists that focuses on plurilingual children in regional New South Wales in connection with the Languages classroom. Researching language use and language teaching in regional schools can hopefully reveal new knowledge.

Bilingualism 'in the bush' has been investigated in a local study on language maintenance within immigrant families and their young children in the New England Region (Ellis & Sims, 2017; Ellis et al., 2018, 2019). The findings show that regional families struggle to maintain their HLs, face pressures brought on by isolation from other speakers of the HL, and that extended family relationships, crucial to bilingual acquisition, are not necessarily available for language support (Ellis et al., 2018, p. 17). Moreover, in Australia, immigrant and linguistic intermarriage parents are demonstrating a growing trend toward raising their children plurilingual. Torsh's (2018a) findings show that intermarried couples feel proud of having a multilingual family, but at the same time see that practicing HLs is problematic. Similar Lam (2011, p. 5), in her multimethod study about parents' experiences in mixed marriages, shows that there is a changing attitude towards multilingualism in Australia and that parents feel it "is necessary for our increasingly diverse and globalized society". The focus of this study was, therefore, twofold: firstly, to investigate the experience of linguistic intermarriage families and plurilingual children in a regional setting; and secondly, to couple this first investigation with exploration of educational settings as support systems to maintain HLs among these families

and children. Consequently, the overarching theme is the extent to which plurilingualism prevails in regional Australia.

2.5.1. Study aims

The overarching aims of the study were derived from the main idea found in the question posed in the 1990s by Fishman (1996) about what happens with children's use of HLs before school, in school, out of school and after school (see Section 1.4.). With Fishman's question in mind, the full set of aims of this study were:

- to identify the ways plurilingual children apply their linguistic resources, and how they use the benefits and challenges of having these resources in additional language classrooms in regional Australian
- to investigate the role of teachers of Languages in regional Australia with a focus on their support of multilingual families' linguistics backgrounds

In light of the above aims, a potential applied outcome of the study also was to contribute to the development of theory and practice regarding an effective Languages pedagogy approach for plurilingual children in regional schools in general and in additional Languages classrooms in particular. These aims were used to formulate the research questions and are described in more detail below. The key research questions were further defined by several more specific sub-questions, which were integrated into the interview questions.

2.5.2. Research questions

In consideration of the fact that plurilingualism only recently emerged as a concept discussed in Australia, one comprehensive question fuelled this study: How does plurilingualism prevail in regional Australia? Literature related to the twofold focus of this study was reviewed in this chapter: first, the experience of linguistic intermarriage families and plurilingual children in a regional setting, and second the educational settings as support systems to maintain heritage languages among these families and children. To account for some of the many facets of plurilingualism in regional Australia and to address the gap in the knowledge about how parents and plurilingual children experience Languages classroom programs, the following research questions were raised.

Key Research Question 1: How and why do parents share and maintain heritage languages in regional Australia?

Plurilingual children were the focus of the study. However, exploring the parent's perspectives first helps to set the scene for understanding children's experiences within the home, since the parents provide more background data. Thus, the experiences and perspectives of parents were a necessary inclusion and enabled the collection of more detail on multilingual family language practice and strengthening the single-case. The aspects of this key research question that were specifically addressed are:

1. How do parents feel about speaking more than one language? (parents' view of plurilingualism)
2. What benefits do parents see in speaking more than one language?
3. What kind of connections do they have to the culture(s) of the language(s) they speak?
4. How do parents support their children using their HLs?
5. How could the school support parents in using/improving their other language(s)? How can parents support children in using the other language in school?
6. How would parents feel if their children could use the other language at school, such as in the additional language classroom?
7. How do parents feel about living in a regional community?
8. How do parents feel about language loss or shift?

Key Research Question 2: What are the experiences of plurilingual children in regional Australia in relation to their heritage language maintenance and personal identity issues?

This general question guided the research data collection phase of the study. Its focus was on the main participants of this project: plurilingual children in a regional area in Australia. The aspects of this key research question that were specifically addressed are:

1. Do plurilingual children identify themselves with one language and culture more than another?
2. How does communication work in a multilingual family?
3. What benefits do children perceive in speaking more than one language and having experience of more than one culture?

4. What languages do children speak and how do children feel about using their HL or other languages at school?
5. How do children feel about living in a regional area with few to no other speakers of their language?
6. How do children feel about language shift and loss?

Key Research Question 3: What is the role of teachers of Languages in supporting plurilingual children's linguistic knowledge and skills in school and in particular in the additional language classroom?

Key Research Question 3 was used to synthesise the findings of the investigation, to interpret the collected data and to shift from an individual focus to a more practical and theoretical understanding of plurilingual children's experiences in general. The aspects of this key research question that were specifically addressed are:

1. How do children use their knowledge of another language in the additional language classroom? (e.g. knowing French and learning Italian)
2. How is plurilingualism influencing the engagement/motivation to learn an additional language?
3. How can schools support the use/improvement of HLs?
4. What are teachers' experiences of incorporating many languages into the additional language teaching classroom? What further professional learning is needed to support them in this endeavour?
5. How can teachers shape planning and programming to accommodate plurilingual children? Is the delivery of the Languages curriculum influenced by having plurilingual students in the classroom?

An exploration of these issues had the potential to address the gap in our knowledge about how parents and plurilingual children make use of plurilingual resources and how Languages teachers can draw on the linguistic knowledge of a child who understands and uses two languages already.

2.6. Summary of Literature Review

The literature reviewed provides an overview of plurilingualism and considers the experiences of multilingual families, plurilingual children and the impact from and in the Languages

classroom. Languages are subject to constant change. Many languages have been lost over time when dominance of another language took precedence, but many languages could potentially be maintained if there were a greater accommodation of the concept of plurilingualism. The concept of plurilingualism has stimulated many discussions, academic reports, studies and suggestions for how to apply the concept in an educational setting. Living life as a plurilingual may be an advantage, but it also brings challenges. These advantages and challenges are likely to have an impact in a school setting, and especially in the Language classroom. The current Australian Curriculum tries to address the circumstances of students' differing linguistic backgrounds and offers in principle support of diverse language maintenance. Linguists, teachers and researchers in education, psychology and linguistics worldwide recognise the need for change in the approach to plurilingual students, and this also applies to schools in the New England Region. Plurilingual pedagogy already has a place in the Australian Curriculum, but now it needs to be implemented and everyday teaching needs to respond to the need, as Clyne, Lo Bianco, Hajek and many more Australian linguists and educators have argued for decades.

For the benefit of Australian society, it is essential to maintain and possibly reverse language shift (Cavallaro, 2005). The following statement[13] by Fishman (1996, p. 13) encourages HL maintenance in ways supported by advocates of plurilingualism:

> Reversing language shift is a research field, it is an applied field, it is a cultural values field, it has new horizons, there are new things to do, things that are, if you like, differently focused than the ordinary school has been. And reversing language shift asks, 'What happens with the mother tongue before school, in school, out of school, and after school?'.

The proposed research questions incorporate the main ideas in this statement: what happens with HLs on a daily basis, in particular in connection with school, and how can plurilingual children have a positive experience in a school setting and advance their hidden linguistic resources?

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[13] Fishman was referring specifically to Indigenous and other languages minoritised by geographical, social and political impositions of outsider groups, and not specifically about HL maintenance following from emigration. However, his sentiment about the reimagining of the place of the mother tongue in relation to schooling applies equally to this post-immigration context.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The investigation of plurilingualism in regional Australia reported in this thesis is based on an interpretivist paradigm, using a case study methodological approach with mostly qualitative methods (Bhattacherjee, 2012; Creswell, 2018; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). It focused on three distinct units of enquiry: plurilingual children attending school in Years 3 to 12, their families, the parents in particular; and teachers of additional languages in the schools the children attend. The study illustrates how an interpretivist case study approach provides a range of data that are valuable for investigating plurilingualism, with the results adding to the as yet scant literature on young people's experiences of their plurilingual selves and school experiences, especially in regional Australia, as reviewed in Chapter 2. In alignment with the interpretive approach adopted in this study, it was essential to incorporate insights from various sources. Cummins, García and Fishman with their theoretical frameworks for contemplating language and plurilingualism in the educational context, offered valuable foundational information. However, it became apparent that their orientations alone were not suitable for the analysis of the data in this study, thus was complemented with more specific literature connected to the setting of the participants. The results from this study also have the potential to inform educational policy, curriculum development and classroom pedagogies both to support plurilingual children and to exploit their semiotic resources and language skills (Ollerhead, 2019) for the benefit of all learners and the classroom culture. In doing so, the study has the potential to demonstrate through insights from participants the ways in which Australian education practice may go some way towards meeting the promise of its diversity and inclusion goals, and contribute to a shift towards a plurilingual mindset, thus disrupting the currently prevalent monolingualism.

This chapter elaborates the research methodology adopted for this study. The research design follows a logical sequence that aligns the study's initial research questions with the data collected (presented in Section 2.5 above). Thus, the research design is the master plan of the study and deals with at least four main issues: the research questions, data collection, the relevance of the data and analysis of the results (Yin, 2018, p. 68).

3.2. Interpretivist paradigm

Qualitative researchers can be said to approach their studies with "a certain paradigm or worldview, a basic set of assumptions that guide their inquiries" (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2008, p. 34) that ultimately lead to its conclusions.

The current study is based on an interpretive research paradigm. The paradigm is shaped by human experiences and social contexts (ontology) and accommodates the subjective interpretations of the participants (epistemology). Interpretive research explores the social reality that is embedded within a social setting. This reality is interpreted through "a sense-making process rather than a hypothesis testing process" (Bhattacherjee, 2012, p. 103; Creswell, 2018). The interpretive research project reported here utilised mostly qualitative data, with the inclusion of quantitative data (parts of the online questionnaire) to add deeper insights into the phenomenon of interest that could not be achieved using qualitative data alone (Creswell, 2018). Therefore, this interpretive research project was designed to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. The use of both qualitative and quantitative data, or a mixed method approach, "may lead to unique insights and are highly prized in the scientific community" (Bhattacherjee, 2012, p. 104).

3.2.1. Interpretive nature of the study

As the study intended to focus on interpretations of participants' perspectives and was influenced by the student researcher's own plurilingual worldview, the ontological orientation of the study is towards an interpretivist paradigm. An interpretivist approach was adopted for this study in recognition of the multiple realities that make measurement difficult. We can only seek to understand real-world phenomena by studying them in detail within the context in which they occur. In this kind of enquiry undertaken in a real-life context, there are no clear boundaries between phenomenon and context (Yin, 2014), and the enquiry therefore is used to develop categories and theories (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 181). Interpretivist research begins with individual participants and illuminates their interpretations of the world around them (Cohen et al., 2018). As stated by Cohen and Crabtree (2006), the interpretivist research paradigm assumes that reality is constructed through socially developed meanings and experiences, and that multiple realities exist, that is, a relativist ontology. It also presumes that we cannot separate ourselves from what we know and there is a relationship between the researcher and participants through the study's topic. Thus, how we understand ourselves,

others and the world play a central role and is how we accumulate knowledge, reflecting a transactional epistemology (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006).

Because an interpretivist approach is based on appropriate dialogue between researcher and participant to create a meaningful reality (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006), this method relies on data gathering methods such as interviews. This approach therefore moves beyond a simple description to develop concepts or even theories that help to explain the case (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). Consequently, this case study moved beyond refining existing theories and strived to construct new concepts through deep and rich description (Merriam, 1998). An interpretive case study is well positioned to adopt qualitative methods and allows for "interpretation of meaning" (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 156) There are, however, challenges with applying an interpretivist framework. In constructing the study, it has been important to take into consideration the notion of 'saturation point' in data collection (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). In interpreting the results, researchers must take care not to overgeneralise the findings and their interpretation (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). In the present study, both of these aspects have been carefully considered.

The decision to embrace an interpretative paradigm utilising mainly qualitative case study methodological approaches and methods was heavily influenced by the purpose of this study. While the research questions are exploratory, the study is designed to interpret the findings in order to contribute to the development of key additional language learning concepts and theories (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013), and to influence education policy and curriculum development as discussed in chapter 7.

3.3. Case study research methodology

Case study is a methodology of inquiry that investigates a phenomenon in a real-life context. It is based on an in-depth investigation of an individual, group or event and is descriptive and exploratory.

3.3.1. Principles of case study design

A case study can comprise single or multiple cases and include qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. Multiple sources of data or evidence are woven into a case study (Cohen et al., 2018; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018).

The lack of a clear definition of what constitutes a case study, however, has been raised by Savin-Baden and Major (2013), who draw attention to the imprecision of the terminology used in relation to case studies as well as disagreements among scholars about the nature of case studies. This imprecise terminology is of significant concern because of the difficulty this raises when determining the case to be studied. For example, researcher perspectives influence how the study is conducted. One such perspective is identified by Yin (2018), who defines case studies by how the case is defined and bounded. In classical terms, a case can be a focus on an individual person, but it can also focus on an entity, such as small groups, communities, schools or social movements. By bounding a case, limitations are set, and it is possible to distinguish who is in and who is out of this bounded group, the size of the group and the time boundaries. Bounding a case helps to delineate the scope of the data collection. In the present study, the boundaries were set around linguistic intermarriage parents and their plurilingual children in regional Australia and Languages teachers of plurilingual children.

A second perspective shared by many scholars describes the case study as a distinctive approach to research. They suggest that case study research is a unique form of qualitative research, and they compare it with other qualitative research methods like biography, ethnography and grounded theory (Creswell, 2018).

A third perspective identifies case studies as the final product of a qualitative study. The importance of bounding a case and selecting sound methods is put at risk, however, when the focus is only on either reporting or narrating (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013), so combining these perspectives leads to a more holistic, in-depth and bounded case. This suggests that case studies can stand as a methodology but need to be implemented by applying multiple forms of qualitative and sometimes quantitative methods.

Yin (2018) takes the terminology a step further and brings to attention the relations between the mode of inquiry, the method of inquiry and the unit of inquiry, wherein case study research is the mode, the case study is the method and the case is the unit of inquiry (Yin, 2018). This trilogy shows the relationships between mode, method and unit (group) and contributes to rendering the terminology of case studies more precisely.

Flexibility of data collection methods is also one of many benefits of case study research (Yin, 2018, p. 89). Data collection can be quantitative, qualitative or a mixture of both. Qualitative evidence seems to be the preference of many researchers using a case study approach; however,

as the evidence can be from multiple sources, there is the option to collect quantitative data as well.

3.3.2. The advantages of a case study approach

Case study research has gained an established place in educational research in recent years due to its many strengths. One of the advantages of case study design is that it can be used in many situations to gain in-depth perspectives and record personal experiences. For this reason, it is a common research method in education because it can be used to understand complex social phenomena and the experiences of individuals (Merriam, 1998; Savin-Baden & Major, 2013; Stake, 1995; Yazan, 2015; Yin, 2014). Moreover, a range of different techniques can be used to collect data for case studies (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013; Wellington, 2001), including interviews, observations and the investigation of documents, techniques that can be applied in almost any discipline.

Despite case study research sometimes being difficult to organise, another advantage this approach is that its data are "strong in reality" and "down-to-earth" (Adelman et al., 1980, p. 59). Because of this strength in reality, case studies manage to be "in harmony with the reader's own experience" and "provide a 'natural' basis for generalisation" (Adelman et al., 1980, p. 59).

3.3.3. Case study as a means of investigating plurilingual experience

Case studies "begin in a world of action and contribute to it" (Adelman et al., 1980, p. 60) and in the case of the study reported in this thesis, insights can be directly interpreted and addressed by parents, teaching staff and children alike, and, therefore, will also have the potential to provide a sense of what is possible in real life (Adelman et al., 1980). Historical research on plurilingualism tended to test either plurilinguals' metalinguistic awareness and or their advantage in language learning, for example Peal and Lambert (1962) or Bialystok (2012). At the same time educators like Cummins (1981a) and Baker (1988) have advocated for bilingual education. The experiences of the participants in the present study will contribute to our understanding of plurilingual experience by exposing practical ways for making plurilingualism work, at home and in a school setting.

3.3.4. Limitations of the case study approach

Case study research, however, also has its limitations. One main concern with case study research design is generalisability. Statistical methods are typically used in scientific and experimental research to demonstrate how a large sample of the population is represented and the findings are then generalised. Generalisability is usually not an aim of case study research; the focus instead tends to be on ways findings can be transferred into, and influence, new but comparable contexts.

3.3.5. Enhancing transferability of case study findings

Transferability refers to the transfer of information from a specific case study to new contexts based on commonalities between the case study setting and the lives of those in comparable settings. Thus, the findings of the case study reported in this thesis will ideally have the potential to be transferred to other regional settings to propose ways multilingual families in those settings might share and maintain HLs (Jensen, 2008; Nowell et al., 2017).

So that readers can make connections, find commonalities and/or transfer the findings of the present case study to other comparable settings, one aim of the study has been, in fact, to develop a ‘thick description’ of the context, based on the following interpretation of the term:

> It becomes thick description if it offers direct connection to cultural theory and scientific knowledge” and “provides abundant, interconnected details, and possibly cultural complexity (Stake, 2010, p. 49).

A further aim of the study has been to make its findings transferable by providing ample details of the case and its parts embedded in the different units of enquiry. The present study has been designed to help “in assisting interpretation of other similar cases” (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 293). Similarly, Yin (2018) also argues that case studies should strive towards “analytical generalisation” rather than “statistical generalisation”. Case study research has the capacity to expand and generalise theories. The present case study was, therefore, conducted in a way that made it possible for the data to be interpreted against previous theories and scholarship that not only support the framework for this project but also expand and generalise these theories.

In summary, case study research design is more than simply conducting research on a single individual or situation. A case study approach has the potential to deal with both simple and

complex situations, and it enables researchers to answer questions like "how" and "why". The selection of this approach to research design took into consideration how the phenomenon of plurilingualism is influenced by the context within which it is situated, and it allowed the researcher an opportunity to gain significant insight into the case. It also enabled the researcher to gather data from a variety of sources and to merge the data to illuminate the case (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The main aim of case study research design in this project has been to collect data from multilingual families and their plurilingual children in regional Australia to identify the ways plurilingual children apply their linguistic resources, and furthermore, to investigate the role of teachers of Languages in a regional school setting to extend research by the scholars discussed in Chapter 2, and, potentially, positively impact communities in the regions and beyond.

3.4. Data collection methods

The research design selected for this study can be described as an interpretivist case study that used primarily qualitative data collection methods. Data were collected using in-depth semi-structured interviews (qualitative) and online questionnaires (qualitative and quantitative) with plurilingual children, their parents and language teachers in the New England Region. The case study design allowed for a clear focus on the participants and their experiences within a manageable scale that suited the timeframe available (Creswell, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). This interpretive case study produced in-depth findings based on small numbers of participants and allowed for interpretation of these findings in ways that are discussed in the literature and later in the thesis in relation to their applicability to larger populations (Merriam, 1998; Savin-Baden & Major, 2013).

A questionnaire was chosen as a data collection technique because it has a written format that can be distributed to people so they can provide both facts and opinions. The questionnaire contained a set of questions, instructions and spaces for answers, including Likert-style, multiple choice and open-ended questions (Cohen et al., 2018, pp. 471-505). Most questions were framed to obtain straightforward information from the participants, with some requiring individual answers that could be written into text boxes. Questionnaires were mainly used for gathering factual information in a quick and straightforward way. The information gathered via the questionnaire also had the potential to help paint a picture of plurilingualism in the New England Region before more detail was gathered through in-depth interviews. The answers

were also used to identify aspects of language maintenance, learning and teaching behaviour that might have transferable insights to the bigger picture of the research domain.

Semi-structured interviews and online questionnaires were used for this study. The questionnaire was used to collect information from around 10 to 15 parents, children and teachers in the network of the participants to provide a contextual base for the case study. Interviews provided data that make participants' "perspectives known and their viewpoints heard [giving] them a voice" (Wellington, 2001, p. 72).

To develop a deeper understanding of the study topic, the participants also had the opportunity to share their experiences during in-depth interviews. Through these intensive individual interviews, experiences and perspectives on plurilingualism in the New England Region were explored in much more detail than was possible through questionnaires alone. As the aim of the study was to explore the experiences of plurilingual children in regional schools generally and in the additional language classroom in particular, there was no intention to gather data on grammar, punctuation and fluency of the participants and so these elements were not part of this study. Instead, the focus of the study was on demonstrating how children and teachers alike approach the reality of plurilingual children having more than one language available for communication.

3.4.1. Practical considerations of case study research

The decision to conduct case study research by collecting primarily qualitative data was decided early in the progress of the study. Yin (2014) suggests that a case study design should be considered when the focus of the study is to answer "how" and "why" questions. As detailed above, the focus of the study reported here was on demonstrating *how* children and teachers approach the reality of plurilingual children having more than one language available for communication.

Yin (2014) also suggests that a case study design should be considered when the behaviour of participants involved cannot be manipulated, and the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clear. Thus, the advantage of a case study was the way in which questions can be asked about a contemporary issue over which the researcher has little to no control (Yin, 2018), as was the case in this study. The practical nature of the study topic also influenced the choice of case study design because of its practical suitability for the researcher and the study,

the accessibility of research participants and data and the applicability to the children, parents and teachers who participated in the study.

3.4.1.1. Practical suitability

One very important practical advantage of case study research was that it can be undertaken by a single researcher (Cohen et al., 2018), which was a significant and appealing condition for the present study. The advantage of a single researcher was the flexibility it provided for organising the whole project, including the autonomy possible when arranging interviews. Further practical strengths lay in the nature of the data collection process, as the process of answering a questionnaire and potentially partaking in a semi structured interview was easily understood by the cohort of potential participants and did not need much explanation.

3.4.1.2. Accessibility of case study participants during COVID-19

The original plan was to conduct the study in schools. Schools and their Languages teachers were to be initially contacted in order to collect data. Through the Languages teachers, the student researcher would then have been connected to plurilingual children and their parents. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was necessary to reconsider the initial plan in order to comply with social distancing and other restrictions that were in place during the pandemic. Approaching schools directly and in person became impossible.

The strategy then became one that was focused on online interactions. Parents and teachers were approached simultaneously via a social media platform (Facebook). This proved to be an invaluable way of approaching a wide range of potential participants in a short time with little effort. The tool of 'sharing' on the social online platform may possibly have reached more suitable participants than would have been possible in the initial plan, and the question of which schools to select and approach also became irrelevant. An additional requirement during the pandemic was that the interviews also needed to be undertaken via an online platform, which meant that coordination of travel times and days, the organisation of rooms for interviews and the collection of hard copies of consent/assent forms were no longer required. Thus, the revised strategy not only benefited the overall study, but also re-affirmed the importance of the study as participants were still keen to record their experiences about learning and maintaining HLs even in a time of social upheaval.

While inviting participants to take part in the study via a social online platform may appear to be impersonal, online accessibility has the potential to encourage participants to fill in the questionnaire more readily, while the advantage of online interviews (Zoom, Skype, FaceTime) was that the whole process was less time consuming and more flexible for all parties involved. As the pandemic had the advantage of making participants 'online-ready' before the data collection started, the inhibition to do interviews via an online tool had become almost non-existent among participants. In general, the online data collection strategy reinforced the practical benefits of the case study research approach for children, parents and teachers alike, as the case study data collection methods were presented "in a more publicly accessible form" (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 292). Therefore, because the participants could potentially see the benefit of the study more easily, they were more likely to engage voluntarily in the project.

3.4.1.3. Consideration of the abilities of children and young people

The research questions were planned around investigating the experiences of primary and secondary school children. In many respects, these children and young people are still developing their linguistic knowledge in all the languages they use. For example, the vocabulary of primary school children in particular is not fully established in either their HL or in the additional languages. This also applies to their reading and writing skills.

Again, a case study research approach proved to be the most practical choice. The questionnaires proved challenging, and in some cases even frustrating, for some younger participants, particularly as some of the questions related to reading and writing skills in different languages; for example, the questionnaire asked the child how easy s/he finds reading or writing in their languages. The collection of data through interviews compensated for these challenges as children were able to respond more freely in their own words.

3.5. Phase 1: Design and preparation

The design of the present study was developed after months of reading and weighing up the options of different methods for conducting the research in a comprehensive and detailed manner. The first subsection below explains why an embedded single-case design was chosen, while the second subsection describes the context of the embedded units.

3.5.1. Embedded single-case design

The methodological design for this case study was an embedded single-case design (Cohen et al., 2018; Yin, 2018). This embedded single-case design incorporated three units of enquiry: parent group, child group and language teacher group. This embedded single-case design relied on mixed methods research to analyse the different units (Yin, 2018). In this study, all the embedded units were analysed using the same research methods, questionnaires and interviews, which in themselves are mixed research methods.

The embedded single-case design incorporated three groups: the parent group, the child group and the languages teacher group.

Parent group: The socioeconomic profile of the parents was mixed and the cultural background diverse. The families live either in one of the towns in the region, on small lifestyle blocks outside town or on rural properties.

Child group: As stated above, the children come from mixed socioeconomic families and diverse cultural backgrounds. They attend government, Catholic and independent schools.

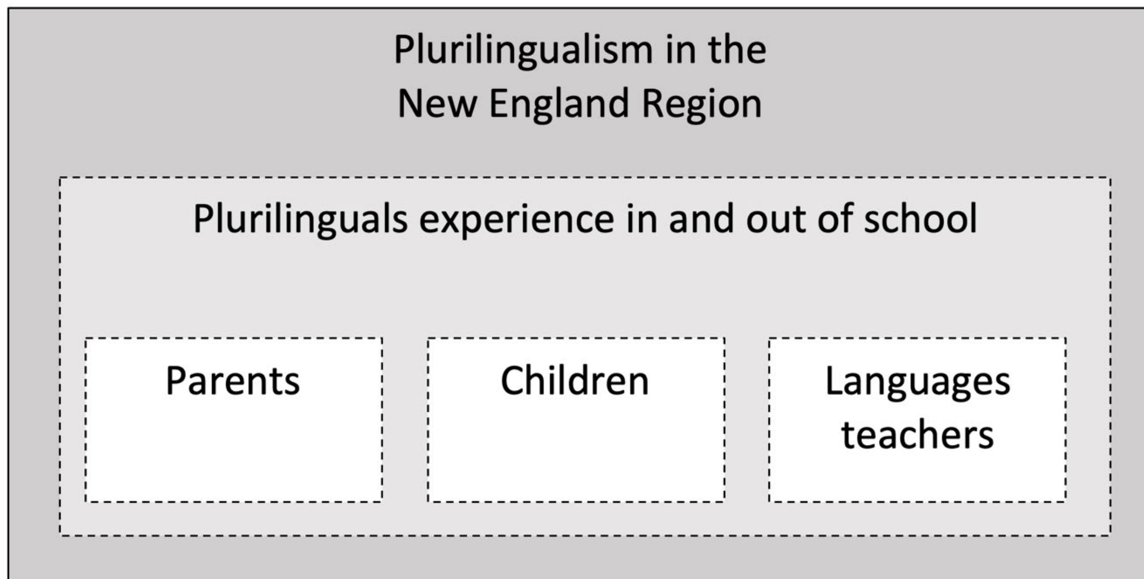
Language teacher group: The language teachers have a variety of cultural backgrounds and teach in government, Catholic and independent schools.

The present case study focused on the experiences of plurilingual children in a school setting and their daily use of languages. The bounded entity of the case defined plurilingual children's experiences in and out of school in connection with their own experience and the relationship with their parents and their Languages teachers and schools. This approach links to Fishman's (1996) question of what happens with children's use of HLs before school, in school, out of school and after school.

Notably, an important feature of the design was that the participant groups (units of analysis) were not isolated, but rather were embedded. The dotted lines (Figure 3.4) show that the boundary between the embedded units and the focus on plurilingual children's experiences in and out of school (case) and plurilingualism in the New England Region (context) remains permeable throughout the study. Parents, children and Languages teachers all interact frequently with each other in a variety of ways. Parents and children deal with HL experiences regularly, and while children and teachers may have fewer opportunities for exchange of experiences, possibilities still exist for this type of exchange, as well as for contact between

parents and teachers. This is in line with the argument of Yin (Yin, 2018) that "the boundary line between the phenomenon and its context are blurred" (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 375; Yin, 2018).

Figure 3-1 Case study design



In addition, the case study design was influenced by the wider community, the teachers' and children's schools and the curriculum. Therefore, even though the case study was a bounded entity, the embedded units connected to and were influenced by the wider context, which is shown by the dotted lines in Figure 3.4. The main reason for choosing an embedded single-case design was to explore the relationship between units in order to find commonalities and discrepancies.

3.5.2. Description of context

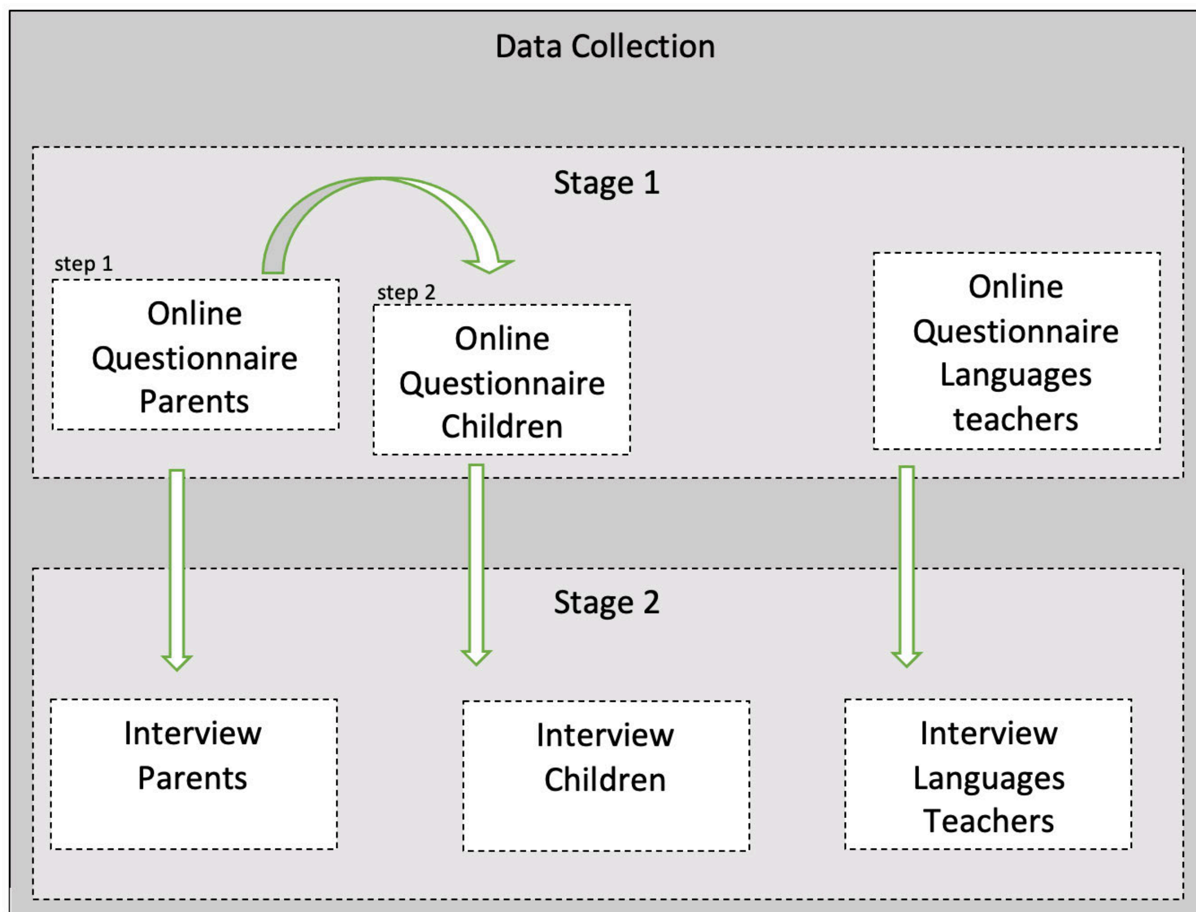
Understanding the context of the present study is important for interpreting the findings. In this case, it is the context of plurilingual children, their families and language teachers in the New England Region experience. The New England Region is an inland region in the north of New South Wales. As an indicator of the socioeconomic profile of the area, it is worth noting that the region has a long history of livestock production, including some of Australia's best fine merino wool and beef cattle (Regional Development Australia, 2023). A second major industry is education, with one of the towns home to a number of educational institutions, including a university and well-established government, Catholic and independent schools (https://asl.acara.edu.au). The university is one of the oldest universities in Australia and one of the city's main employers. Despite the long history of the grazing industry in the region, the

New England Region, and the larger town in particular have a rich cultural diversity and demographics. International students at the educational institutions and recently arrived refugees largely contribute to this diversity. According to the latest census (ABS, 2021), 75.1% of the largest town's population were born in Australia and 79.7% speak only English at home. The 2016 census results were slightly higher (78.3% of the population were born in Australia and 83.3% spoke only English at home) (ABS, 2016), an indication that in the meantime the population has become marginally more language diverse.

3.6. Phase 2: Data collection

Data collection was conducted in two stages as shown in figure 3.5 below. The questionnaire phase was designed to be performed in two steps. The completion of questionnaires by parents was the first step. The participation of children in completing a questionnaire was heavily dependent on the parents' approval and compliance. The second stage of the data collection was in-depth interviews.

Figure 3-2 Stages of data collection



3.6.1. Forms of data

Multiple sources of data provided the basis for rich, thick description and made it possible to "seek to describe the whole of the case as well as the relationships of the parts of the case" (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 154). Multiple perspectives and data sets also produced different views of reality. The multiple perspectives provided the student researcher with greater assurance of arriving at a set of findings that would address the research questions and allow for interpretation and potential application to other settings.

The main forms of data collected were online questionnaires (quantitative and qualitative data) completed by parents, children and Languages teachers, and in-depth interviews (qualitative data), which were audio-recorded and transcribed.

In summary, the forms of data collection chosen were online questionnaires and in-depth interviews. These two forms served the purpose of answering the three key research questions effectively and in detail. While additional data collection forms were desirable, it was considered that they would not benefit the project by adding more depth, and they were not considered essential for answering the research questions.

3.6.2. Stage 1: Questionnaire

The first stage of the data collection phase was monitoring the smooth running of posts on the social media platform Facebook and answering questions from potential participants. The student researcher created four online questionnaires: one each for parents, children 7–11 years old, children 12+ years old and Languages teachers (see Appendix B). The questionnaires for parents and teachers were posted with the title 'Plurilingualism in the New England Region' on a variety of community Facebook pages and were linked, which made them easily accessible. The information sheets for parents and teachers were included in the post and there was a direct link to the Qualtrics survey page to participate in the questionnaire. The questionnaire links remained valid for several weeks until saturation was met (see Section 3.6.4).

If the parents were happy for their children to fill in the questionnaire as well, they were able to leave their contact details at the end of the online questionnaire. The student researcher then contacted them and sent a password-protected link to the relevant children's questionnaire (according to their child's age). If the parents were prepared for them and their children to participate in an in-depth interview, they were able to agree to this at the end of the questionnaire

and leave their contact details. Teachers were also able to leave their contact details at the end of the questionnaire to then participate in an interview.

3.6.3. Stage 2: Interviews

The second stage of the data collection comprised in-depth semi-structured qualitative interviews. The qualitative interview was designed as means of understanding "the world from the subjects' points of view, to unfold the meaning of peoples' experiences, to uncover their lived world" (Kvale, 1996, p. 1). Conducting interviews is, therefore, a particularly efficient technique for collecting data when the research design involves an analysis of people's experiences, motivations and opinions. This is the exact aim of the present study, because "if you want to know how people understand their world and their life, why not talk with them?" (Kvale, 1996, p. 1).

The interviews were conducted with all participants identified below: linguistic intermarriage parents, plurilingual children and language teachers. The interviews were held over a period of several weeks, and as the originally planned face-to-face in-person interviews had to be abandoned due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they were conducted using the online tools of Zoom, Skype or FaceTime. The result was a less time-consuming process for conducting the interviews; however, there was some loss of the valuable experience of meeting plurilingual children, parents and teachers in person. The interviews were audio-recorded if the participant agreed and transcribed by the student researcher. The application Kaltura Capture, which is recommended by the University of New England, was used for the audio recording, and the interviews were transcribed using NVivo software, which is also supported by UNE. Transcription of the interviews demonstrated how much valuable information emerges from in-depth interviews. NVivo was also used to analyse the raw data.

3.6.4. Data saturation

Data saturation refers to the point in the research process where no new information is discovered from the data analysis, and this moment signals to researchers that data collection may cease. Saturation means that a researcher can be reasonably assured that further data collection would yield similar results and would only serve to confirm emerging themes and conclusions (Nowell et al., 2017). When researchers can claim that they have collected enough data to achieve their research purpose, they should report how, when and to what degree they

achieved data saturation. The ethics application for this study stated that five to ten participants from each group is enough to answer the research questions.

3.7. Phase 2: Data analysis

Data analysis has been characterised as one of the most complex phases of qualitative research; the researcher needs to be clear about what they are doing and why. The process followed here is explained over the following sections (3.7.1 - 3.7.4). It is also necessary to include a clear description of the analysis methods (Nowell et al., 2017, p. 1). Thematic analysis was chosen for this present study as it provides "a highly flexible approach" (Nowell et al., 2017, p. 2) that could be adapted to meet the needs of this study. This is likewise explained in the following sections.

3.7.1. Trustworthiness of data

The ultimate aim of every study is to be trustworthy and to be acknowledged by other researchers and readers. Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 43) refined the concept of trustworthiness by proposing the trustworthiness criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility is established by making sure that results represent participants' views and realities. Transferability is possible if the findings of this study can be transferred to other settings and contexts. Dependability and confirmability relate to the structure of the research process. These criteria contrast with the quantitative assessment criteria of validity and reliability, and help to reassure the reader that the findings of this study are "worth paying attention to" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290). Trustworthiness is a way for researchers to persuade themselves and readers that their research findings are worthy of attention (Nowell et al., 2017). In this study, the collected data provided a rich source of information for responding to the aims of the thesis. It was fundamental to filter this rich data and to present those aspects that best address the research questions.

3.7.2. Analysis of audio recordings and transcripts

Over nine hours of audio recordings were collected during the 16 interviews with parents, children and teachers. This is in line with the interviews lasting around 30-40 minutes, as advised to the participants prior to the interviews. Two interviews were not recorded as participants did not feel comfortable doing so; instead, notes were taken, and summaries of the interviews were recorded in writing. Both interviews lasted for approximately 30 minutes. Just

over six hours were recorded with parents but only around 45 minutes were recorded with the child participants. Two children were included in the parent interviews as they were part of these interviews.

All the interviews were listened to in full several times by the student researcher and transcribed in full. Some of the initial interviews were transcribed by the student researcher, but most were transcribed by a professional transcription company (transcriptionpuppy.com) due to the time-consuming nature of transcribing audio recordings. As most of the interviews consisted of one or two speakers only, it was relatively straightforward to transcribe them due to their clear turn-taking in the dialogue. Interviews with three participants were slightly more challenging as the turn-taking conventions were not always complied with and the speakers would talk over each other. Some of these interviews were listened to repeatedly. All interviews transcribed by the transcription company were reviewed and amended by the student researcher to ensure comprehensible and meaningful texts.

Reading the interview transcripts repeatedly helped to determine the major themes that were worth exploring in more depth, as described in the steps of the analysis above. Rereading the interview data thoroughly, highlighting key ideas and coding these into themes as explained above provided the student researcher with a good overview of the content of the interview data. Content analysis was therefore applied to all interview transcripts in order to discuss the themes and use the comments to illustrate and reinforce findings.

3.7.3. Six steps of analysis

The analytical approach used in this study was adapted from Nowell et al. (2017), who propose six data analysis steps:

1. Familiarise yourself with your data.
2. Generate initial codes.
3. Search for themes.
4. Review themes.
5. Define and name themes.
6. Produce the report.

These steps were adopted for the present study and proved to be a valuable process for structuring the data following collection. Steps one to five are explained in more detail below.

Familiarisation

The data in this study came from two sources: online questionnaires and in-depth interviews. As a sole researcher, becoming familiar with the interview data happened effortlessly. Firstly, conducting the interviews and then engaging closely with the transcription process enabled the student researcher to develop a strong knowledge of the content. Reading and re-reading the transcripts and the questionnaire answers and making notes about first impressions gave the student researcher an overall picture of the content. Also, including field notes like reflexive journals provided significant support for the familiarisation process, a process encouraged by Crabtree and Miller (1999). Observations during interviews, reflections during transcribing, and reading through answers from the questionnaire created a significant amount of reflection on the whole process. These documented thoughts marked the beginning of data analysis (Tuckett, 2005).

Generating initial codes

The production of initial codes, nodes or indices was a process that required the student researcher to revisit the data. Labelling relevant words, phrases or even whole sections allowed the student researcher to simplify the data (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 203). These labels included concepts, differences, opinions, processes and more. Working through the entire data set systematically and giving "equal attention to each data item" was completed as recommended by Nowell (2017, p.6). Also, using a systemic approach allowed for analysing statements and categorising them into themes. The development of a code manual prior to generating codes supported the initial data management as well as the organisation of similar texts to help with interpretation (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Saldaña, 2016). This also provided "a clear trail of evidence for the credibility of the study" (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006, p. 84). In addition, the use of the NVivo software program supported the sorting and organisation of the data and enabled the student researcher to work efficiently.

Searching for themes

After the initial coding and collating, a list of different codes across the data was developed into themes. A theme "captures something important in relation to the overall research question" (Nowell et al., 2017, p. 8). With the code manual, the search for themes was deductive as there was a pre-existing coding frame that provided a more detailed analysis. Some of the many codes created in the beginning did not support some themes and were dismissed.

Reviewing themes

The reviewing phase began when a set of themes was created. The student researcher reviewed the coded data that were extracted for each theme and evaluated if they displayed a coherent pattern. It also was determined whether the themes accurately reflected the meanings in the data, and this step resulted in some changes of initial coding and themes (Saldaña, 2016). Some themes may not have had enough data or the data were not diverse enough to support the theme, while others merged into each other or separated into more detailed themes (Nowell et al., 2017). At the end of this phase, the data were reduced to a manageable set of important themes that summarised the text of the interviews and the answers of the questionnaires. The different themes gave the student researcher an overview of the topics and how they fit together.

Defining and naming themes

An important part of defining the themes was the consideration of each theme in relation to the research questions. The permeable nature of the units in the present study produced intersecting data, which meant that sections of data were included in multiple themes and overlapped between themes. Apart from the importance of defining themes, it was critical that theme names were expressive and to "give the reader a sense of what the theme is about" (Nowell et al., 2017, p. 10).

3.7.4. Themes in the analysis

In the context of the analysis, the themes refer to recurring patterns and ideas that emerged from the data of the online questionnaires and the in-depth interviews. Understanding the benefits and challenges, family language policies and ideologies, individuals' language repertoire and languages in education provide a comprehensive view of the complex dynamics involved in maintaining a language at home and within a community.

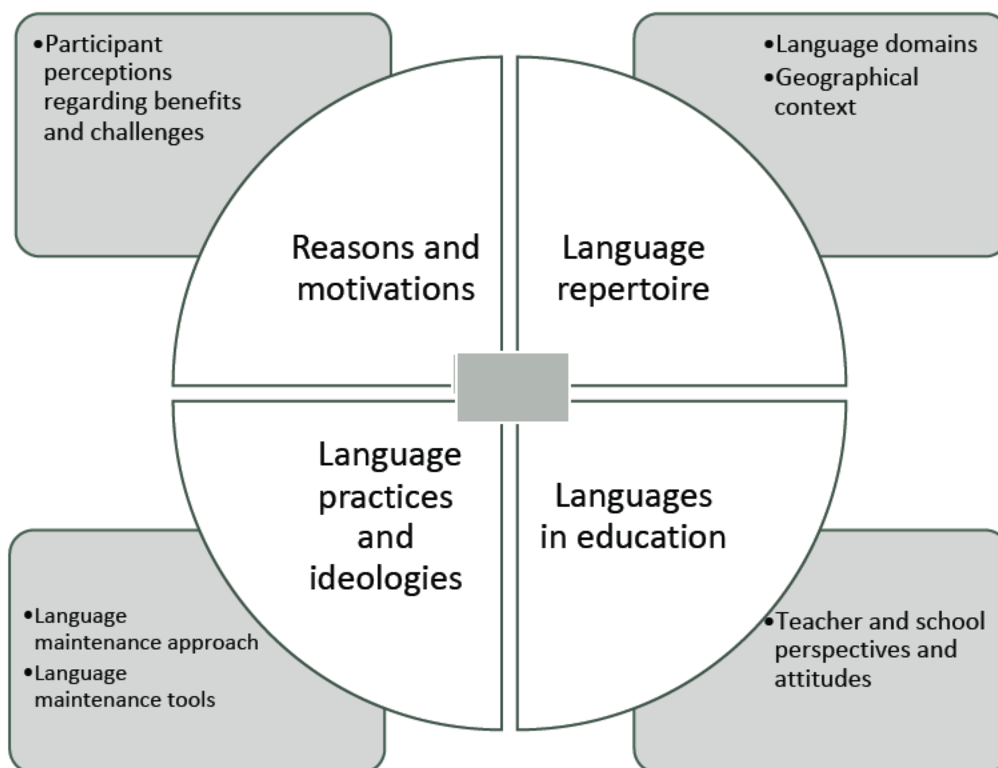
Parents' language maintenance approaches, their ideologies and beliefs, thus, the different actions and decisions in maintaining languages, help to categorise parents into varied groups. The characteristics that emerged from the data of the online questionnaires and the in-depth interviews defined the categories of 'committed', 'deeply committed' and 'wavering' parents, discussed in Section 4.3: 'Parents and their language maintenance practice and ideologies'. Motivation for language maintenance is influenced by a combination of perceived benefits and challenges. The recurring factors that emerged from the data collected through the online

questionnaires and the in-depth interviews defined the reasons for motivation as discussed in Section 4.4: 'Parents' reasons for HL language maintenance'.

Understanding children's language practices in maintaining a HL requires considering dynamic and interconnected patterns and ideas that emerged from the data collected through the online questionnaires and the in-depth interviews. Children are less categorisable when it comes to reasons and ideologies. As a result, their language practices may not fit neatly into predefined categories based on reasons and ideologies, but rather on different perspectives, as discussed in Section 5.4., 5.5. and 5.6.

Teachers' perspectives and attitudes on HL maintenance in school, and in general, can vary based on several factors. In Section 6.3, 'Language teachers' perceptions, beliefs and practice', the defined themes are connected to patterns and ideas that emerged from the data collected through the online questionnaires and the in-depth interviews.

Figure 3-3 Defined themes



The themes that emerged, as shown in Figure 3.6, are represented by the sub-headings in Chapter 4 to 6 and will also be further discussed in the discussion chapter.

3.8. Participant overview

A total of 37 people completed the online questionnaire: 17 parents, 10 children and 10 teachers of languages. All child participants completed the survey in full. Only a few parent participants answered the first few questions in the online questionnaire, and three teachers were teaching outside the New England Region. These responses were disregarded as they did not add any relevant data to the study.

Over 50% of the online questionnaire participants agreed to share their experience in an in-depth interview. The interviews were conducted with 11 parents, seven children and six teachers. These comprised 13 family groups with a varied participants (one parent, both parents or parents and children) and an additional three language teachers. At least one adult family member completed the online questionnaire and agreed to participate in an in-depth interview. Parent participants from 10 families supplied background information during interviews. The interviews with families 1-10 were conducted with one or both parents present, either the HL parent or native English-speaking parent. Families 11–13 contributed further information as the HL parent participant is also teaching an additional language. Thus, teachers often also offered commentary about their own family situation. The decision to include the teachers' family backgrounds in the analysis emerged from the valuable comments during the teacher interviews regarding their family life. These data added relevant insights into plurilingualism from a different perspective.

Table 3.1 displays the language ecologies of the families who took part in an in-depth interview. It shows the languages spoken by each parent, the language(s) parents use with each other, and the language(s) parents use when speaking with their child(ren). Table 3.1 also indicates the family language planning or family language practices (FLP) adopted by the families in this study.

Table 3-1 Family language ecology

Names (pseudonym) if relevant Parents	children	Mother (M) Languages	Other languages	Father (F) Languages	Other languages	Family language practice	Parents to each other	Parents to children
Family 1 Caroline, Magne	Ole (m)	SAE[1]	Danish, Nepalese	Danish	SAE, Nepalese	OPOL[2]	SAE	M: SAE F: Danish
Family 2 Chiara, Mat	Evita(f) Carolina (f)	Italian, Spanish	Catalan, SAE	SAE		OPOL	SAE	M: Spanish, Italian F: SAE
Family 3 Cameron	1 girl 1 boy	Japanese	SAE	SAE	Japanese	MLAH[5]	Japanese	M: Japanese F: SAE, Japanese
Family 4 Howin, Alex	2 girls 2 boys	Taiwanese, Mandarin	Japanese, SAE	SAE	Japanese	OPOL	SAE, Japanese	M: Mandarin, Taiwanese F: SAE
Family 5 Miyako	Itachi (m) Machika (f)	Japanese	SAE	SAE		SAE/sequential plurilingualism	SAE	M: SAE, Japanese F: SAE
Family 6 Tsukasa	Chiaki (f) Sakura (f)	Japanese	SAE	SAE		OPOL	SAE	M: Japanese F: SAE
Family 7 Lo Shen, Michael	Holly (f) 2 boys	Taiwanese, Mandarin	SAE, *German**	SAE	Mandarin	Plurilingual[4]	SAE, Mandarin	M: Mandarin, Taiwanese F: SAE, Mandarin
Family 8 Felix	Julia (f) Marc (m) Fiona (f)	SAE	*Swiss German**	SAE, Swiss German	German	OPOL-mixed[3]	SAE	M: SAE F: Swiss German
Family 9 Idna, Peter	Aafie (f) Izzy (f)	Flemish/Dutch	SAE, Spanish	SAE		OPOL (T&P)	SAE	M: Dutch F: SAE
Family 10 Jade, Jacque	Evelyne (f)	SAE	*French, Japanese**	French	SAE	OPOL	SAE	M: SAE F: French
Family 11 Maria	2 boys 2 girls	Spanish	French, SAE	SAE, French	Spanish	OPOL-Plurilingual	SAE, PL	M: Spanish, French F: SAE, French
Family 12 Selma	1 girl 1 boy	Swedish, Finnish	SAE, German, *French**	SAE	German	SAE	SAE	M: SAE F: SAE
Family 13 Françoise	Charlotte (f)	French	SAE, *German**	SAE		SAE	SAE	M: SAE, little French F: SAE

* Parent has only a basic proficiency in the language as indicated by participant

1. SAE = Standard Australian English
2. OPOL = one parent one language, meaning that one parent uses SAE and the other parent uses an HL.
3. OPOL – mixed = A mostly OPOL approach but English or the HL is used in family situations and the HL parent mostly uses the HL but sometimes uses English with the children or vice versa.
4. Plurilingual strategy =The parents speak different languages in addition to English. They speak their HLs with the children as well as English in the home.
5. MLAH = minority language at home. Both parents use the HL

Table 3.2 presents the language profiles of the additional language teachers who took part in an in-depth interview. It shows the languages they speak, the languages they teach and any other languages they may use.

Table 3-2 Teacher language profiles

Name (pseudonym)	Native languages	Teaching languages	Other languages
Teacher 1/Fam 11 Maria	Spanish	French, Spanish	SAE, Portuguese, Italian, Māori, Latin, Mandarin
Teacher 2/Fam 12 Selma	Swedish, Finnish	German	SAE, French
Teacher 3/Fam 13 Françoise	French	French	SAE, German
Teacher 4 Monique	SAE	French	Spanish
Teacher 5 Martina	Swiss German, German	German	SAE, French, Spanish, Punjabi, Japanese
Teacher 6 Anna	SAE	German	Italian

3.8.1. Survey data

The survey data were collected over a period of nine months, between August 2020 and April 2021, using four separate online questionnaires created with Qualtrics™ (see Appendix B). One questionnaire was for children aged between 7 and 11 years old and the other one, which was slightly different in its wording, was for children 12 years and older. There was an online questionnaire for parents as well as one for teachers of additional languages. As mentioned above, 17 parents, 10 children and 10 teachers completed the survey.

The questionnaires were undertaken in a considered manner by most participants and the completion rate was between 83% and 93%. The structure of the Qualtrics™ online questionnaire was structured so that each participant's pathway through the questionnaire was tailored to their responses. For example, if the child answered 'no' to the question of having an additional language at school, the question of what language is learnt at school would not appear. Some open questions that requested a written answer were left blank. These accounted for most of the unanswered questions. It seems that non-written responses were more favourable with participants. The rate of between 2%–4% of unanswered questions is a minimal amount and was in many cases complemented by the in-depth interviews.

3.8.2. Interview data

The in-depth interviews were also executed over a period of nine months. The first interview was conducted in August 2020 and the last interview was conducted in April 2021. As with the survey questionnaires, the interview questions were adapted to suit each embedded unit, with a set of questions designed for children aged 7 to 11 and another set for children 12 years and older, as well as a set of questions for parents and a set for language teachers (see Appendix C). All interview questions were intentionally kept similar in order to achieve a coherent answer base. Nevertheless, the questions for the children and parents focused on their connection with the HL, the experience of being plurilingual and the relationship with school. The questions for teachers asked about their teaching practices and school policies concerning languages teaching, as well as and non-target languages in the school environment, in addition to the similar questions about HL use, either for the teachers themselves or their students.

There were two groups of siblings. On two occasions it was more practical for parents to do the interviews together with their child, which affected how the interviews were conducted. On the one hand, it was complicated asking the appropriate questions of each participant. The completion of a satisfactory interview with the participants in the two-sibling group was uncomplicated as they are close in age. The interviews with parents and children, on the other hand were more complex and challenging, and required a sensitive approach that included all participants in an equal manner and made them feel that their contributions were valued and important. The two parent-child interviews were each very different in their execution. One was very orderly; questions could be addressed to either the child or the parents. The other interview was more intense for all involved with the child participant very willing to disclose information; however, the means of data collection via online video chat was not an ideal approach for this child. He became restless when his mother answered questions and he had to wait for his turn to answer. A face-to-face interview may have been a more positive experience for the child. It was noticeable throughout all group interviews that while participants encouraged each other to reveal more information through cross-questioning, the group interview also potentially inhibited more personal opinions from some participants.

3.9. Vignettes

This study presents some of its findings in form of vignettes. According to Skilling and Stylanides (2020, p. 3), vignettes are “descriptive episodes of specific situations that simulate

real events” and probe for “understandings to gain insights to participants’ beliefs, emotions, judgements, attitudes and values about a particular phenomenon that lies at the heart of the research”. Further, vignettes enable reflection on participants’ responses, and reveal similarities and differences between these responses (Stecher et al., 2006). The focus on similarities and differences helps to allocate participants’ answers to the developed themes. Bloom-Christen and Grunow (2022, p. 10) describe vignettes as “sandwiched between analysis and methods”.

The ‘sandwiched’ form has been adopted for this study to showcase particular participants. Placing the vignettes in the analysis sections of this document discloses participants’ answers in a “evocative, theatrical” way, while the content still derives “at least partially from empirical research” (Bloom-Christen & Grunow, 2022, p. 11). Thus, vignettes “complement scientific prose” and support the interpretative stance of thick description (see 3.9.) (Bloom-Christen & Grunow, 2022, p. 15).

3.10. Summary of Methodology

The research methodology adopted for this study has been examined in this chapter. The first section of the chapter introduced the interpretivist paradigm and the case study research methodology. The reasons for the adoption of the case study methodology and the consequent choice of a mainly qualitative approach were outlined. The second section presented the conceptual framework with a brief overview of relevant theories, the study aims and their connection to the research questions. The data collection methods were also explained alongside some practical considerations. The following section provided a description of the data collection tools, the relevant staging of the questionnaires; the conduct of the interviews was then described. This was followed by a section that described the methods used in the data analysis. The final section was an overview of the participants, parents, children, and teachers, and included two tables of all family and teacher participants.

Chapter 4. Parents' Heritage Language Maintenance Perspectives and Practices

Investigating how and why parents share and maintain their heritage language (HL) in regional Australia involved distributing questionnaires and conducting interviews with parents in multilingual families in the New England region of NSW. The reported experience of parents of plurilingual children in regional Australia provides insights into the experiences of multilingual families in regional New South Wales. The role of the parents is the focus of Research Question 1 (see Section 2.5.2.):

> How and why do parents share and maintain heritage languages in regional Australia?

While raising bilingual children is a popular topic in the literature, this study was motivated by an interest in what this might look like in real life in a regional area like the New England. The literature review (Chapter 2) revealed that there is a gap between families' language practices and motivations in Australia, the ideal goals of plurilingualism as stated in the language education curriculum and teachers' perspectives on HL support. Thus, exploring how parents manage a multilingual family and how children experience their plurilingualism in a monolingual-oriented society is the core of this study. It tries to analyse ideas amongst parents in this technological and globalised world and explore possible approaches for maintaining HLs amongst linguistic intermarriage parents. The uncertainty and vagueness of some participants in the study reported in this thesis about how to manage language transmission effectively echoes the limited knowledge within multilingual families about how to maintain an HL alongside the dominant language of English (Ellis et al., 2018, 2019). It also indicates that even though Australia is a multilingual country, in regional areas monolingualism is prominent (Clyne, 2005). As the data below reveals, the invisibility of languages other than English spoken in a family setting, as indicated by the data collected, is remarkable and needed further investigation to reveal this phenomenon more fully.

In order to answer Research Question 1, this chapter first presents and analyses data from the online questionnaire before illustrating parents' maintenance preferences and the approaches they implement to develop and maintain the HL. Further, the chapter provides insights into parents' reasons for wishing to maintain the HL and the approaches they use for developing and

maintaining a HL, and then it discusses parents' perspective of the significance of plurilingualism in a school setting.

4.1. Parents' responses to online questionnaire

Participation was voluntary; therefore, all parents who filled in the questionnaire and took part in an interview demonstrated an interest in sharing their plurilingual experiences. The different approaches and feelings they reported about their own or their partner's HL and how language maintenance with their children is managed are compelling and illustrate the importance of the study.

There were 17 parent participants who completed the online questionnaire, six males and 11 females. Some questions were left unanswered. Four parents are native English speakers and 13 are non-native English speakers. In total, this participant group uses 16 different languages in addition to English.

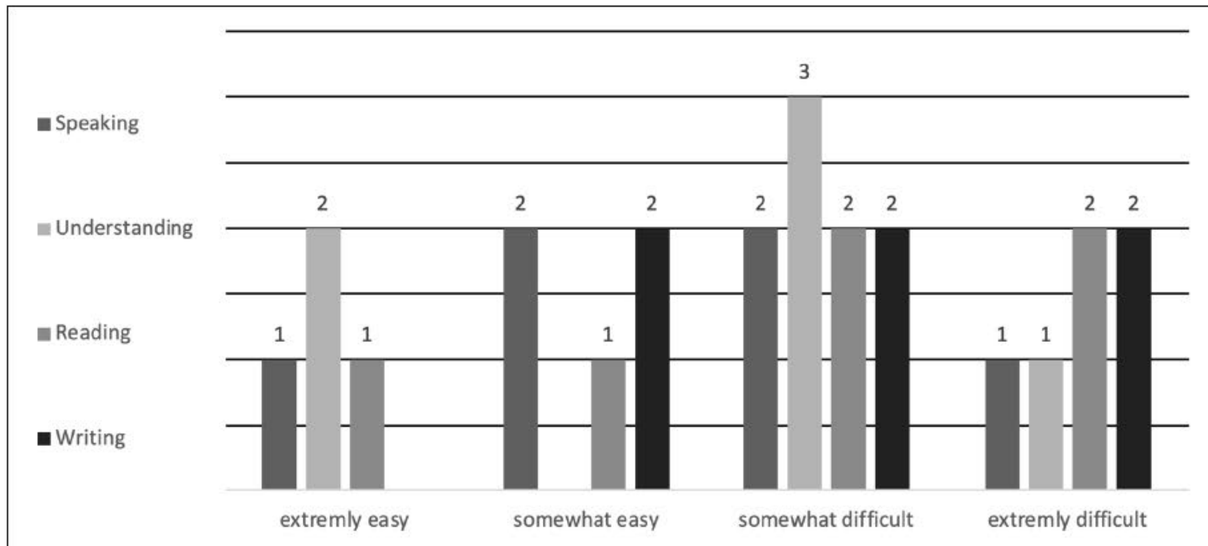
4.1.1. Parent participant perception of their literacy skills

The four language skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing in the different languages varied slightly among the parent participants and are described in more detail below. Language skills are an important factor in family language practices as the level of parents' language skills influences the standard of language transmitted. Therefore, these skills directly contribute to answering the research question of how parents transmit HLs and were addressed by parents during the interviews.

4.1.1.1. English dominant speaking parents

There were two female and two male participants in the English dominant speaker's category (Jade, Caroline, Cameron and Alex). The languages they use in addition to English are French, Danish, Japanese and Taiwanese; one participant also knows a little Nepalese. All English dominant speaking participants find it easy to speak, listen, read, and write in English. The situation regarding the family HLs is displayed in figure 4.1 below.

Figure 4-1 Heritage language communication skills of English dominant speaking parents

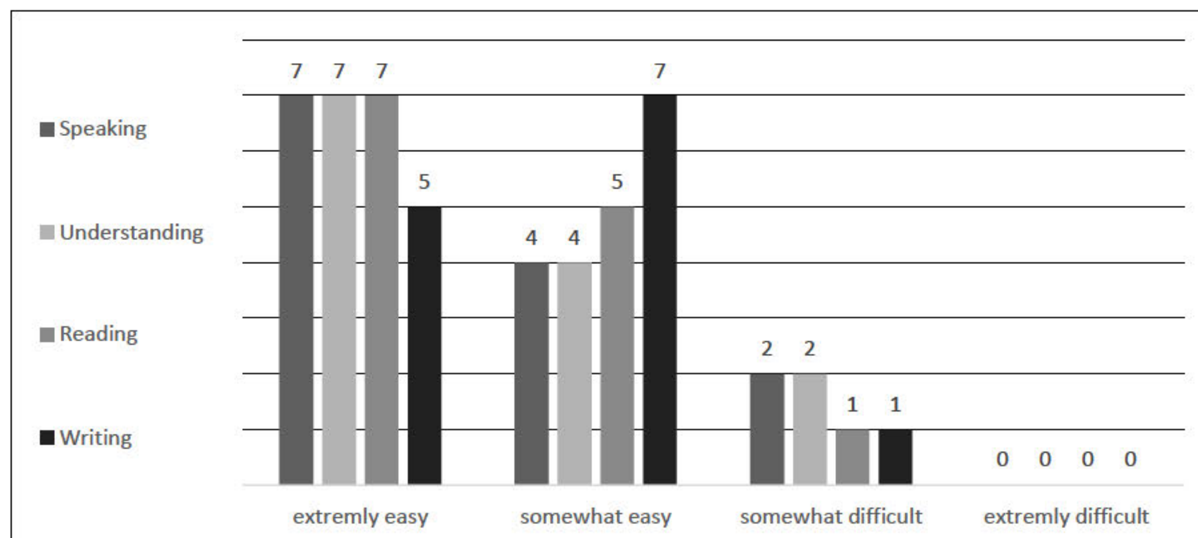


As figure 4.1 shows all the English dominant speaking parent participants find it very easy to communicate in English, which is an expected outcome as this is their first language. However, there is great diversity in their ability to use their spouse's HL or a foreign language they have acquired during their lifetime. Figure 4.1 shows that only one person indicated to find it extremely easy to read and speak in another language than English and two who find understanding extremely easy. Thus, Figure 4.1 illustrates that HL communication skills lean more towards being difficult.

4.1.1.2. Heritage language speaking parents

There were 13 parent participants in the HL category, nine females and four males. The languages they use are Danish, Taiwanese, French, Japanese, Spanish, Italian, Flemish, Dutch, Finnish, Swedish, Swiss German, Sinhalese, Afrikaans, and Nepalese. However, it is interesting to know these parents' perceptions of their English communication skills, which are displayed in figure 4.2 below.

Figure 4-2 English language communication skills of HL speaking parents



As figure 4.2 shows all the HL speaking parent participants find it moderately easy to communicate in English, which is an expected outcome as they are surrounded by English-speaking partners and children who attend English-speaking schools. Furthermore, none of the HL parents expressed extreme difficulties in using their HLs, which contrasts with the English-speaking parents who struggle to communicate in the HLs of their partners in quite a few cases. The overall confidence of the HL users in their language ability in English and in the HL displays readiness and acceptance of plurilingualism in themselves but presents a potential complication for successfully maintaining HLs in their families.

The participating parents expressed being interested in maintaining their HL (14 parents saying 'definitely yes' and one 'probably yes') and provide their children with a "bicultural identity - that is, a global or world citizen identity on the one hand, and a sense of local or national identity … on the other" (Lamb, 2004; Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009, p. 4) However, the children's responses, presented in Chapter 5, echo previous studies that while the second generation tends to use the HL with parents and maybe siblings, they use English in all other domains, and they may experience a shift to the sole use of English during their lifetime (Ortman, 2008; Schüpbach, 2009).

4.1.2. Parents' English and heritage language use and domains

The online questionnaire asked parents about their language use. One question asked about how often they use English and their elected HLs. All parent participants use English every day. The following question then asked how often they use English and who they use the HLs with.

4.1.2.1. Use of English

In most cases, English is used on a daily basis with children, partners, extended family and friends, and community members. One HL parent states that she never uses English with her children, while others do not use English with extended family members such as parents or siblings. The absence of English in the communication with children and relatives by HL users can, in some circumstances, strengthen the maintenance of the HL (De Houwer, 2007) and indicates that this is a central pillar of parents' strategy for HL maintenance. This approach is used by a couple of participating HL parents (Idna, Tsukasa).

4.1.2.2. Use of heritage languages

All HL parent participants stated that they use their native HL with their children every day, while the native English-speaking parent participants stated that they never use the HL with their children. Around half of the parents reported using the HL between each other daily or at least a few times a week, while the other half reported using the HL from a few times a year to never between each other.

An important distinction needs to be made between HL and other languages that have been learned by either English dominant speakers or non-English dominant speaking parent participants. The online questionnaire asked the participants about their use of other languages they know. This other language could be another HL; for example, in the situation of Chiara, who uses Spanish with her children but grew up also speaking Italian and Catalan, or the situation of Howin, who uses Mandarin with her children but grew up speaking Taiwanese as well as Mandarin. The other language could also be a language that participants have learnt later in life, such as in the situation of Idna, who has strong connections to Spanish, or Monique, who teaches French. Comparing these two language groups, HL parents do not prioritise the use and maintenance of languages they know other than the HL and do not use them as regularly. However, one pivotal reason for parents to sharing and maintaining HLs is to equip

their children with a language in addition to English and to make them realise how important learning and using more than one language can be (see Section 4.4 in this Chapter).

4.1.2.3. Heritage language use outside the home and language status

More than half the parents indicate, in the questionnaire, that they or their HL partner feel extremely comfortable using the HL outside the home, for example when they go shopping with their children. Five of the 17 parents said that they feel somewhat comfortable and three feel somewhat uncomfortable. The high percentages in this current study of feeling comfortable using the HL outside of the home by both parents and children shows that parents are supporting children in ways that limit potential unease when using HLs, a finding that echoes with other research findings. One example are the findings, based on a survey conducted by Diskin-Holdaway and Escudero with Western Sydney University in 2021 (Diskin-Holdaway & Escudero, 2021), where parents are feeling good when raising their children in their own language and on the other hand feeling less secure if pressured to use their non-native language.

The reasons for this result are potentially varied but one reason might be the support and encouragement parents feel from the community. All parents noted that the status of the HL in the community is either very accepted or at least just accepted. Nobody feels that HLs are not accepted. One of the larger towns in which this participant cohort resides is multicultural and diverse, and parents believe people with different backgrounds are accepted. In comments in the questionnaire parents wrote that 'HL users are a blessing to the community', and 'they are admired for speaking more than one language'. One parent even mentioned the perception that French sounding beautiful opens people's minds.

The knowledge that other people speak the language in the community may help the parents feel more comfortable. Around half the parents indicated that there are more than 10 other HL speakers in the community, and everybody knows of at least one other person in the community with the same HL background, although they may not be acquainted with them.

4.1.2.4. Heritage languages in school

Nearly 70% of the parents believe that their children feel extremely or somewhat comfortable using their HL in a school environment, and only one parent feels that their child feels extremely uncomfortable. Parents also have a positive perspective regarding schools' support of

plurilingual children. Around 70% feel that the schools are interested in supporting plurilingual children but 15% feel that schools are not interested. Parents, in comparison to child participants, were less precise about practical implementations of HL support. Some parents mentioned that primary schools seem supportive of plurilingual children in the form of being open to multiculturism and offering some relevant inputs like Harmony Day[14].

According to four parents, the HL is included in either the additional language class or generally in the classroom always, usually, or sometimes; four parents replied that the HL is never included, and another four do not know. The limited inclusions of HLs in schools may explain why parents are keen to support the use of HLs in schools as they feel it is important for HLs to be recognised. Parents listed the following ideas for including HLs in the classroom:

- vocabulary extension by making labels for different objects
- greetings in different languages
- watching some simple TV shows
- singing songs
- exchange with a class from overseas
- looking into language families and how languages influence other languages
- inviting local HL speaking volunteers
- cultural/heritage studies/projects.

One parent also questioned how inclusion of any HL could be handled successfully if (Languages) teachers do not have any formal knowledge of the HL.

4.1.3. Parents' view on language change (shift and loss)

Language change in multilingual families is a process that may, for example, include a gradual shift towards the dominant language of the society and eventual loss of the HL. The parents in the present study were found to be concerned about HL maintenance. Of the parents, 2 parents believe that language change is extremely unlikely, 4 parents feel that it is somewhat unlikely and somewhat likely that language change is happening, and another 2 parents believe that language change is extremely likely. This steady distribution accounts for all HL languages

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[14] Australia's Harmony Day is held on 21st March and celebrates the country's cultural diversity.

listed by parents. Nine parents' answers indicated they would be greatly disappointed if their children lost the knowledge of their HL. Three parents feel indifferent towards language shift and loss of their children's HL knowledge, even though all parents are very interested in continuing their HL use at home and in the community.

Overall, the parents' online questionnaire responses paint a picture of HL use in regional Australia. In their responses parents disclosed their perception of literacy skills in English and HLs and how and where they use their languages. Further, they revealed information about the status of HLs in the community and the use and acknowledgement of HLs in their children's schools. Lastly, parents revealed some concern about HL shift and loss. These answers were further enriched in the in-depth interview data as displayed in the next section.

4.2. Parent participant interview results

The interview data were collected after the parent participants completed the online questionnaire. There were 11 parent participants who took part in an in-depth interview. One interview was conducted by interviewing both parents at the same time, and one parent did not agree to being recorded. Three of the parents are also language teachers (as mentioned in Section 3.8.). Their responses are considered in this section when relevant but will otherwise be discussed in the chapter on language teachers. The following analysis is organised around the main themes outlined in the Methods Chapter, Section 3.7.4. and illustrated in Figure 3.6. The analysis addresses language repertoire, reasons and motivations for HL maintenance, or rather the benefits and challenges, the parents' practices and ideologies and HLs in educational settings. In the context of the analysis, the themes refer to recurring patterns and ideas that emerged from the data of the online questionnaires and the in-depth interviews. Understanding the benefits and challenges, family language policies and ideologies, individuals' language repertoire and languages in education provide a comprehensive view of the complex dynamics involved in maintaining a language at home and within a community. Parents' language maintenance approaches, their ideologies and beliefs, thus, the different actions and decisions in maintaining languages, help to categorise parents into varied groups. The characteristics that emerged from responses to the online questionnaires and the in-depth interviews defined the categories discussed in Section 4.3. 'Parents and their language maintenance practice and ideologies'. Motivation for language maintenance is influenced by a combination of perceived benefits and challenges. The recurring factors that emerged from the responses to the online

questionnaires and the in-depth interviews defined the reasons for motivation as discussed in Section 4.4. 'Parents' reasons for heritage language maintenance'.

4.2.1. Parent's language repertoire

Building on the themes presented in Chapter 3 (see Section 3.7.4.), this section links directly to the theme of 'language repertoire'. The language background of each parent could be easily divided into two groups: the parent from a monolingual background and the parent from a multilingual background. The different backgrounds may influence the management of their child's plurilingualism. This is reflected in the vast diversity of results.

4.2.1.1. Parents from a monolingual background

Due to the participation requirement of linguistic intermarriage couples, nearly all families in the study have one parent who grew up in a monolingual society or community. According to the interview responses, all SAE (Standard Australian English) parent participants grew up monolingually; however, many parents with an HL background also grew up monolingually until learning a second language, for example English, at school. Even though Australia is a multilingual country, Australian-born parents expressed in the interview that they feel that they grew up monolingually, as they grew up in a regional area and had few to no contact with other cultures and languages. While most of them studied an additional language at school or later in life, some Australian parents are monolingual still, even though they are part of a multilingual family. Several parents with an HL background also grew up monolingually. As with the Australian monolinguals, they learnt another language at school, or in some cases their course of life took them abroad and required them to learn another language later in life. Plurilinguals' experiences of and perceptions about language use, therefore, depend on all these different backgrounds.

4.2.1.2. Parents from a multilingual society

Most families in this study made a conscious decision about how to raise their children and what family language practice (FLP) to apply. Four parent participants grew up in a multilingual society. One parent grew up in Spain with Italian parents and lived in an area where Catalan is used, two participants grew up in Taiwan and used Taiwanese at home but due to the political situation were immersed in Mandarin from a very young age, and one was raised in Finland but

was a member of the Swedish language minority. They found it difficult to decide how to pass on their languages to the children. However, they were all aware that it would be vastly different to how they grew up where acquiring several languages was considered to be a natural process.

4.3. Parents and their language maintenance practice and ideologies

This section explores how parents interact with their children, how they manage language maintenance, and what challenges they face as parents in multilingual families. This Section continues the exploration of the themes presented in Chapter 3 (see Section 3.7.4.) and links to the theme of 'language maintenance practices and ideologies'.

Considering all the different language backgrounds of each parent in the study, it is apparent that not one family has the same linguistic situation and therefore each family should be considered separately. The data collection revealed different decisions made by families regarding the maintenance of two or more languages in the family. However, despite the particularities that make each family unique, there are some similarities between families. Therefore, for the purpose of the analysis, the groups are described in very generalised terms. Each section is illustrated with vignettes (see Section 3.9.) that describe individual parents' backgrounds, beliefs, and intentions in more detail. The differing approaches are represented in the broad categories of *committed parent*, *deeply committed parent*, and *wavering parent*, in order to answer the question about how parents transmit HLs. These categories are based on differing degrees of:

- connection to homeland (grandparents, extended family)
- identification with the HL and its culture
- a belief in and knowledge of the benefits of being plurilingual
- effort to transmit the HL
- family language planning/practice
- local community of the same heritage
- personal experience (within oneself or/and within family members)

These criteria emerged from the responses to questionnaires and/or interview questions as points of differentiation between the parents and fit into the defined theme of family language

practice and ideologies (see Figure 3.6) and represent different clusters of language maintenance practises and ideologies.

All parents in the study were found to be supportive of their children's plurilingualism to some extent, and most care deeply about their HL. They probably would not have agreed to be part of this study otherwise. Ten of the 13 families reported that they make some effort to very strong efforts to maintain the HL. The efforts are defined by intensity and frequency of language maintenance activities, connection to the homeland, identification with the HL and its culture and the efforts into a family language planning/practice as reported by the participants. The reasons provided by the different participants for their approaches and decisions regarding HL maintenance are discussed in the following sections.

4.3.1. Committed parent

From the interview data, as illustrated in the vignettes in the boxed-text below, it was apparent that a committed parent shows one or more of the following characteristics:

- a strong connection to homeland (grandparents, extended family)
- a strong identification with the HL and its culture
- a belief in the benefits of being plurilingual
- some effort to transmit the HL.

The group of supportive parents comprised the largest number of parent participants. Six parent participants and their families indicated deep connections to the HL home country and largely fit this category regarding motivation and commitment to HL maintenance. In particular, this was evident in the frequency of contact with family using technology such as regular video chats with grandparents, extended family members and friends, as well as maximising opportunities to visit the home country and spend a reasonably long time there. Unfortunately, these visits have been suspended during the Covid-19 pandemic, which has caused the families some distress, especially those families who rely on regular linguistic input for their children through overseas stays.

The parents, both the HL speakers or the English dominant speakers, indicate a strong identification with the HL of themselves or of their partner. This was demonstrated through daily use of the HL language and through family involvement in activities and maintenance of

traditions, for example, regularly participating in cultural festivities in the community in which the HL also features.

This group of parents all outlined clear family language practices. Most intended to use a 'one person, one language '(OPOL) family language practice and one family uses the 'minority language at home' (MLAH) approach (see Section 2.3.1). However, daily circumstances sometimes interfere with that strict goal and therefore lead to a more flexible approach. For example, Cameron uses English with his child when talking about school, but uses Japanese as a family language otherwise, and Felix described how he finds it difficult to ensure his children use Swiss German as English is more convenient for them, so he sometimes 'surrenders'. Also, even though Idna indicated that she always uses Dutch with her children, she added that she sometimes uses English when other people are around, making a judgment about appropriate language for each domain of use. Idna's family circumstances automatically also led to a time and place (T&P) approach, she uses Flemish with the children at her house; the children use English with their father, when staying with him (see Section 2.3.1).

The parents in this group all indicated they believe that raising their children plurilingually has many benefits. The benefits they identified were being able to communicate with grandparents, learning additional languages more easily, for travel purposes, and to benefit their children's cognitive development and future job opportunities. Being more open-minded, as in understanding different perspectives gained through engagement with additional languages and cultures, was a further benefit parents saw in raising plurilingual children.

Although there is significant literature on HL maintenance in both academic and popular/social media formats, only Tsusaka mentioned that they have read some of this literature and intentionally applied some of the ideas. All other parents' efforts towards language maintenance are based more on personal discretion and rely heavily on parents' own initiatives. Most parents reported that they make an effort to read stories in the HL to their children, supply books in the HL, watch movies, as mentioned previously, organise regular opportunities to meet and talk with extended families and friends either overseas or in the local community.

The first vignette from this group of parents is family 3, with Australian-born Cameron and his Japanese wife. Both parents grew up in monolingual contexts initially. Cameron learnt Japanese very young as his speech pathologist recommended to his parents that he learn another language. This led to an interest in languages and, eventually, to having a plurilingual family.

Parent of family 3

Cameron

Cameron was born and raised in Australia and is now married to a partner of Japanese origin. Together they have two young children. They regularly visit Japan, and his older daughter has attended preschool there. At home, the family mainly uses Japanese, as Cameron believes this helps both him and his children to develop and maintain Japanese language skills. Since his daughter started school, she has started sharing her experiences from school in English. Cameron supports this approach as he knows that she can also use Japanese effortlessly and moves comfortably between the languages.

Cameron believes that raising his children bilingually gives them a more global perspective and enhances their overall life opportunities. He also is convinced that bilingualism has a positive effect on brain development, as his daughter is learning to read faster than other children and in general can grasp new information much quicker. Furthermore, he thinks that people who are bilingual are often better critical thinkers; for example, they are better at analysing information and finding solutions because the brain is tuned in to thinking on different levels. He also believes that they are better decision-makers and that they are more empathetic because they understand what it is like to go to a different country and to be able to be understood.

Using Japanese in regional Australia is not always easy as in the local community it is mainly Japanese women married to Australian men. Cameron feels privileged to be able to understand and speak Japanese in contrast to most other Australian husbands who do not speak Japanese (or another language) at all or have very limited Japanese. He feels, however, that the constant need to translate when they meet up with other Japanese-Australian families is mentally draining for the Japanese wives.

Maintaining Japanese language and cultural traditions is very important for Cameron and his family. They regularly meet with other Japanese-Australian families to celebrate Japanese cultural events, such as the Girls Day (Hinamatsuri) and they also subscribe to Japanese live stream television, watch Japanese movies and cartoons, listen to Japanese music, and have over 200 books in Japanese for readers of all ages. Reading fiction and non-fiction books helps both Cameron and his children boost language skills and cultural awareness. Before the Covid-19

pandemic they used to visit Japan regularly, sometimes for several months to immerse the children in Japanese language and culture.

Cameron reports that using Japanese outside the family setting in Australia is more challenging. Except for the local Japanese community gatherings, there are few opportunities to use Japanese.

The second vignette from this group of parents is family 1, with Australian-born Caroline and her Danish husband, Magne. This couple were each raised monolingually but went out to explore the world as young adults. On this journey, they have allocated longer and longer periods in each of their countries to satisfy their desire to be exposed to other languages and cultures intensively.

Parent of family 1

Caroline

Caroline grew up on a farm in the New England Region of New South Wales in Australia. Her husband, Magne, is Danish, and they have one child. For a few years they have been living and working in Nepal where she and her husband learnt some Nepali. During the wet season in Nepal, they always either went to Denmark or Australia for three months. This helped their son to be immersed in either Danish or English.

Caroline and Magne have adopted OPOL as their family language practice. Usually when her husband and son speak together in Danish, Caroline can understand the gist of the conversation and will add her comments in English, but sometimes they use English only as a family. Caroline's husband pretends not to understand English when conversing with his son. Even though the son knows this is not true, he is happy to speak Danish with his dad. Caroline tries very hard to maintain the little Danish she has but feels awkward using it in a family setting, mainly because her husband and son tease her about it. However, when they are in Denmark, Caroline is encouraged and supported by her Danish relatives and friends to use Danish. Caroline also understands some very basic conversations in Nepali due to their stays in Nepal.

Caroline enjoys knowing and learning different languages. She loves exploring other languages and the similarities of words but also the different ways of expressing things and the challenges of explaining words in another language. She feels that knowing different languages and

cultures provides more insight and shapes how you see the world. For Caroline and her husband, they say it is important to maintain Danish language and culture. They meet with one other Danish family in the area and attend Scandinavian cultural events. Caroline's son has just started to read in English, and his knowledge of Danish is also oral knowledge. Caroline feels that her son wants to excel in Danish and that the long stays in Denmark help him to maintain it. She also feels very fortunate that they have the opportunity to visit Denmark and spend time there. She believes that home visits are of real value for development and maintenance of a language.

While the story above described a longing for immersion in both the Danish and the Australian cultures, the following vignette is of a family who seeks to maintain their HL in a more isolated context.

Parent of family 10

Jacques

Growing up monolingually in France, Jacques was forced to learn English when he met his wife, Jade, many years ago. He has strong intentions to use French with his child, even though there are no strong connections to extended family members in France. Jacques feels that the language relationship with his daughter is very natural, because he has always spoken French with her. There are a few French speakers in the town where he lives, and his daughter even uses some French with friends at school. Jacques used to read stories in French, but his daughter has now started to read her own books in English. While he accepts this, he would like her to read books in French also. He would also like to teach her in French academically, but he feels it might be a bit too early. He understands that she has strong social pressures to speak English. Another reason he wants to maintain French with his daughter is because his English is not proficient, so he wants his daughter to use French with him.

Before moving to the region in which the family now lives, they used to live in the Blue Mountains, west of Sydney, and Jacques is amazed that even though there were so many more people around in the Blue Mountains, he uses much more French here in the New England Region. He teaches the local conversation class for Alliance Française and meets French-speaking friends almost daily. He encourages his daughter to use French with his friends, some of whom are parents of children in his daughter's class. Jacques insists that his daughter uses

French, even though he feels that currently she does not see the benefits. However, he knows that French can help her with other languages, even English, and will be an asset in the future.

The following two vignettes are about women who both grew up in a multilingual society and have been exposed to different languages all their lives. Plurilingualism therefore is normal for them, and they reported that they want their children to also experience the benefits of plurilingualism.

Parent of family 2

Chiara

Chiara was born in Italy. Her parents moved to Spain when she was young, and she grew up in Barcelona, which is a city with two official languages: Spanish and Catalan. Therefore, she grew up trilingual, using her languages in different domains. Since marrying an English speaker, Mat, and coming to Australia, she has added English as a fourth language. Generally, she uses Italian with her parents and sometimes with her siblings, Spanish with her friends and her children, Catalan when she is in Barcelona, and English with her husband, his family, and her friends in Australia.

After living in Spain for some years, about five years ago Chiara moved with her husband and their two young children to the New England Region of New South Wales in Australia. Together with her parents-in-law they run a cattle farm, which is an endeavour much different from their lives in Barcelona. Despite working on the cattle farm, Chiara restores antique furniture for her growing client base in Australia, maintaining a business that keeps her connected to European fine art.

Chiara believes it is natural to be able to speak several languages and she feels comfortable using Spanish, Italian, and Catalan. Even though she says she is an Italian at heart, Spanish is the language that she feels most comfortable with. The effortless ability to speak it was one of the reasons she chose to use Spanish with her children, but another reason is because Spanish is spoken in more countries all over the world. She is less comfortable using English because she says she lacks the richness of vocabulary and cannot express herself in the same way as in Spanish or Italian.

Chiara always uses Spanish with her children, even when they answer back in English. They watch movies in either Spanish or Italian, they have books in Spanish and Italian, they use Duolingo for these languages, and they have regular video chats with grandparents and other relatives in Spain. Chiara also believes that her children feel comfortable using Spanish outside the home and they even use it amongst each other when they are trying to avoid being understood. Situations like that make Chiara very happy as she sees that they are already taking advantage of being plurilingual.

Being plurilingual herself, Chiara knows about the benefits of knowing several languages. She says it opens so many doors when you are travelling, you understand different cultures, and she also believes that there are neurological benefits. Even though she very much relates to Spanish and Italian, she would welcome her children being able to learn any other language at school so they can learn about different cultures, food, and music.

Parent of family 9

Idna

Idna has two children and lives in town in the New England area. She has recently separated, and the children live one week with her and one week with their dad. This situation makes maintaining an HL slightly more difficult, as Idna's husband, Peter, of Australian background, speaks English to the children. He does, however, support the children's plurilingualism.

Idna has a background in different languages. She grew up in Belgium speaking Flemish, which Idna herself calls a softer version of Dutch. Idna was also exposed to French and German as they are official languages in Belgium. She uses Dutch with her children because there are more people speaking Dutch than Flemish in the New England Region and Dutch is more common than Flemish. Idna lived in France and Spain and has acquired both languages to a proficient communication level. If she hears people speaking those languages in the street, she loves to start a conversation with them.

Idna has lived away from Belgium half her life and her approach to languages and cultures has shifted. In her younger years, she would present herself as a Flemish speaker from Belgium, but now she is more relaxed about it and feels that it is more important that her children are exposed to Dutch as a more common language, so she chooses not to make the distinction between Dutch and Flemish.

Idna actively seeks out people to communicate with in Dutch, for her children and for herself. She tried to engage with an older lady in town to compensate for the lack of grandparents being around, but Covid-19 has so far restricted any closer contact. Idna still feels very Flemish and is very proud of her culture, and she would like her children to have that connection too and relate to her background. Apart from thinking that being plurilingual helps brain development, Idna says she very much relies on her pluricultural identity and the experience of being able to speak several languages. Idna used to go home every two years but lately she has been restricted due to other financial obligations. Her goal is to return to Belgium for a longer period again, and now she is saving up to achieve this goal. Meanwhile she and her children have started watching online Belgium TV to be exposed to Belgium languages and cultures, and they have also been celebrating traditions such as the coming of Sinterklaas (Santa Claus) on 6 December, as they would in Belgium. This celebration also offers the opportunity to do some literacy development as the children have to write a letter to Sinterklaas. Furthermore, they read books in Dutch and listen to online storytelling in Dutch and Dutch radio.

The last vignette of this section is about Felix and his family. This example is slightly different from the above as Felix grew up in Australia and became a plurilingual himself through schooling.

Parent of family 8

Felix

Felix was born in Switzerland and moved to regional New South Wales when he was nine years old. His parents' intention was to stay for a couple of years, but they stayed in Australia. Felix grew up in a household where only Swiss German was spoken; he had strong connections to Switzerland. Felix feels it is a privilege to be plurilingual and sees it as a point of difference with most Australians. It is something of which he is proud. He is much more proficient in English, but considers his mother tongue to be Swiss German, and he reports it takes him only a short while to return to self-talk and dreams in Swiss German when he is in Switzerland.

Felix's wife is of Australian English-speaking background and they have three children. They always intended to raise their children to be bilingual. Felix's work requires him to travel extensively and therefore his wife is the primary caregiver for the children. This has caused some challenges with raising the children to be bilingual. He feels that it is a constant battle to ensure they use Swiss German, as it is more convenient for them to speak English, but he

believes that as long as he speaks Swiss German, they will develop an ear for the language. Felix's parents still live close by and have regular contact with the children. They use the same strategy as when Felix was young, and only use Swiss German with the grandchildren. Felix feels that his parents expect him to pass on the language but likewise he expects them to do their part in engaging with the children to maintain the Swiss German. Felix's sister, who lives a few hours away, is applying the same strategy with her children, so there is another outlet to use the language for the family, as they do not otherwise intentionally seek out other Swiss people to use the language with.

A few years ago, Felix took advantage of an overseas work placement, and the family moved to Switzerland for 18 months. For the children to be immersed in Swiss culture and language, they deliberately enrolled the children at the local primary school, despite there being an expectation to enrol them at the international school. Felix and his wife achieved their intended purpose, and the children became fluent in Swiss German and German. Felix reports that the children have not improved their Swiss German since returning to Australia, but believes they at least now have a good base to maintain it, even though it is very hard work for Felix, his wife, and the grandparents.

Felix's oldest daughter has the opportunity to study German for her HSC and his son also just started German at high school. Felix believes that his children enjoy learning languages, and knowing Swiss German not only gives them a point of difference as a 'secret' language but also provides a cognitive advantage. He hopes that his children will use that advantage in their lives. Felix himself has taken advantage of being plurilingual and uses his knowledge to adapt to different cultures more easily. The current pandemic forced Felix to work from home, and he enjoyed being around his children more. He agrees that it may help with language maintenance.

The vignettes above show how and why parents transmit HLs. This group of committed parents have active connections to their homeland, grandparents, and extended family and some consciously make an effort to maintain cultural connections. Most parents in this group also feel that there are certain benefits for children being plurilingual and therefore parents commit to maintaining HLs with the help of having a clear FLP. The different reasons for maintenance are discussed in more detail in Section 4.4 below.

4.3.2. Deeply committed parent

The deeply committed parent shows some characteristics of the committed parent but with a higher level of commitment to ensuring maintenance of the HL with their children. Nonetheless, these parents face challenges that are not within their control or were not considered when they set off on the journey of raising plurilingual children. In addition to the supportive parent characteristics of strong connection to homeland, strong identification with HL and its culture, and a belief in plurilingual benefits, these parents also have a firm family language planning/practice and undertake intense efforts in HL transmission.

From the interview data, as illustrated in the vignettes below, it was apparent that a deeply committed parent shows one or more of the following characteristics:

- a strong connection to homeland (grandparents, extended family)
- a strong identification with the HL and its culture
- a belief in the benefits of being plurilingual
- intense efforts to transmit the HL
- firm family language planning/practice

Although the following stories portray parents with aspirations to maintain HL use within their family through targeted academic instruction, the approach and processes differ. What is evident is that the age of the children may be a factor in their capacity to realise plurilingualism, but it may also reflect parents' attitudes and perseverance. The first two participating parents in this section are both from Taiwan and have a similar cultural background, but they have different attitudes and approaches to HL maintenance.

Parent of family 4

Howin

Howin grew up in Taiwan (officially the Republic of China). Her first language is Taiwanese Hokkien, but she had to learn Chinese Mandarin from a very young age, as it is the language of business, government, and most education. She also learnt English and later Japanese. She met her Australian husband, Alex, in Japan, and they lived there until three years ago. Alex speaks English with the children, but his work requires him to travel often. The children's English was not very proficient when they moved to Australia. The children now attend schools in two

country towns in the New England Region. Howin speaks Mandarin with her children, and they have Mandarin classes on Saturday via distance learning. Howin feels that speaking more than one language is like "having an extra credit card in your wallet". Her oldest son has also started to appreciate the benefits of multiple languages because he has had occasions where he could use Japanese or Mandarin here in Australia. The two younger children did not express any feelings about the benefit of speaking more than one language. Rather, they indicate it is more of a hassle. Howin feels that wherever she is, the dominant language of that place is the language she identifies with most. She said it is like having a tray in front of her and she enjoys what is on that tray right now. However, she does miss communicating in her first language, as she would have done at home in her early childhood years. She has only found one woman in her town who speaks Taiwanese Hokkien.

Howin uses Chinese language books from Taiwan with her children. She reads to them on a regular basis and has organised distance learning in Mandarin for all three children. They do these lessons and practise once a week. It is important to her that the children keep up all the home languages, but she sometimes feels it confuses them to learn and use Taiwanese Hokkien, Mandarin, and Japanese. Her language maintenance approach is to keep the languages separate whenever she can, and that is why she focuses on speaking Mandarin with the children. When they visit Taiwanese relatives in Taiwan, they can communicate on a very basic level in the local language as well as in Mandarin, but she helps to translate when needed.

Howin says she feels lonely because there are no other Taiwanese Hokkien speakers near her, and she especially misses the shopping and cultural opportunities she had in Tokyo. On the other hand, she really embraces living in the country right now and her two younger children enjoy this lifestyle too. The older two miss Japan, and so does her husband Alex, who enjoyed the busy workplace and his business travels.

Parent of family 7

Lo Shen

Lo Shen has a rich plurilingual background. She grew up in Taiwan speaking Taiwanese Hokkien and was immersed in Chinese Mandarin from a very young age. Lo Shen and her Australian husband, Michael, make extensive efforts to maintain Chinese Mandarin with their children and each other. Lo Shen's husband made a conscious decision to learn Mandarin as an

adult to be able to speak with his children. Lo Shen feels that Michael's Mandarin is not up to a good standard and she speaks English with him while he uses Mandarin with the children.

Lo Shen has realised that the older her children become, the more they are exposed to the dominant community language, English, and hence their ability to communicate in Mandarin is reduced. Therefore, she enrolled the children in an online Mandarin class. Lo Shen feels this helps them, even though the children often answer her back in English. Her youngest is still very much using Mandarin, but he recently started school and Lo Shen fears that like the older ones, he will start using English more because of his English environment.

Before having children, Lo Shen had many Australian friends. She now intentionally seeks out Chinese-speaking friends to retain cultural connections with her Chinese heritage and to provide opportunities for her children to use the language. They have regular gatherings with other Chinese speakers, cook and eat together, and celebrate special events such as Chinese New Year. She also feels very comfortable being with other speakers of Chinese. Most of her friends also have Australian husbands, so these women have much in common and can relate to each other because of their similar backgrounds. Lo Shen sometimes feels awkward being with Australians as she thinks her English language skills are not up to their level, and she finds she misses some important information. While Lo Shen feels blessed to have the Chinese-speaking community, she notes that her children use English with the other children when they meet at gatherings with the Chinese community. This is distressing for her, and she feels she should provide more Chinese resources and spend more time with her children reading stories in Chinese Mandarin.

Even though Lo Shen sometimes struggles to 'make' her children use Chinese, she says the regular visits to Taiwan and the ability to enrol the children in school while they are there provides an ideal opportunity to ensure that the aim of maintaining a basic communication level in Chinese is reached.

Lo Shen says her husband is the driving force behind their decision to raise their children plurilingually, but she also believes it is very important for her children to maintain their languages and to take advantage of being plurilingual. It offers opportunities to have different friends, and they can remain connected to the extended family in Taiwan. Lo Shen believes that knowing the dominant language(s) of a place helps you to blend into that other culture.

However, she feels the pressure of the responsibility to enact the plurilingual approach, and she sometimes finds it difficult, especially when her children answer in English.

Tsukasa (Family 6) differs from the other deeply committed parents in these vignettes as she specifically prepared herself to raise her children plurilingually. She has read intensively about raising children plurilingually, and together with her husband decided to apply the OPOL family language practice. The reason for this pre-determined decision possibly arose from Tsukasa's teaching and lecturing background, indicating a more academic approach to HL maintenance.

Parent of family 6

Tsukasa

Tsukasa grew up in Japan and studied English in high school. She met her Australian husband in her late twenties and moved to Australia with him. Before they had their first child, Tsukasa read about raising children bilingually, and particularly about families with parents of different language and cultural backgrounds and about the one parent one language approach. This is why they made the decision to opt for OPOL. Tsukasa feels much more comfortable using Japanese than English. She says she feels nervous using English.

Tsukasa feels that her children are more open-minded due to their plurilingualism, and that they can relate to people who have limited English language skills. Tsukasa's two children are very much aware of their Japanese and Australian (English) backgrounds, and report that they sometimes experience this as a burden. Despite these feelings, the children's connections to Japan and Japanese language and culture are very strong. They have a weekly chat with their Japanese grandparents, and Tsukasa's sister used to visit Australia regularly, bringing books and other teaching materials. Due to the close-knit Japanese community in the town in which they live, Tsukasa and her children can use their HL regularly. She feels this is a great encouragement for her children as they can see the benefits of an HL. Tsukasa and the other Japanese mothers in town used to run an HL program for their children, and because of Tsukasa's lecturing background, she still teaches them Japanese.

Tsukasa and her husband requested that their older child study Japanese for the HSC via distance learning, as it is not offered at the local school. Tsukasa loves living in this country town, and she feels that even though her children are near native Japanese speakers there is no pressure for them to excel in Japanese and is happy to see where life takes them. She is not

worried that they could lose their Japanese as she has made sure they have a strong foundation and are using both Japanese and English readily.

The last parent (Family 11) of the deeply committed group of parents has very firm ideas around literacy development across languages and has shifted the emphasis on her desired outcomes for her children from oral skills and at home family communication to higher level writing skills and understanding.

Parent of family 11

Maria

Maria was born and raised in Venezuela, speaking Spanish. She is also a near native speaker of French and is very proficient in English. Her husband is of English-French background and speaks both languages. The family has lived in different countries all over the world, following the father's employment.

Maria's goal was to raise their children trilingually, and they all speak English, Spanish, and French well. Their plurilingual competence was achieved by engaging with different languages in different countries. When they lived in France, Maria spoke to them in Spanish, and when they lived in Spain, she spoke to them in French. Here in Australia, she speaks in French and she teaches Spanish literacy at home. The father speaks to the children in both French and English. It is normal for the family to start a conversation in one language and finish in another. And even the languages Maria uses with her four children vary, because each had a different experience of early language use depending on where they were living in those early childhood years and how each child responds to each language. Hence the meaning of and relationship to each of the family's languages is different for each child and impacts on the relationship between Maria and each of her children. For example, with one of her daughters, she uses mostly English because her daughter lives in a non-English-speaking country in Europe, while with her youngest son, who lives here in Australia with her, French is more commonly used.

Maria is herself also a passionate language teacher. She teaches French at one of the independent schools in town and teaches Spanish privately. Maria is a fierce advocate for plurilingualism. She feels that in her experience, and in Australia especially, plurilingualism is often seen as pejorative and something that only 'coloured people' have instead of something that adds value to your CV and your life. She feels that plurilingualism is very powerful and

something to be promoted and valued. As a teacher of languages, mostly of monolingual Australian children, she experiences students coming to the classroom full of apprehension and prejudice. Despite her advocacy for plurilingualism, and perhaps because of school policy and parental pressure, in her additional language classroom she teaches only that language, and according to the curriculum requirement. She does, however, offer support to students if they speak the target language, providing them with material that is suitable for their learning stage and that can improve their literacy skills.

Overall, the vignettes of the deeply committed parent share characteristics with the previous group of committed parents and show how and why they maintain HLs with an even higher level of commitment. Apart from reasons and motivations (see Section 4.4) to maintain HLs amongst family members, these parents have a firm FLP and undertake intense efforts in HL maintenance through targeted academic instruction.

4.3.3. Wavering parent

Life often takes people on a journey that they did not anticipate, and parenting is no different. It may be the case that some parenting decisions are more complicated for immigrants. Nearly 30% of Australians were born overseas and more than half have a parent born overseas (ABS, 2021). Many immigrants have partners of a different language and cultural background, with many 'mixed marriages', especially between an Australian-English parent and someone from another language and cultural background. Having children with an English-speaking partner and living in a still steadfastly monolingually-oriented society poses challenges (Hajek & Slaughter, 2014). The views of some of the participating parents show that these challenges are related not only to them being 'foreign' but also to them being from another country with another language. While they have chosen to live in Australia, the society and even their own partners do not always appreciate their background.

Regarding HL maintenance and interaction with their children, immigrant parents experience the impact on their own and their children's lives in different ways. Speaking an HL in a dominant English-speaking country may produce what Harding-Esch described as "the secret garden" (2003, p. 81).

> Other people really do not seem to mind leaving their first language behind, and sometimes even enjoy having it as a sort of 'secret garden'

for themselves, in which case their commitment to bilingualism in their family will be much weaker.

Consequently, for parents with non-English HLs and cultures, there may be a reluctance or a less strong desire to actively maintain the HL with their children. Such an approach by parents may be described as a wavering approach, where the HL and culture takes a back seat to the local dominant language and culture. Parents in this category and adopting this approach may feature one or more of the following characteristics:

- little connection to homeland (grandparents, extended family)
- less overt identification with the HL and its culture
- limited local community of the same heritage
- insecurity with family language planning/practice choices
- viewing plurilingualism as an inconvenience
- no or little knowledge of the benefits of plurilingualism and/or acceptance of 'myths' about the detrimental impacts of an additional language on English development
- experience of personal conflicts (within oneself or/and within family members)
- making an active decision to embrace the language and culture of a new or their partner's country

The following vignette from this group of parents is family 5, Japanese-born Miyako and her Australian husband. They have one son and a daughter and adopted a sequential plurilingual approach.

Parent of family 5

Miyako

Miyako was born and grew up in Japan. She learnt English at school and really enjoyed this experience. Her Australian husband lived in Japan for two years and that is when they met. Miyako has been living in Australia for 20 years, but she still has daily contact with her friends in Japan and has video chats with her mother once a week.

When she had her first child, Miyako and her husband decided to use English with the children as they felt it would be too much for the child to grow up with two languages. Also, her husband

and his extended family only speak English, which reinforced the decision to use English only. Nonetheless, Miyako uses a few Japanese words and phrases in family life.

With her second child, Miyako began to use more Japanese because she had made Japanese friends in town, and it was more natural to use Japanese with this group of mothers and children. Her older child refused to use Japanese in this group, however, because he did not understand enough of the language to feel confident to communicate in it. He is, however, now learning Japanese at school, and this has boosted his confidence with Japanese.

Miyako seems relieved that at last she can use more Japanese with her children, and they have started communicating with their grandmother in Japan using Japanese. Miyako's current ambition is for her children to be fluent in both Japanese and English, but acknowledges it is difficult for the children to use Japanese because of the limited exposure to Japanese in the community and their everyday lives. Nevertheless, Miyako's family attend different gatherings organised by the local Japanese community like the New Year festival or Girls' Day celebrations and the children experience some aspects of Japanese culture this way.

Miyako now feels that knowing another language is beneficial. Growing up in Japan made her realise that knowing English opens many doors for Japanese people. Her husband's lack of Japanese language skills made her agree to a primarily English-only family language practice. During the interview it was apparent that Miyako is now relieved that her child is getting a boost in Japanese language skills through school, and she is finally able to use more Japanese with her children.

Parent of family 12

Selma

Selma was born and raised in Finland as part of the Swedish minority ethnic group. Selma speaks a Finnish dialect of Swedish, Finnish, German, English, and a little French. With her parents she still speaks Swedish but uses Finnish with her sister and all her friends as she grew up in a Finnish area with no Swedish community.

Selma met her Australian husband in Austria. They have been living in the New England Region for some years now and have both been teaching German. When they had their first child, Selma spoke Swedish to the child. She did this for around three years until the child's development

issues made her stop as she felt it just added an extra stressor on the child having another language. But it is painful for Selma to see that she lost that special connection with her child.

Having two children now, she thinks of taking up Finnish with the children. She feels she would need to approach learning Finnish more academically as the children have, in her view, grown past the age of acquiring a language 'naturally'. The Swedish dialect Selma grew up with is different from the Swedish spoken in Sweden, and, therefore, she would now choose Finnish as the children could then communicate with everyone in Finland and not just their grandparents.

Selma also remembers that as a child she did not understand anyone when they would go to Sweden as the dialect she grew up with was so different and she is Finnish and not Swedish. So, her view on using a language different from the dominant language hinders her from maintaining her HL for now.

Selma grapples with the dilemma of how to raise bilingual children successfully. Her husband supports her in her endeavour to maintain an HL with her children, because he also knows different languages (German and some Finnish). He has left the decision around using Swedish or Finnish with Selma, however, as it would be she who would need to provide this input for the children.

The two parents in this group are very different: Miyako grew up in a monolingual context, Selma experienced plurilingualism from a very young age. Furthermore, Miyako's husband has only little knowledge of Japanese, while Selma's husband is a plurilingual himself. Thus, their overall contexts are very different and still both mothers waver about raising their children with more than one language. There is a connection between the characteristics listed above in relation to Research Question 1. Both mothers have connection to their homeland but have made an active decision to embrace Australia as their new home and the reasons for HL maintenance are therefore negligible. While both have or had a FLP, family circumstances led to insecurity about their aim of raising children plurilingually, and hence this circumstance conflicts with maintaining HLs.

4.3.4. Other influencing factors

For most English-speaking partners in this study, they view their own support of plurilingualism in their family as essential if the HL is to be maintained with the children. For example, Jade comments:

> But even then, when they are discussing, and I don't know what is happening I do not resent that in any way because to me it is a fantastic thing to see them speak in French together. I am just so glad that Jacques persevered with her.

The role of English dominant speaking parents and their views and perceptions on HL maintenance are discussed explicitly by Torsh (2018a, 2020a, 2020b). She confirmed previous studies (Clyne, 1991; Winter & Pauwels, 2005) that showed male English-speaking parents often leave the "bilingual childrearing" to the HL speaking mother (Torsh, 2018a, p. 203). This current study echoes this pattern, with English-speaking father participants largely leaving the "bilingual childrearing" to the HL speaking mother participants. In contrast, all participating HL speaking fathers see the "bilingual childrearing" clearly as their duty (Jacques, Felix, Magne). One English-speaking father, however, clearly contradicts the trend (Cameron) because he uses the HL as a family language, while another one tries to use the HL on a regular basis with his children (Lo Shen's husband Michael).

Nevertheless, some HL mothers in the study who experience challenges with maintaining the HL because of the attitudes or approaches of partners or extended family members. This echoes a study conducted in urban contexts which has shown that challenges amongst linguistic intermarriage parents are common, especially regarding HL communication between parents and with children (Torsh, 2018a). The role of parental support is therefore important in both urban and regional contexts. In addition, the level of support from partners and members of the extended family has an influence on the confidence of children using the HL, and also on the confidence of the HL parent. If parents

> … feel pressured to speak to their children in their non-native language [they] feel less secure in their role as parents. But if they feel supported in using their first language, they feel more confident as parents, which in turn has a positive effect on children's well-being (Diskin-Holdaway & Escudero, 2021, p. 4).

As noted above, HL mothers still seem to have the sole responsibility of raising children plurilingually and maintain the HL (Torsh, 2018a, p. 186). For most female participants of this study this was due to their partners low to non-existence knowledge of the HL, an issue that was found in other studies as well (Matsui, 2022, p. 55; Yates & Terraschke, 2013, p. 106). One such example in this study is Miyako's husband. He says he feels left out when Miyako speaks Japanese to her children. Cameron, who is married to a Japanese woman, observes that, in his

view, Australian husbands often feel left out when they meet as a group because their Japanese is limited:

> It's kind of challenging because when we spend time with my wives' Japanese friends and their husbands, we can't assume the husbands understand what the conversation is about, so we have to, you know, include English in our conversation to explain what we're talking about. And for me, I understand, but for some other husbands it's quite, I suppose, not to be mean, but they can't keep pace with the conversation … Australian husbands have to have everything translated to them and that's very mentally draining for the wives, she can't relax, she can't be with her friends, she has to be worrying what the husband can understand.

Many English dominant speaking participants mentioned feeling uncomfortable when either using the HL themselves or when the HL was spoken by their partner and children, although, most of them blamed their own lack of HL knowledge and not the fact of bilingualism in their family as such. But the reason for Miyako and her husband to choose a "bilingual bonus" approach, meaning both parents using English and adding a HL later has derived from anxiety around a possible language learning delay as a result of exposure to a HL (Gerber, 2015, p. 32; Grosjean & Byers-Heinlein, 2018; Piller & Gerber, 2018; Torsh, 2018a). Miyako's comments though also suggest that she felt pressure to use English due to her husband's lack of Japanese.

Miyako's confidence to use Japanese with her children has improved due to the support from the local Japanese community. This links well with Fishman's (1991) idea of reversing language shift, as illustrated in Section 2.4.1.2., where he described the use of HLs in cultural interaction involving communities (reversing language shift stage 6 and 7). So local communities and spouses are an important factor in whether the HL is maintained. However, sometimes HL users also feel pressure from other family members. Chiara, for example, mentioned that her parents-in-law do not like it when she uses Spanish with her children when they are around. "One time she [mother-in-law] said 'we speak English'".

Despite these feelings, parents seem optimistic regarding the development of a healthy linguistic and cultural identity in their children. Only Selma thinks that plurilingualism has been a barrier to the development of her child. To avoid an "extra stressor", because of her child's developmental issues, Selma decided to discontinue the use of more than one language and stop the use of the HL at home for a while. Confusion and 'practicality' caused Howin and Chiara, who are plurilinguals themselves, to decide which language they would use with their children

and which languages to discontinue. Even though Chiara feels very Italian, she made the decision to use Spanish with her children: “I have to choose one. I'd love to that my kids learn Italian as well, but for practicality, I chose Spanish, because there's much more countries that speaks Spanish in the world”. Howin’s reason to choose Mandarin over Taiwanese Hokkien or Japanese was the same. Both mothers weighed the practicality of the language and its use in the current global context. In contrast to Selma, Chiara and Howin suspended a language for practicality rather than cognitive development issues; however, the suspension of a language that is part of their own identity may cause some stress for the mothers. Howin and Chiara were able to make a conscious choice for one language, while stopping to use a language completely may cause emotional conflict: “It pains me sometimes” (Selma).

As reported above, in general the participating parents experienced only minor challenges regarding their FLP and are mostly supported well by partners, extended family members, and the community. This support drives their reasons and motivations to maintain their HL with their children.

4.4. Parents’ reasons for heritage language maintenance

This section presents parents’ reasons for HL maintenance and links it to the theme of ‘reasons and motivations’ (see Section 3.7.4.). It discusses the experiences of parents and their various reasons and motivations for maintaining HLs in more detail in order to answer why they share and maintain HLs within the family, thus, building on the answer to Research Question 1.

First, to understand parents’ reasons for developing and maintaining a HL, it is important to understand what benefits parents see in raising their children plurilingually. All HL parents in this study have a reasonable proficiency in English and most of the HL-speaking extended family members live overseas. Given this context, it was important to explore the parents’ aims and what they were trying to achieve by raising their children plurilingually. It has previously been found that instrumental and extrinsic motivation play an important part because parents see practical advantages, have a personal interest in their own heritage and culture, and also see that plurilingualism benefits social and life choices such as employment opportunities (Gerber, 2015; McCabe, 2014). These motivations are also key for multilingual families living in regional Australia. For example, Felix said:

> It’s kind of a gift they have to be able to do that and I think there’s plenty of research that suggests every child would benefit, in a very

broad sense, in a cognitive way, from having exposure, having proficiency in a second language from birth.

4.4.1. Reasons and motivations

Analysis of the participating parents' responses to the interview questions revealed four major reasons or motivations for maintaining the HL:

- HL for communication with HL parent, extended family and overseas use.
- HL as linguistic and cultural heritage and identity.
- HL as an academic, cognitive asset.
- HL for social and life choice advantages.

Most parents mentioned all four types during the in-depth interview. For some it is very important to maintain HL for grandparents, while others value the academic and cognitive benefits more; however, most also consider the cultural identity and social benefits. Table 4.1 identifies which families indicated different benefits.

Table 4-1 Parental reasons for heritage language maintenance

	Reason 1: Communication			**Reason 2**	**Reason 3**	**Reason 4**
	Use with HL parent	Use with grandparents	Overseas/ traveling use	cultural heritage and ethnic identity	academic, cognitive asset	Social and life choice advantages
Family 1 Caroline, Magne	XX	X		X		
Family 2 Chiara, Mat	XX	X	X	X	X	X
Family 3 Cameron	XX	X	X	X	X	X
Family 4 Howin	XX	X	X	X	XX	X
Family 5 Miyako	X	X			X	
Family 6 Tsukasa	XX	X	X	XX	X	X
Family 7 Lo Shen, Michael	XX	X	X	X	X	X
Family 8 Felix	X	X		X	X	X
Family 9 Idna, Peter	XX	X	X	XX		X

	Reason 1: Communication			Reason 2	Reason 3	Reason 4
	Use with HL parent	Use with grandparents	Overseas/ traveling use	cultural heritage and ethnic identity	academic, cognitive asset	Social and life choice advantages
Family 10 Jacques, Jade	XX		X	X	X	X
Family 11 Maria	XX	X	X		X	X
Family 12 Selma		X				
Family 13 Françoise			X		X	X

X: Motivation present, XX: Strong motivation present

4.4.1.1. Reason 1: Heritage language for communication with parents and extended family and use overseas

Movement of people around the world has long provided motivation to learn and use new languages. The explosion of movement in the 21st century as well as trade and online interaction has led to what has been described by Vertovec (2007) as 'superdiversity'; this means there is increasing motivation, even necessity, to engage with the world's languages as people move around the globe. In moving to new locations, not only is there a challenge to learn new languages and live in new cultures, but there is also a strong desire or motivation to retain contacts with HLs and cultures. This is especially the case where extended family remains in the home country or have themselves moved elsewhere but also wish to retain connections to each other and to the HL and culture. Most families in this study have grandparents and other extended family members living overseas, and it seems natural for them to continue to communicate with them in the HL. The ability to communicate with grandparents, extended family members, and the wider community when visiting the home country is an important if not the primary reason for HL maintenance. As Lo Shen noted in her interview: "Hopefully, they will just have those, at least those simple conversations, like they could go to town, go to shops, and just simple conversations".

Communication with extended family

Most participating HL parents in this study have regular contact with their own parents who remain in the home country. Sustaining this valuable relationship and extending the link to the children requires the maintenance of HL. Furthermore, in most families, grandparents still have

an important role in raising children and in some cases, HL parents rely heavily on them. On the other hand, Felix, for example, feels some pressure from his parents in that they expect the grandchildren to be plurilingual. Felix therefore stated that "they have to play their part and step up, meaning to spend more time with the grandchildren and working a little harder; that is their job too". In most families, regular visits to the home country or extended visits from grandparents to Australia generally provide significant support for the families in their plurilingual endeavour.

The importance of the connection to grandparents may also be an expected cultural tradition, as is the case for Chiara, who comes from an Italian family. Furthermore, most of the grandparents in the families in this study do not speak English, and this presents an incentive for the children to learn and use the language. In most cases, knowing how to speak the HL is the only way for the children to develop and sustain a meaningful relationship with their grandparents. Tsukasa is confident, stating that "They [children] are happy to speak Japanese to especially my family in Japan. We do a Skype session once a week and always speak Japanese and sometime mixing English but mainly speak Japanese". Caroline also sees it as a necessity: "There is quite a few people in the extended family in Denmark, because we live so far on the west coast when there, who do not speak English at all", as does Lo Shen:

> For my children, it really pays off when Holly [daughter] went home to Taiwan or went to my home. She could play with all the cousins as if she just lives there. She understood them and they can communicate. She can talk to my dad and my stepmom. That really is worthwhile doing.

Communication between parent and child

Aside from the benefits of communicating with extended family, some HL parents also feel that maintaining the HL is beneficial for their own relationships with their children. For example, Idna said, "I just find it important for them [her children] to relate to their mum and their family. I'm really like, I'm proud of culture and 'they need to know it too' kind of person". Tsukasa feels similarly, stating that "I'm very keen to educate Japanese language to my daughters, it's kind for myself I just happy if they can speak Japanese to me". Maria, who speaks different languages with each of her children, disclosed her major motivation for HL maintenance in relation to which language she uses when with her children: "[I do this] because the way they

speak those languages, and the way they have a relationship with their three languages, and their relationship with me is different”.

In addition, the literature on plurilingualism highlights the importance of an HL for communication between children and parents and shows how the use of an HL is important for the wellbeing of the whole family in general, as discussed further in Chapter 7 (Diskin-Holdaway & Escudero, 2021; Kouritzin, 2000). While most parents do insist that their children use the HL in the home setting, the reality of family circumstances often shows a much more flexible approach. Felix mentioned that “They're of course not guided by my parental aspiration. Their only driver is convenience. Convenience for them is English”. Lo Shen has a similar experience, stating that “the older two are getting a little bit more English-speaking oriented. I don’t know how you say it. Yes, they think more in English now at school every day”. Likewise, Chiara mentioned that “It makes a lot of pressure on me: not talking English, because for them it would be much easier, their vocabulary is much richer in English, so for them would be not a headache to talk to me [in English]”. On the other hand, Tsukasa’s children feel awkward when their mother speaks in English with them. “Sometimes I speak English with them at school or in front of teacher, they feel very, feel strange”.

None of the parents expressed explicitly that they use English to make themselves understood if they opted for the OPOL FLP. However, some parents use English because it is more practical in some situations, especially when other non-HL users are involved in the conversation. Chiara explained that “when we are the four of us together English is the language, because Mat [husband] does not speak the languages” but otherwise “I commit to my kids only Spanish and when they have to talk to me, and I will only address them in Spanish”. Idna likewise explains that:

> At home when we have friends come round it is still quite a lot of Dutch, but things get translated and at certain times when conversations go really fast when more people around it gets changed into English, but I try to get them changed back into Dutch as much as I can.

In addition, Cameron mentioned that:

> Of course, because my daughter is going to an Australian school, she is learning English at school so when she comes home, she wants to share her experiences with me and that will obviously be in English because it’s easier for her to converse what she has learned in school to me in English, it’s much quicker.

Jacques is experiencing a similar situation. “When she has complex things to tell me, she uses English. I understand some but I am not forcibly pleased because I want that she keeps French”. So, Jacques wishes that his daughter Evelyne would just try to explain complex things in French instead of switching to English.

The proficiency in English of the HL parent very often has an influence on how communication works between children and parents. If the HL parent is not as fluent in English this has an influence on the communication (Yates & Terraschke, 2013). The four mothers with an Asian background mentioned a certain lack of proficiency in English. Their FLPs vary significantly, however, and they also indicated that misunderstandings may occur in the communication with their children if they use English.

Tsukasa only uses Japanese with her children:

> English is my second language and [I] always feel a bit nervous to speak English and so Japanese language much more comfortable for me, easier for me. So that’s one of the reasons I’m very keen to educate Japanese language to my daughters.

Miyako expresses a similar view: “I feel more comfortable speaking Japanese for like especially reading and writing Japanese. Japanese is better but I have been in Australia for 20 years, so I am getting familiar with English”. However, for her children to stay familiar with Japanese, Miyako throws in some Japanese phrases or sentences while communicating with them in English. Miyako finds that especially her older child would say “mum, I don’t understand”, and then Miyako would repeat it in English.

Howin made a conscious decision to use Mandarin with her children. She reported feeling comfortable using Mandarin but sometimes misses being able to converse in her truly native language, Taiwanese Hokkien. The children understand Taiwanese Hokkien and can read and write it. When they visit Taiwanese relatives in Taiwan, they can communicate on a very basic level. However, Howin feels that the three HLs confuse the children and she tries to keep them separate whenever she can. Thus, the possibility of English being used among family members is small because the children have three other languages in which to communicate.

For Lo Shen, sticking with the HL use is a constant battle. Even though she and her husband both communicate in Mandarin, the children only answer in Mandarin about half of the time when addressed in Mandarin. “I try to make them speak Chinese to me. Holly [eldest daughter]

is finding it hard … the younger ones, I think they are comfortable with speaking Chinese". Even though Lo Shen finds it frustrating that her children switch to English more often now, she stated that "I will be fine with that"; 'that' meaning that her children have a basic level of communication skills in Mandarin.

Heritage language use overseas

In most families, regular trips, annual or biennial, to the home country are a major motivation for children's HL maintenance. These visits provide the children with the opportunity to use the HL, and they stimulate their interest in the HL, an observation Yates and Terraschke made in their study too (2013, p. 122). Furthermore, some families consider overseas study for their children as another means of engaging with the HL. Felix's family "were openly talking with the kids about gap years and maybe university studies in Switzerland", and Françoise mentioned that "she [daughter] would like to spend a year in France, and that will give her the opportunity to polish her language skills".

All families seem settled in the New England Region. Among the 13 families, five participants imagine the family or the child moving overseas for a longer period. As mentioned above, both Felix and Françoise see an oversea stay for their children as an opportunity for them to immerse in the HL language. Some of Howin's family members are drawn back to Japan, and Idna dreams of spending some extended time in Belgium.

> I would love to take them home for a couple of months, you know, even a term to go to a school in Belgium, just sign them up with them, just drop them in. You know, have them experience Dutch on a daily basis for a set period of time for them, so their brain can catch up, and to start using it as a norm. (Idna)

Maria's older children live in Europe and New Zealand; therefore, the chances of her and her youngest child living overseas in the future are high. Likewise, Caroline's husband has started talking about moving back to Denmark at some time in the future, "so I [Caroline] keep waiting for the pull to happen to go spend more time in Denmark".

Heritage language use in Australia

For most of these families, the major motivation for HL maintenance is to enable communication between parents and children and between the children and their grandparents and other extended family. Only a few parents believe that their children's plurilingualism is of

practical use in Australia. Howin's oldest child has had some incidents where he could use Japanese or Mandarin in Australia and starts to appreciate his plurilingual upbringing. Further, Tsukasa's children make regular use of their Japanese communication skills when they meet other Japanese-Australian families in town. "So, they speak Japanese to Japanese mum and speak English to Australian father. And those couple's kids, if those children understand Japanese very well, they speak Japanese but depend on that friend" (Tsukasa).

As mentioned above, all HL parent participants have at least an intermediate knowledge of English and the children all attend either a government, Catholic, or independent school where lessons are in English. The need for the children to speak the HL with other children with the same linguistic background and even their parents is therefore absent. While the parents' intention is to immerse the children in the HL, they experience some frustration:

> Most of them speak English and even though some of them are very fluent in Japanese, they choose to speak English between the children. But some of them when they speak to us mums, Japanese mums, they speak in Japanese. (Miyako)

> Mostly, all those kids speaking English. So, even though if they can understand or speak a little bit, they speak English to each other when we meet up. (Lo Shen)

Meeting families with the same linguistic and cultural background does not necessarily provide an incentive for the children to use the HL but such meetings contribute to HL parents' well-being, as they interact with people from the same linguistic and cultural background.

Despite the knowledge that an HL is not necessary in daily life in Australia and the opportunities to use the HL are rare, some parents revealed that they and the children use the HL as a 'secret language'. Felix believes:

> … they enjoy it as a point of difference, we do have the ability to have a secret language … which gamifies it a little bit, that's what kids love, it's kind of a special thing we do and no one understands it all, well almost no one understands it.

The 'secret language' incentive also seems to work for Chiara's children:

> [if] they don't want other kids to know what it's going on, they address each other in Spanish. Which makes me very proud. Oh, okay, okay, something is sinking in, something is working and yes and they are not

> embarrassed to speak Spanish with me when we are in a group of people and in front of their friends.

Lo Shen is also convinced that "It is really good. Secret language, secret power!" Having the secret language as a motivation for HL use demonstrates that parents believe that English is the dominant language used in Australia and HL languages are still rare, especially in the regional context of this study. Parents therefore feel comfortable using it as a 'secret language' in public as they expect that no one else understands it.

In summary, Reason 1, Heritage language for communication with parents and extended family and use overseas, suggests that in the view of the participating parents, parents and grandparents are the major motivation for maintaining the HL, as well as maintaining it for children, is to have basic communication skills when visiting the home country of their HL parent. Due to the limited opportunities for using the HL in Australia, participants believe HLs are important for them as a family and for the future.

4.4.1.2. Reason 2: Maintaining the heritage language as cultural and linguistic identity

The motivation to maintain the language for its connection to cultural heritage and identity is an important reason for most participating parents. A reason that also generates conflicts as parents have a different understanding of identity than their children which may be disturbing for parents.

Maintenance of cultural heritage

Many HL parents seek to build relationships with people with the same HL in a new country. It seems comforting for them to connect with people with the same linguistic and cultural background when living overseas.

> I've been very lucky here. Because there's a few friends of mine in town. They are Argentinian, they are Spanish, and there's Colombian. So, we speak, we catch up often, and they speak in Spanish. (Chiara)

> I guess, it is nice to be with someone that really knows the background, similar background … They are very similar to me. They have Australian husbands. They have mixed children, and you just have a lot in common. You have both Chinese and Australian culture. You are not

> just purely this one culture or the other. You are mixed, so you are very similar. (Lo Shen)

> I feel Magne loves that, you know, there is another guy who he can hang out with and speak Danish just, you know, get it with each other. I think that connection is super important. (Caroline)

Meeting with other HL users and therefore continuing or in some cases even developing a stronger bond to their own culture sustains HL parents in their cultural heritage maintenance. Lo Shen reflects:

> After having Holly [daughter], I was more interested in having Chinese friends because I want her to know her other culture. So, I now have a huge group of Chinese friends. We had a huge party for the beginning of the Chinese New Year together at my house.

Likewise, Tsukasa said:

> There are several families (with) similar age children, so we often, once a week during the school holiday time, we often see each other and do Japanese cultural things for kids. So, like a traditional celebration for girls or boys or... And then bring traditional food.

Caroline's family has a less regular gathering:

> Every year except this year because of COVID, we didn't do it, we have this thing called Scandian where all the Scandin … well most of the Scandinavian people … get together and it is like the kids have a lot of fun watching movies and stuff, but also going outside and playing.

Idna lacks the advantage of a Dutch speaking community in town and therefore takes it a step further:

> I do make an effort when we go on holiday to try and meet up with another Dutch-speaking family just to keep it going. I've only recently put a post on Facebook asking anybody else, you know, Dutch-speaking around in town and an older lady, she's 73, responded so she can be a pretend grandma and yeah stand in, create that relationship with her and definitely make the effort, make the time to connect. You speak my language you're you know you're already like 10 steps ahead of becoming a friend because I just want to practise my language.

Idna also focuses on traditions such as celebrating Saint Nicholas on 6 December:

> We celebrate Sinterklaas which is a children's festival. Which is something that we work towards they have to write letters in Flemish we sing the songs, and the music is on like two months before, to get them in the same vibe. We watch it as well so it's like a three-month project and one celebration.

In contrast, Felix said that:

> We wouldn't be seeking out Swiss German speaking communities. I know that for a fact. We embrace being Australians, being multi-cultural and we seek, would not seek out Swiss German communities no more than seeking out Italian, Vietnamese or whatever community… So, I don't need that to achieve a sense of belonging. Actually, in fact I would if I want to connect with Switzerland, I would do it in Switzerland.

Cultural identity

Identity is a complex issue, but it is inextricably linked to one's cultural and linguistic heritage (De Capua & Wintergerst, 2009; Koshiba, 2020; Park, 2021; Shin, 2010; Tatar, 2015). For this study, Joseph's (2004) description of identity provides a way to consider the cultural dimension of identity:

> There are, then, two basic aspects to a person's identity: their name, which serves first of all to single them out from other people, and then that deeper, intangible something that constitutes who one really is, and for which we do not have a precise word (Joseph, 2004, p. 1).

Considering the first aspect, the names of many participants in this study do signal cultural and national identity, although this may not always be the case. The 'intangible' aspect of identity is something that is frequently expressed, and especially so for the participants in my study and others like them who have a background or a mixed background with elements of culture and language different from the dominant culture and language of Australia. Caroline, for example, explains that "He [Ole] seems to be really happy and confident in his Danish and, and it seems to make sense to him. You know, this is how I am Danish, and this is how I am English, and it works". Chiara asserts this certainty about who she is: "I feel very Italian in my heart. Because my lovely people, you know the people I grow up with, are from, are Italian and they taught us

music in Italian, you know… No, it's, yeah, it's very dear". Tsukasa also believes that language and cultural heritage is connected to identity:

> I think English is important, more important for my daughters. But at the same time, they are half Japanese they cannot change that. I think that it's good to understand their background and also study language is not just a word, they can understand a lot of background and history… so my kids always feel two background(s), two culture(s), two language(s).

Felix seems well aware of the complexity of his identity when asked about which language he identifies with more:

> That's a really complicated question. My proficiency is much, I'm much more proficient in English. I do though consider Swiss German to be my mother tongue and strangely when I am, on the occasions when I lived in Switzerland, I am, I started to, my self-talk and my dreams and everything reverts to Swiss German and when I'm in Australia all of that is in English.

Idna also tries to comprehend the second aspect of identity referred to by Joseph (Joseph, 2004) in relation to her children:

> I just find it important for them to relate to their mum and their family … It's, it's because we seem to be on one of these edges at the moment you can go one or the other way. I really hope I can get them across and keep the Dutch going, keep Flemish going. I would really struggle if the girls wouldn't talk it anymore. Emotionally it will just be like a loss of my connection to home. Even though I haven't been there for longer than three weeks, you know, every time and when I do go home, it feels strange because it's a cultural … because everything has changed.

Unsurprisingly, the connection between language maintenance, cultural heritage, and linguistic and cultural identity seems important for most of the participating parents. The lack of their children's aspirations to maintain the HL or their minimal interest in contrast to "parental aspiration" (Felix) causes concerns in most parents. Most parents mentioned that if the children ceased to use the HL it would be a loss not only for themselves but also for the children. As indicated above, Idna feels she would lose her connection to her home country, and Chiara feels that "I don't want any language get lost for them because … they got it in their genes, so it's out of question", and Jacques feels he "would be ashamed for her [Evelyne] to lose it. It is like

an asset". As discussed above, Lo Shen believes her Australian husband is the driving force behind the plurilingual raising of their children:

> He does not want the kids to lose Mandarin. He wants them to be able to… It is like it is part of you. If you cannot speak that language and then you will forever be an outsider… But if you can speak their languages, it is a bit easier to merge into the community.

Caroline's husband, Magne, has a different view. He has been living away from Denmark for over 20 years, and he considers his Danish to be dated. He is comfortable with this perspective, but it is connected to his sense of Danish identity:

> It has to do with identity. And of course, you know we evolve as humans. You know in our lives, and that is part of the journey. And I wonder if it is bit like a rubber band, you know, like you sort of going away, away, away, away, and then as he gets older, he is going to want to start coming back again.

This finding suggests that the influences of language and culture on identity are not static, as has been established in previously research (Escalona, 2018; McCabe, 2014). Everyone changes over time, and our sense of identity responds to new influences in our lives. Miyako mirrors this idea in relation to the use and influence of Japanese in her family:

> Sometimes in the future Japanese will fade away from my family. I can't imagine my, my children will probably use a little bit of Japanese or they will be familiar with Japanese but probably for the next generation it will be lost.

Miyako therefore sees the 'fading' of cultural and linguistic identity over time if family remain removed from the Japanese national setting.

Parent's self-conflict with passing on heritage language, culture, and identity

None of the participating parents reported that raising plurilingual children is presenting an impossible task, but most of the parents have encountered resistance of some kind from their partners or children. At the time of data collection for this study, 11 families were using and consciously maintaining an HL at home. Two parents had discontinued the use of an HL at home before data collection commenced.

Most parents were able to describe a specific time when it was most difficult to sustain the HL. Lo Shen remembers clearly that "when she [daughter Holly] was four, probably because she started Pre-K here, that she says she does not want to speak Mandarin anymore". Likewise, Jacques stated that "I read French books to her from the beginning of her life to probably two years ago. I stopped because she was not interested. She wanted to read her own English books". Jade, his wife, confirms:

> I am just so glad that Jacques persevered with her. He kept speaking French even if for many years she would respond in English. It was not until about three years ago after visiting France it just clicked and then it really became very natural. It would have been easy for Jacques to give up because he is speaking French and the response was in English, but he just persevered, and it has paid off.

Felix has also encountered some resistance:

> I find myself saying to them literally dozens of times a day: 'with me it's Swiss German, with me it's Swiss German'. At which point they roll their eyes and switch to Swiss German. It's just, I just have to constantly remind them. … And since our return to Australia I have worked hard, my wife has worked hard, my parents have worked hard to maintain their level of Swiss German, which we have done. It hasn't improved, but they understand Swiss German and they have the opportunity to maintain it.

Tsukasa's experience shows a different perspective around raising children plurilingually:

> One time elder one when she was three or four years old, one time she cried because no one understand Japanese at the primary school, no preschool, preschool. Then I feel very guilty because she can speak English too, but still should feel bit lonely but maybe just a personal because her personality is very sensitive. Cos younger one at the same age she said, I am very busy because no one understand Japanese, so I have to translate. I have to teach Japanese to my friends, so she was very happy. So maybe just the personality.

Miyako's family is the only family in the study that chose not to introduce the HL from birth and add Japanese subsequently.

> So, we start using English to him. Then, by the time we decided we wanted to introduce Japanese he kind of refused. 'Mum I don't understand, please don't speak Japanese.' So, our communication is

> mostly in English, but I must say a few sentences, I throw some sentences in Japanese that so he can still be familiar with Japanese, for me speaking Japanese to him. Then he says: 'Mum I don't understand', then I translate it in English. … She [daughter Machiko] is actually a little bit better with Japanese. I think that because when she was little, I would speak more Japanese to her and also have a lot of Japanese friends around. I was using more Japanese to her, that she tries to say things in Japanese sometimes, but mostly in English.

Two parents discontinued the maintenance of their HL while the children were still young. This decision has caused some distress for these parents. Françoise explains this felt to her like "an act of violence":

> She [daughter Charlotte] was proud and I don't know what happened. She went from pride in her language and a desire to teach her idiom to other students to "I'm not doing this anymore". Aged three and a half, she basically demanded that I speak English to her and said "I don't want to speak French. I don't like it. I speak English". And I was so gobsmacked and hurt that I stopped speaking French to her on that day apart from little things like, *ouvre la porte, lumière*, and *c'est combien?* when we are shopping, which she capably answers but ... it was basically like an act of violence, her insisting that I stopped speaking French to her".

Françoise's daughter is 17 now and is doing beginners French at school. Selma's children on the other hand are still young and her reason for discontinuing was more of a precaution:

> I started with the firstborn, I could speak Swedish to her, probably the first three or four years. She still has a passive knowledge of it which is still quite extensive considering we have not spoken it for probably a year, but it just got too difficult. We had other issues with her, communication-wise so I like, I dropped it because I thought it is an extra stressor that I don't need. … It pains me sometimes. It does, I would not lie especially if it is just the two of us and because we had that history, it is a shame that it happened. There is nothing saying I couldn't pick it up again.

Parents used terms like 'pain', 'violence' and 'guilt' to describe their feelings about HL transmission. Thus, these examples show that language is very much connected with parental identity and the motivation to pass the cultural and linguistic belonging to children (Harding-Esch & Riley, 2003). Most parents combine HL maintenance at home with either cultural events in the community or exchanges with other HL users. Parents reported that they often feel a

pressure in trying to sustain two languages and cultures but seem to be able to sustain the HL use despite some conflicts (Grosjean, 2010; Okita, 2002; Tatar, 2015; Torsh, 2018b, 2020a, 2020b). For example, 'conflict' is characterised by a child's sensitive personality or refusal to acknowledge/speak HL. While none of the parent participants particularly suggested that it is the HL parent's job, as discussed above (see Section 4.3.4) Torsh's (2020a) study shows that mother tongue maintenance often is exactly what it says – a mother maintaining her HL. Thus, "working and integrating into a new country was enough to make the job of bilingual childrearing an ongoing and often insurmountable challenge", but even English-speaking mothers sometimes feel the pressure and feel responsible for "the presence (or absence) of the other language in their children's lives" (Torsh, 2020b, para. 10). This study had two HL fathers. The fact that Caroline, an English-speaking mother, was interested in participating in the study, and not Magne, her husband, supports Torsh's statement above. Similarly, Jacques' wife said that it is very important to her that her daughter maintains French and therefore participated in this study. On the other hand, Felix said that he feels it is his responsibility, but appreciates his wife's support, nonetheless. Saying this, Felix is well supported by his parents who live close by and help him transmit the HL and Swiss culture to his three children. Thus, while Torsh (2020a) observed that HL maintenance is often a matter of 'mother' tongue maintenance, this current study demonstrates several fathers taking on the primary role, albeit with female partners who are very active in their support of HL maintenance.

4.4.1.3. Reason 3: HL as an academic and cognitive asset

Most parents expressed the view that they are motivated to maintain their HL for academic and cognitive reasons. This motivation was expressed as an additional benefit to reasons of identity and family and heritage culture connections.

Heritage language for academic advantage

Literature on second language learning suggests that previous knowledge of a language helps with learning new languages as elaborated previously in the Literature Review (see Section 2.4.1.) (Cenoz, 2003, 2013; de la Fuente & Lacroix, 2015; O'Brien, 2017; Piccardo et al., 2019; Turner, 2019b; Westergaard et al., 2017). A few participants mentioned an academic advantage during the interview.

Referring to his own experience, Cameron said that “once you learn one language, a third language is much easier, I think”. His view on language learning is in line with theoretical approaches like Cummins’ (1979a) common underlying proficiency (CUP) model, where languages support, influence and complement each other on the cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) levels. Cameron commented further in relation to his daughter:

> She is expressing interest in learning languages; she likes to read books about the world and like. She always asks like for example in France or Germany and Italy she seems very curious about how languages are used by certain countries around the world. She’s only six, so very young, but she has that awareness which is really good.

Felix confirms this awareness when asked about his children being raised plurilingually and learning an additional language at school: “I think … the language skills have come very easily to them”. Jacques and Jade are convinced that raising their daughter bilingually is a good thing and “is going to save her a lot of work having to learn it as an adult”.

The benefits for English in Australia from having an additional language are underestimated. Jacques presented this aspect:

> She [Evelyne] does not realise the language she is learning since her birth is something really important. It is important for now, not only, as I said, for her French, it is good for English too. That is my opinion but soon she would be a bigger girl and will probably realise it.

Jacques’ motivation is supported by research that suggests HL literacy at home and in school positively influences children’s literacy knowledge in general (Kremin et al., 2019; Owens, 2019; Wallner, 2016), but also as mentioned before, BICS and CALP in various languages support and develop each other (Cummins, 1979a).

Heritage language use as a cognitive benefit

Cognitive benefits in connection with plurilingualism have been researched extensively and studies confirm that raising children plurilingually may benefit cognitive development (Bialystok et al., 2012; Cummins, 2000a; del Pilar García Mayo, 2012; Polinsky & Scontras, 2020a, 2020b). Parents are aware that learning two or more languages at the same time affects brain development. Idna simply states that “from the studies, their brain will develop better”. In addition, several participating parents also commented on the cognitive benefits of plurilingualism.

> I think it [is] very good for the brain to like elasticity, neuroplasticity, you know. (Chiara)

> My understanding is that when kid's brains are formed if they're learning multiple languages, neurologically, it's an implication. Same kind you achieve with music and mathematics, and I think having that exposure adds benefits, in addition to just speaking the other language. (Felix)

> They [daughter's teachers] said bilingual kids obviously, they're good at managing time because they are juggling multiple forces in the brain and that has been beneficial to her [daughter] and her school … she's like learning to read much quicker than the other students because, yes, I guess, I don't know, how a bilingual brain works, but she seems to learn new information a lot quicker. (Cameron)

Parents' reported awareness of linguistic and psychological research clearly contributes to their motivation to raise plurilingual children for cognitive benefits.

4.4.1.4. Reason 4: HL for social and life choice advantages

The parents in this study also indicated that they believed there are social benefits from being plurilingual for themselves and for their children. Chiara described her plurilingual experience in this regard:

> It's good for, for, to open your mind to other culture to understand other languages. Especially when you're little to understand that there is a world outside your house that they speak different languages, they eat different food, they listen [to] different music and it's all good and cool to learn … speaking a language means also understanding a different culture than yours, than your original family one … umm if somebody talks to you in a language and you know how to answer in the same language, I think you should try, you know, eh, use. I think it's a polite thing to do.

Additionally, Tsukasa believes that "because they [daughters] can speak both languages, they really open-minded people they are really nice to friend who cannot speak English or some who have a heavy accent. They are very friendly and very open mind".

Lo Shen sees even more benefits: "I think it is good, that you have more opportunities, and you can have different sorts of friends when you can speak more than one language". Caroline agreed with this perspective, stating that "unique exploring and learning other languages is just

the different ways of expressing things and the similarities of the words and things that you can and can't say in different languages". All of these comments supplement the importance of the aspect of plurilingualism as a social asset.

4.4.2. Comparing reasons for maintaining heritage language

Plurilingual parents are motivated towards maintaining their HLs. The reasons for the motivations discussed above include maintaining a means for providing meaningful relationships between themselves, grandparents, and other extended family members; conveying cultural and identity aspects of their own background; and for academic and cognitive benefits.

Reason 1 revealed the importance and value that an HL holds for meaningful relationships between children, parents and grandparents. McCabe (2014) and Ellis and Sims (2014) presented similar themes relating to family motivations for maintaining HLs. The reason for maintaining HLs for ccommunication in transnational social spaces (McCabe, 2014, p. 110) coincides well with reason 1. In order to "create a sense of belonging" Ellis and Sims (2014, p. 31) cover parts of reason 1 of this study too. Both studies discovered that multilingual families are driven by the importance of communication between generations, even across the globe, supporting the results of this study. When asked about their motivations to maintain HLs, the parents' first answer contained mostly communication with themselves, grandparents and extended family. Interestingly, however, in examining a general Australian online forum regarding raising children bilingually, Piller and Gerber (2018, p. 627) found that "language- and community-specific benefits, such as the ability to communicate with grandparents . . . [were] completely absent".

Individual cultural and linguistic identity are the focus of reason 2. Two studies mentioned above covered parts of this motivation (Ellis & Sims, 2014; McCabe, 2014), while Piller and Gerber's (2018, p. 632) analysis of online comments found no link between language and identity. Although Ellis and Sims combined communication and identity with 'a sense of belonging', the current study aligned more with McCabe's study which separated communication from cultural heritage and identity. In this study the reason for this separation lies in the emphasis in parents' answers about why they transmit HLs but is also mirrored in the view of Joseph's (2004, p. 15) work on identity and language. In harmony with terms like *globalisation*, *multiculturalism*, and *superdiversity*, cultural and linguistic identity provide

opportunities to use different languages. Parents in this study see an important connection between their ongoing use of the HL and their cultural and linguistic identity. Participation in cultural festivities that are specific to a country or region overseas but are celebrated in Australia to maintain cultural connections gives them a sense of identity and in turn, offers further opportunity for HL use in the community. In this way, identification with the HL and associated culture, not only motivates, but gives rise to opportunities to use the HL in everyday life.

The local Japanese community for example celebrates Hinamatsuri, Girl's Day, with special activities, and Lo Shen and her Mandarin-speaking friends celebrate Chinese Lunar New Year together. While the HL may not necessarily be used by the children, the diverse backgrounds allow them to take advantage of cultural diversity. None of the parents mentioned that their children have an issue with identity. Most said that the children feel Australian or binational, but none disclosed any difficulties. Tsukasa identifies very much with Japan, and she said "I think English is important, more important for my daughters. But at the same time, they are half Japanese they cannot change that. I think that it's good to understand their background". Further, Chiara believes, as mentioned above, that "they've got it in their genes", while Felix anticipates "that it is something they want to continue to identify with".

Nevertheless, most parents indicated at some stage in the interview what Caroline describes as "[it] makes us feel as other, like it makes us feel, so we are not from here". Lo Shen's experience is similar, and she says: "You are here, people think you are Taiwanese and when you go to Taiwan, people think you are Australian". The subliminal feeling that raising children plurilingually and being a multilingual family is something abnormal is still anchored in peoples' minds. However, 22.8% of the population speak a language other than English at home, making Australia, according to the World Economic Forum, one of the most multilingual countries of the world (ABS, 2021; Torkington, 2023). The reality remains, however, that this is not reflected in schools and society. Australia has a multicultural population but retains a monolingual mindset (Torsh, 2020a, p. 6). Fostering cultural and linguistic identity is therefore an important task for multilingual families.

Academic and cognitive reasons were illustrated in reason 3 and these are comparable to motivation 3 in McCabe's (2014, p. 122) discussion but also theme 2 and 3 of plurilingual advantage in the work of Ellis and Sims (2014, p. 32). Most parents, as described above, said that these reasons are not the main driver for raising their children plurilingually in contrast to Piller and Gerber's (2018, p. 627) results where "academic benefits are foregrounded" but also

McCabe's results where parents felt strongly about academic, cognitive and social reasons. While not expressed as firmly, Ellis and Sims dedicated both theme 2 and 3 to bilingual advantages, which indicates a certain weight on academic and cognitive motivations. Nonetheless, most parents in this current study reported that plurilingualism may enhance their academic and cognitive capability and even enhances their overall linguistic skills, and none of the parents mentioned that their children experience academic challenges due to their plurilingualism.

HLs for social and life choice advantages was explained in reason 4. The term of 'being open to others or other cultures' was mentioned often during the interviews; thus, creating a separate category felt necessary. Despite arguments for or against raising children bilingually, the parents participating in this study stated that in addition to the reasons for maintaining HL for communication amongst family members in Australia and overseas, social aspects are highly valued. Most parents see a benefit for themselves and their children in maintaining their HLs and believe advantages of being plurilingual are evident not only in language skills but also for social and cultural understanding, now and in the future.

4.5. Approaches to heritage language literacy development and maintenance

Key Research Question 1 asked 'how and why do parents share and maintain HLs in regional Australia?' The 'why' has been discussed above in section 4.4. Thus, this section presents the findings on *how* parents transmit HLs and links it to the theme of 'practices and ideologies' (see Section 3.7.4.). The decisions parents make about HL use at home and how much effort they put into HL transmission and maintenance are crucial factors in this study. Most parents report that they make some effort to maintain the HL and hope that their children will master a certain level of spoken form of the HL, and even some ability to read and write in their HL. This hope shows in the kind of efforts they undertake to develop and maintain the HL. All parents encourage their children to speak the language as discussed above and illustrated in Table 4.2. The desire to develop literacy skills is present in most parents. For example, while some parents hardly mentioned literacy development, it was mentioned several times by other parents. This variation is further elaborated below.

Table 4-2 Motivation of literacy skill development

	Fluency in spoken HL (speaking /listening)	Reading skills	Writing skills
Family 1 Caroline, Magne	XX		
Family 2 Chiara, Mat	XX	X	X
Family 3 Cameron	XX	XX	XX
Family 4 Howin	XX	XX	XX
Family 5 Miyako	XX	X	X
Family 6 Tsukasa	XX	XX	XX
Family 7 Lo Shen, Michael	XX	XX	XX
Family 8 Felix	XX	X	X
Family 9 Idna, Peter	XX	XX	X
Family 10 Jacques, Jade	XX	XX	X
Family 11 Maria	XX	XX	XX
Family 12 Selma	X		
Family 13 Françoise	X		

X: Motivation present, XX: Strong motivation present

4.5.1. Speaking and listening opportunities in different contexts

Lo Shen, Tsukasa, and Miyako are all part of an HL community and use this to expose their children to Chinese and Japanese, respectively. Lo Shen made a conscious decision to enlarge her circle of Chinese friends: "I was mostly just mingling with Australians, but after having Holly, I was more interested in having Chinese friends because I want her to know her other culture. So, I now have a huge group of Chinese friends". The local Japanese community is also an ideal place for developing speaking and listening skills: "We see each other at small parties and always Japanese people encourage or happy to hear my daughters speak Japanese to them, so that is very good thing. So, it's kind of opportunities to encourage my daughters" (Tsukasa). Miyako also feels that the Japanese community offers a good opportunity for Japanese language maintenance:

> But some of them when they speak to us, like, mums, Japanese mums, they speak in Japanese. So, it's, when we have a gathering with the Japanese community, it's kind of like a mix of English and Japanese. Sometimes I say things in Japanese they answer in English. So yes, we don't push them to speak Japanese. 'Don't speak English' we don't do that sort of thing.

A less social but nonetheless important context of development of listening skills is watching TV, movies, and online channels such as YouTube. Oriyama (2012, p. 179) described this as "learning a wider range of registers in context" and is helpful in vocabulary knowledge and sound learning. As mentioned previously, watching TV is not always regarded well, but parents nonetheless see a benefit in exposing their children to other media than books, as illustrated in the comments below.

> We subscribe to live streaming TV from Japan so we will pay so we got live TV coming in from Japan so she has access to media, film, movies, cartoons, and music. (Cameron)

> We started lately to watch the Belgium TV online so we can still relate to the looks and the clothing which are really different to here … And we talk about where we are from what the faces look like when we see something on TV or hear something that happened in Belgium. (Idna)

> We watch DVDs. A DVD they already have seen a thousand times like Rapunzel. I oblige them to watch it in Italian or in Spanish. Evita is very happy, Carolina is not happy [laughs]. (Chiara)

Some parents also have some reservations about watching TV:

> I seldom let them watch YouTube Chinese stories … I just feel like they start watching other things and I can't control it. So, I just leave it. (Lo Shen)

Thus, according to how parents responded, watching TV is only a good source of input if it happens in a guided manner. This means parents need to invest considerable time to plan this. Idna's approach to watching TV offers some useful insights. They watch TV together and then talk about what they have seen and observed. The TV watching therefore is a joint activity that not only helps to increase vocabulary and learning about different registers but also provides a crucial time for HL parents to share their culture.

Only Lo Shen mentioned CDs as a tool for skill development: "Then I would buy Chinese story CDs for her [daughter Holly] to listen to, she is interested. Maybe that is why it went on. I feel Wyatt is not interested in those stories at all. He prefers listening to music". Tsukasa's descriptions of her girls' HL literacy skills would appear to make them the most advanced of all the participating children. For example, she states that they work with books from Japan. Tsukasa's sister is a primary school teacher in Japan and she recommends specific books to read and write Japanese, which other parents do not report. Yet Tsukasa's approach is very similar to the other parents: "[I] just encourage them to speak with me and watch Japanese animation or books".

4.5.2. Development of reading and writing skills

Parents tend to use books to develop their children's literacy skills as part of their family language practice, as reported by various scholars (Cummins, 2016; Grosjean, 2010; Lam, 2011; Oriyama, 2012; Owens, 2019). And most parents in this study mentioned that books play a vital role in their FLP too.

> So, I used to borrow Chinese books from the [local] library. They would get it in from Sydney, for free as well. So, we would borrow a lot and we would read a lot. (Lo Shen)

> I would like to teach her, it is a big word, to make her read French books herself because I read French books to her from the beginning of her life to probably two years ago. I stopped because she was not interested. She wanted to read her own English books. (Jacques)

> A primary school teacher [Tsukasa's sister] in Japan and she knows a lot of knowledge for children who cannot speak Japanese …[and] recommend many books [and I] borrowed a big box of Japanese books for my daughters. (Tsukasa)

While in most cases books are read to the children, some older children can also read books in the HL, which is an advantage for developing literacy skills in the HL further as described above.

> She's learning to read now, and she's got probably 200 books from Japan, like stories, cartoons, and like you know encyclopaedia, fiction, no fiction so she can read about a variety of subjects and contents in Japanese. (Cameron)

> We have books as well for reading … So, she is able to read books and we have a star chart for her she can read a chapter in Flemish in a book, and she gets a star just to keep her engaging in wanting to read. (Idna)

The strain on HL parents to develop literacy has been documented in Yates and Terraschke's (2013) study on mothers in linguistic intermarriage relationships. It shows very similar stress factors to those of the participating parents: The dominant language, in this case, English, is often the language of the relationship between parents so the HL loses status in the family itself. The lack or limits of HL maintenance opportunities in the community are a further stress factor. Another factor, not mentioned by Yates and Terraschke, is the time factor that inhibits literacy skill development. Lo Shen said that "There is not enough time left to read them Chinese stories or anything. Holly [her daughter], because she is the first child, I put a lot of effort in". Lo Shen added that Holly is reading really well in English but "with Mandarin, she is not. She has gone backwards; she is at the same level as she has achieved when she was two or three". Lo Shen essentially blames the lack of time for this particular issue in her multilingual family. So, Lo Shen enrolled her children in formal lessons to ensure that her children continue learning Chinese:

> Holly is finding it [reading] hard, but they are now having Chinese lesson once a week. One hour a week through online. This time with Chinese teacher from China. I think that helps a bit…. Yes, they are supposed to learn to write, but I just care about speaking.

Howin's children also do Mandarin classes on a Saturday via distance learning and Tsukasa teaches her girls at home but also with the local Japanese community. As a lecturer at university, she is the expected Japanese teacher for the local Japanese children; however, she said that she feels that "once they really want to study Japanese more, they can start, so when they're little I just encourage them to use Japanese happily. I really don't like to give them pressure to study Japanese". This approach is in line with Miyako's response of not putting on pressure. Lo Shen also mentioned that her "sister's kids [in Taiwan], they have to go to after school, like a study class. It is just really so much emphasis on studying. … It is just really too crazy". She said that she prefers the more relaxed atmosphere in Australia where children have a life outside of school. Idna has a less formal approach to language teaching but one that is very much focused on maintaining a connection to culture and including literacy development:

> We celebrate Sinterklaas which is a children's festival and is something that we work towards. They have to write letters [to Sinterklaas] in

> Flemish, we sing the songs, and the music is on like two months before to get them in the same vibe. We watch it as well, so it's like a three-month project.

While most HL parents reported that they hope that children master a certain level of spoken form of the HL some parents said that they prompt particular activities to develop some degree of literacy. Parents reported being very active in developing reading and writing skills are the three HL families with an Asian HL (Howin, Tsukasa, and Lo Shen) and Idna. Jacques said that he focuses more on reading only while Chiara said that she focuses more on watching movies as the main tool for HL maintenance next to using the HL in daily conversations.

The opportunities for digital language learning tools have boomed in the last decade and most parents embrace the opportunities available.

> There is like a website, it's story reading person. It's like heaps of Flemish or Dutch speaking books on the library and they read it to the kids with music behind it so it's really calming and engaging so we have been doing this too. (Idna)

> My eldest when she was learning to read in English, I've shown her a spelling reading learning program that they use in Belgium to learn to read but just online. So, there are just a few games on there, helping her with some sounds that are different. (Idna)

Chiara decided to focus on maintaining Spanish, but still feels that it would be nice for her girls to at least understand Italian a little bit. For this purpose, her children use Duolingo:

> So, first would be Spanish, but, Italian, if they listen [understand] Italian, I am happy. Even if they don't learn, if they get [to understand] words … Evita with Duolingo or with the grandparents. It will come … Well, now the Duolingo. I put Carolina [on] Duolingo, she loves it. (Chiara)

The results of the online survey and in-depth interviews show that parents report using oral communication as the main tool for HL maintenance. Most parents also regard book reading to and with the children and children reading on their own as an important tool. However, a study by Guskaroska and Elliot (2021) on HL maintenance through digital tools indicated "that books are less exciting" to children (Guskaroska & Elliott, 2021, p. 5). Given the focus on digital tools to maintain HLs, this contradiction is unsurprising, but even educational electronic books were the parents least preferred tool, the children prefer interactive child friendly apps. The parent

group in this study though use TV, movies, online channels, and digital tools evenly across participants, sometimes in connection with online or local HL classes, but still value books as a tool for HL transmission.

Based on the parent's answers, the following tools are practised in HL literacy maintenance and may support other parents in maintaining and developing HL literacy skills in plurilingual children:

- an active heritage language community, including formal classes
- online teaching
- a variety of TV programs, DVDs, and online channels to expand children's registers
- books to be read to and with children
- writing opportunities connected to cultural events
- digital tools such as vocabulary games from the home country.

This study shows that parents have differing goals for their children in terms of HL literacy development and are mindful of selecting different strategies in search of those goals. The range of goals and considerations expressed by the participating parents is echoed in Lam's (Lam, 2011) interview-based case studies of four Vietnamese-Caucasian families in the United States. In particular, the following summary of considerations found to be relevant in that study (2011, p. 207) all appeared in the interview data of the present study:

> Is it only to be able to speak the HL or also to be able to read and write? If so, at what proficiency do parents expect children to learn to read and write in the HL? The elementary level (e.g., reading a menu) or a high level (e.g., reading a newspaper article)? Who will teach their children these skills? Is going to a HL school once a week for an hour or two enough?

These questions allow looking back to Fishman's (1996, p. 13) question: "What happens with the mother tongue before school, in school, out of school, and after school?" All participating parents feel it is their responsibility to maintain HLs with their children. However, teaching children to read and write is most often a task that is designated to schools. For this reason, linking parents' goals and queries on how best to develop HLs with school settings and the school's influence on HLs is a reasonable step to take. Understanding parents' perspectives on how a school setting can support their plurilingual endeavours is therefore valuable.

4.6. Parents' perspectives of the teachers and school

This section highlights parents' perspectives on the role of teachers in accommodating plurilingual students' linguistic knowledge and skills in school and links it to the theme of 'languages in education' (see Section 3.7.4.). Small towns and schools in regions like the New England have an advantage, as the distance between parents and institutions are smaller, which makes "both problems and solutions more visible" and also allows the potential to implement change more easily (Torsh, 2018b). Maria, a parent and languages teacher, suggested having a 'panorama'. She said that the New England lacks HL classes. She proposed that every school in a particular town or area should make a statistical overview of languages of all plurilingual student, a 'panorama', so schools could combine resources in offering HL classes. Such a 'panorama' may well work in these smaller towns in the New England Region and should be imitated by the government as proposed in the report by the Foundation for Language Community Schools (Chik et al., 2019). Also, while many parents see school as an ideal partner for HL maintenance, they also feel the lack of support from schools and teachers.

4.6.1. Schools as partners in heritage language development

Some parents admitted that support of the HL through school has not occurred to them. On the one hand it is not something they have considered at all, and on the other they have purposely established other practices. These parents' approaches seem to run counter to the prevailing academic view (Cruickshank, Black, et al., 2020). Nonetheless, some parents acknowledged that they would appreciate having the school as a reliable partner in their children's HL development and maintenance as they feel that school plays an important part in "the formation of language habits" in general (Torsh, 2018b) regardless of the target language being a HL and this is noteworthy, that educational settings are vital for language development (Cruickshank, Black, et al., 2020, p. 123; Masters, 2020, p. 104; Volodina et al., 2020).

The different perceptions were evident in parents' answers whether schools could support the use and development of an HL in school. Caroline for example said that:

> We probably have not really thought about it because I just have, I certainly have not thought about even trying to make a space for him to use Danish in the school because it has not seemed relevant, maybe. Which is not because … I saw, I just start [to] see it as a possibility that I would strive for … literally hasn't occurred to me.

Lo Shen also said that “I have not thought about that. I guess, yes. But I don’t know”.

Some parents expressed concerns regarding implementation. Caroline feels there is a possibility to incorporate HLs into school; however, she also notes that:

> It would be hard for her [French teacher] to do some of that extension stuff, I think. Even though it would probably be excellent for all of the multilingual kids in the class. There is quite a few of them and quite a few different languages.

Tsukasa also said that “it’s difficult. Currently my younger one is only one who can speak Japanese in her school”. Cameron said that it would be “fantastic” if his daughter could use Japanese at school but also feels “it’s very hard to bring that to school but I think she [daughter] could maybe teach her class one word a week”. Tsukasa also sees the plurilingual approach as an opportunity for HL inclusion. She said that “teachers cannot encourage [teach?] my daughter for Japanese language but I think class teacher can encourage that all kids have different background, use language, teach language, different language to friends or just teach culture, I think that is very nice”.

Accommodating HLs into school seems to be an option for only a few parents. While most parents see the role of the teacher asking for certain words from time-to-time, Idna has a vision of having HLs incorporated more fully. She illustrated that by saying:

> Aafie has reached a level where she needs some guiding, and she could take it home and I can look at it. She doesn’t need someone to help her teach the language, but it would be nice that she gets an opportunity to have someone with her and help her through an activity or something.

Felix, however, has a clear perception of school and parent responsibilities, stating that “we have a desire for our children to speak another language. I see that as a family responsibility not as a school responsibility”. Some other parents also have some reservations about integrating an HL into the language classroom. Lo Shen believes that “it might be too confusing. It is like they also are foreign to the French, Australian kids anyway. ‘Which one is which one?’”

Some children in this study attend schools where the HL is a target language. While Felix feels that it is the parents’ responsibility to develop the HL in general, he however admits that “the school is just part of that if you got German on the curriculum, [then] make it happen”. Felix expressed that they as parents initiated more and extended German tuition in school for their

daughter, by asking the school to provide this. Tsukasa and her husband also encourage their girls to advance their proficiency through more thorough channels, i.e. distance language education, because, according to Tsukasa:

> Chiaki and Sakura are very close to native speaker …, it's online study, so she could choose a level … the high school the school can organise Japanese, formal Japanese study like a home school I'm not sure about that. So now my daughter [Chiaki] is study Japanese [through distance education].

Both families (Felix, Tsukasa) take advantage of options at school to develop their HL further.

Miyako and her husband have chosen not to opt for extra language development because while Itachi's Japanese language skills are not as developed, he is taking advantage of the Japanese language option at school. He had doubts regarding choosing Japanese at his school, but Miyako reported that it strengthened his confidence:

> Before he started Japanese class at school, he wasn't very confident about his Japanese skills. He said "I'm not sure if I should take Japanese at school" because he was worried that at school, other students would have higher expectations for him to speak Japanese fluently, so he was worried about it. He decided to take Japanese because he thought taking Japanese, he would be able to use [it more] or [it would be] more beneficial for him. So, then he started the class, he realised how much he already knew about Japanese so because he is still doing the basic level of like hello how are you, I am (name) and sort of things he already knew that so, so well actually "I'm not that bad". He can already write the characters in Japanese, and he knows like lots of vocabulary and things like that so for him it's yeah motivation.

This scenario shows that opportunities at school can positively influence children's attitude towards their HL (Fielding, 2015, p. 31) and Itachi's example shows how he was even encouraged to use Japanese more often at home and embrace his Japanese heritage.

Schools can therefore be places where cultural and linguistic heritage and identity contribute to HL development and maintenance as investigated by Torsh (2018b, 2020a, 2020b) in a study of bilingual children and intermarriage families in Australia. Torsh's (2018b) investigation raised the following questions, questions aligned with the research questions for this study:

> How can schools support members of a diverse society i.e. linguistic intermarriage parents in their endeavour to raise children with a heritage and identity that is not exclusively connected to Australia?
>
> How can parents support children in using the other language in school and therefore showcasing a diverse linguistic heritage?
>
> How can schools fulfil their obligation to meet the needs of students of diverse backgrounds while still attempting to instil a shared sense of identity and belonging?

Felix attempted a basic answer to the general issue of diverse backgrounds in a monolingual and monocultural school setting:

> The reasonably homogeneous nature of Swiss and Australians' similar culture, there is no, there is no tension arising as a race or ethnicity or any such. It is likely to have a very smooth path to bilingualism because it isn't complicated by, uhm, I imagine other challenges, like people that are speaking Farsi or Indonesian or Chinese or something.

Some parents in this study have a non-white background, increasing the chances of them encountering difficulties related to racism[15] as one described herself during the interview (Tsukasa). Nonetheless, most participating parents in this study reported that schools are open to children with a diverse background, especially in primary schools.

Most parents are interested in enabling their children to communicate orally at first and then to introduce some sort of more formal language development later, i.e. literacy development in an educational context. Some schools can provide HL development through target language teaching (as part of the Languages curriculum) and others grant parents' wishes to allow distance learning options. Thus, according to participating parents' responses, schools play a more vital part in formal HL maintenance the older the children are, while younger children benefit from cultural activities in primary school settings.

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[15] The use of 'race' in this thesis is restricted to instances when it is in connection with literature that mobilises (critically) this term (for example, García, who uses the term specifically to raise awareness around race (see Section 7.4.2.1.)), and when participants themselves use the term.

4.7. Summary of parent’s motivation and practice

The parent participants provided rich and useful accounts of the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of HL maintenance in their homes; in this way, their responses to the questionnaire and interview questions have provided initial answers to Research Question 1. Parents allowed insight into their daily HL family life and their language maintenance preferences; they explained the reasons they maintain HLs and recounted the ways they maintain and develop their children’s HL, not only in a family setting but also through school, where possible. All the parents in this current study reported being committed to maintaining some of their own linguistic and cultural background. Some parents reported feeling successful, such that, for example, their children excel in HL literacy skills. Other parents report wavering and even stopping actively maintaining the HL. As the parent responses revealed, maintaining an HL requires substantial effort from the HL parent and commitment from the spouse and even the community, perhaps even including schools.

The role of the wider community is also reflected in the reasons parents named for maintaining an HL. The reasons essentially are about the benefits for the plurilingual child and their family, but there are benefits also for the extended family, oversea travel, and cognitive and social aspects. These reasons then influence the tools of HL maintenance. Some parents focus on book reading, exposure to TV, online channels, and media, while others also organise community gatherings and enrol their children in formal HL classes, privately or through school. Examples mentioned by some of the parents show that support from schools and teachers is possible; however, most parents underestimate HL development opportunities in schools because it is an approach that has been neglected so far. Most parents see the role of Languages teachers and teachers in general as a supportive partner in their plurilingual endeavours. According to parents, the main responsibility for developing and maintaining an HL rests with themselves. In other studies parents have also indicated that they have the main responsibility for the transmission of HLs, so parental responsibility for maintaining and developing an HL is a universal theme and not solely a challenge experienced in regional Australia (Ellis & Sims, 2014; Ellis et al., 2019; Iwaniec, 2020; McCabe, 2014; Oh, 2003; Okita, 2002; Ortman, 2008; Piller & Gerber, 2018; Romanowski, 2021; Tatar, 2015; Torsh, 2020a; Van Mensel & Deconinck, 2019). However, the lack of community support and access to more intense HL literacy development outside the family setting certainly is an issue related to geographical distance and disclosed in other studies (see, for example, Community Languages Australia,

2018; Ellis et al., 2018; Joo et al., 2021; Oriyama, 2012; Pauwels, 2005; The NSW Federation of Community Language Schools Inc., 2020). For this reason, the potential for support for HL maintenance beyond the family, including by government, was worthy of investigation.

Chapter 5. Plurilingual Children's Heritage Language Perspectives and Use

The reported experience of plurilingual children in regional Australia is the topic of this chapter; specifically, it provides insights into the experiences of plurilingual children in regional New South Wales. The experiences of the plurilingual children who participated in the study are used as a basis for answering Research Question 2 (see Section 2.5.2.). The chapter includes examples of how plurilingual children use their languages in a family setting, the child's perspective on how parents maintain the heritage language (HL), and how children feel about being plurilingual. It provides some insight, from the children's perspective, into the role of the school and in particular the role of language teachers and if and how children feel schools can accommodate the plurilingual children's linguistic knowledge and skills. Their contribution also helps to answer:

- the question posed by Fishman (1996) about what happens with children's use of HLs before school, in school, out of school, and after school
- Research Question 2 (Section 2.5.2): What are the experiences of plurilingual children in regional Australia in relation to their heritage language maintenance and personal identity issues?

5.1. Results from online questionnaire

The child participants in the online questionnaire comprised 10 children between the ages of 7 and 16 years. There were three boys and seven girls. Amongst them, they use seven different languages excluding English. Table 5.1 displays the two age groups, gender, the HL used at home, and additional language(s) learnt at school. One can infer that the children understood the terminology used in the questionnaire as they all completed the questions, for example, regarding home/heritage language.

Table 5-1 Child Participant's Language Repertoire and Additional Languages

	School stage	Gender	Name (pseudonym)	Languages used at home in addition to English	Language learnt in school
7–11 year olds	2	F	Evita	Spanish, Italian	none
	2	M	Ole	Danish	French
	3	F	Evelyne	French	French
	3	F	Sakura	Japanese	French
12+ year olds	3	F	Fiona	Swiss German	French
	4	M	Itachi	Japanese	Japanese
	4	M	Marc	Swiss German	French
	5	F	Agnes	Danish	French
	5	F	Chiaki	Japanese	Japanese (German, French)
	5	F	Julia	Swiss Germ	German and French

Stage 2: Years 3&4, Stage 3: Years 5&6, Stage 4: Years 7&8, Stage 5: Years 9&10, Stage 6: Years 11&12

5.1.1. Australian Curriculum: Languages learners' background

Most child participants are attending an additional language class, especially in Years 7 and 8, where language learning is part of the mandatory 100-hour language learning strategy of the NSW Education Standards Authority. Some participants attending primary school do not necessarily have the option of regular language classes but rather have language clubs, which they attend a few times a year. All Stage 5 participants in this study continued with language learning after the Year 7 and 8 mandatory language program and all child participants are or have been exposed to additional language learning in school.

As described in Section 1.3.1, according to the *Australian Curriculum: Languages* (ACARA, 2017, Section on 'Diversity of languages') there are three major groups of language learners accounted for in the Australian school system. These are termed 'Second Language Learners', 'Background Language Learners, and 'First Language Learners'. Child participants in this study included two of the three major groups. Four children are **background learners** of the HL and five children are **second language learners** of the HL, and so accordingly are **third language learners**, which means they are introduced to learning a target language at school in addition to English and an HL as shown in Table 5.1.

The **first language learner** group is not really represented in this study as all participants have grown up and attended school in Australia. However, some children have undertaken short

periods of schooling in the target language, their HL, while living abroad. Therefore, they have had some socialisation as well as initial literacy development in that language, but still use the target language/HL at home and therefore have the potential to expand their use of the language at school, if the right supports are given.

Children participating in the study learn French, Japanese, and German in their additional language classes. Seven learn French; Japanese and German are currently learnt by one participant respectively. Only Evita is currently not receiving any additional language teaching. She is also the only one who attends a small village school in the New England Region. All the other participants attend different schools in one of the bigger towns.

Chiaki, Itachi, Evelyne and Julia are background learners of the languages learnt at school. Three are typical background learners with a varying degree of proficiency, including the variation of Julia learning German but having Swiss German as an HL background.

Chiaki, Sakura, Marc, Fiona, Julia, Ole and a girl with Danish as a HL are second, or additional, language learners with respect to the target language learnt at school. Some of the schools provide several languages, for example, one semester of French and one semester of German in Years 7 and 8, but also offer distance learning in their HLs for the HSC. Therefore, Chiaki and Marc experience being both background learners as well as being second/additional language learners, with respect to the different languages learnt at school, and depending on how well schools respond to requests from plurilingual children and their parents.

There is also some variation in terms of the classroom context of learning. This is important to note because, according to the child participants, language class sizes in schools vary greatly. In Year 9 and 10, languages classes usually have fewer than 10 students, while the earlier years usually contain the whole year group classes, and thus have a larger group in most cases. All groups seem diverse with regard to speakers of different languages. Two participants have no other children speaking another language in their class, five participants have one to three HL speakers, and three have more than three who speak a language other than English at home.

5.1.2. Literacy skills of child participants

This section covers the children's reported perception of their skills in English and their HL. This is important because the children's reported perceptions of their linguistic help to generate

knowledge about the research questions. The child participants were able to self-assess the four literacy skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing during the online questionnaire.

In response to Research Question 2, "What are the experiences of plurilingual children in regional Australia in relation to their heritage language maintenance and personal identity issues", the child participants' responses presented here suggest that the different language skills reported vary greatly between child participants and are described in more detail below.

5.1.2.1. 7–11-year-old participants

There were three female participants and one male participant in the 7–11 years age group. Two children were in Stage 2 (Year 3 and 4) (Evita and Ole), and two were in Stage 3, (Year 5 and 6) (Sakura and Evelyne). Three children attend school in one of the towns, and one attends school in a little village. The languages they use apart from English are Spanish, French, Danish, and Japanese, and Evita also uses a little bit of Italian as a third language.

All children find it extremely easy to speak English. Sakura also finds it extremely easy to speak Japanese while the other children in that age group find it somewhat easy to speak their HL. All four find it easy to understand English and somewhat easy to understand the HL. All three girls find it extremely easy to read in English while Ole finds it difficult. In the follow-up interview he reported that he has, in fact, only just started reading. Sakura finds it somewhat easy to read in her HL while the other children find it somewhat difficult to read in the HL. Writing in English is extremely easy for all the children. Two find it somewhat easy to write in their HL, Evita finds it somewhat difficult to write in Italian and Spanish, and Ole finds it extremely difficult to write in his HL (Danish).

5.1.2.2. 12+ year-old participants

In the age group 12 years and older there were six participants, two boys and four girls. One participant was in Stage 3 (Year 5 and 6) (Fiona), two were in Stage 4 (Year 7 and 8) (Itachi and Marc), and three were in Stage 5 (Years 9 and 10) (Agnes, Chiaki, and Julia). All of them attend school in one of the larger towns. The languages they use apart from English are Danish, Swiss German and Japanese and one child has French as a third language. All children find it extremely easy to speak English, Chiaki also finds it extremely easy to speak the HL, and four others find it somewhat easy to speak and one somewhat difficult to speak the HL.

Everyone finds it extremely easy to understand English, five also find it extremely easy to understand the HL, and two find it somewhat easy to understand the HL. All the children find it extremely easy to read in English. Chiaki finds it extremely easy and four find it somewhat easy to read in their HL, and one finds it somewhat difficult to read in the HL. The third language (i.e. second HL) used by Evita is also felt as being read somewhat easily. Everyone finds it extremely easy to write in English, two find it somewhat easy to write in the HLs, and the rest find it somewhat difficult to write in their HL.

In summary, all the child participants find it very easy to communicate in English, which is an expected outcome as all children are growing up with an English-speaking parent and attend English-speaking schools. Furthermore, none of the children expressed any extreme difficulties in using their HLs. The disclosed confidence in their self-perceived language ability in the HLs may surprise because researching into HL use and maintenance often leaves a negative impression due to the loss of HLs by the third generation, as reviewed above in Section 2.3.2. The children's perception of their own abilities and reported acceptance of their plurilingualism do not contradict the literature reviewed above; however, the results differ from expectations held when the study was initiated. These results contribute to answering the Research Question 2: 'What are the experiences of plurilingual children in regional Australia in relation to their heritage language maintenance and personal identity issues?'

5.1.3. Comfort with using heritage language and school support

In response to Research Question 2 and its sub-question, "How do children feel about living in a regional area with few to no other speakers of their language", most child participants reported feeling extremely comfortable using the HL outside the home. They would use the HL for example when they attend a school event with their parents or when their parents drop them off. Children, for example Julia, who feel less comfortable using their HL outside the home also revealed that their school probably is not interested in supporting children with an HL background, while all the children who feel comfortable using the HL outside the home also indicated that their schools are interested in supporting children with an HL background. Itachi, Miyako's son, feels extremely uncomfortable using Japanese outside the home; however, he stated that his school is supportive, and he even reported some measures that supports HLs. This result raises the question about whether the participants' use of the HL at school affects their sense of support from the school or vice versa, as discussed below in Section 5.6.2.

Another consideration is the participants' age in comparison with their feelings of comfort. Some studies mention correlations between age and comfort with using HLs (Jean & Geva, 2012, p. 50). In most cases, younger children tend to feel more comfortable than older children. Tse (1998) theorised that until the age of approximately eight years old, children are not aware that their HL is a minority language, which may explain that the younger children in this study feel comfortable using their HL. One exception was Françoise's daughter Charlotte who rejected the use of French at the young age of four. Otherwise, this current study shows no age correlation with feeling comfortable using the HL at school; the reasons may lie in the parents' FLP (family language practice) and parents' approach in handling HL in different domains. Nonetheless, all child participants clearly stated that English is their preferred language.

Throughout the age groups, the children specified different school activities and approaches that either support or hinder the use of their HL in an educational environment. Measures that participants listed themselves that support the use and development of an HL are:

- extension classes to work at an appropriate academic level (Julia)
- choice of language even if small class (Marc)
- option of distance learning (Chiaki, Julia)
- inclusion of HL through specific tasks like comparison of words in different languages (Chiaki, Sakura, Marc, Julia)
- excursions and trips that encourage language learning/bilingualism (Marc)
- language clubs or language learning groups (Evelyne, Sakura)
- video chat with a class overseas (Sakura)

Actions that inhibit the use and development of the HL are:

- no language learning until Year 5 (Fiona)
- limited time for language learning (30-minute session per week) (Fiona, Ole)
- no time allowance to use language with HL speakers (Fiona)

Even though the child participants listed some supportive measures taken by the school and language teachers, they still indicated that teachers never to sometimes include the HL in lessons, and only Chiaki, Fiona and Marc experience regular inclusion of their HL in the language classroom. These three experience the inclusion of their HL differently:

- Japanese user Chiaki experiences regular inclusion because she attends an online Japanese class through school.
- Fiona's Swiss German background is included in the German lesson.
- Marc's German is included in the French class, e.g. word comparison.

Sakura suggested that especially with Japanese, the Olympics in Tokyo (occurring at the time of data collection) offered possibilities to establish connections using Japanese words or talking about Japanese culture and, in the long-term, including other cultures as well. Fiona is encouraged to share her Swiss German heritage knowledge in her German class and the German teacher generally includes different cultures from different German-speaking countries in her class. On the other hand, some participants noted that the language teachers would only teach the target language with no regard to other languages in the class.

5.2. Child participant interview results

The interviews were undertaken after child participants completed the online questionnaire. Similar to the online questionnaire, the interview questions varied slightly between the 7– 11-year-old participants and the 12+ year-old participants. The in-depth interviews were conducted with seven children from four different families. Two children are only children (Ole, Evelyne), one family has two sisters (Sakura and Chiaki), and one family contains three siblings (Fiona, Marc, and Julia). Interestingly, the child group has three fathers who use an HL and only one mother. This stands in contrast to the overall distribution of HL parent participants, as 10 of the 13 participating families have an HL mother.

The following analysis is organised around the main themes outlined in the Methods Chapter and illustrated in Figure 3.6. The focus of the analysis is language repertoire and domains, ideologies, benefits and challenges, the parents' practices and HLs in the educational settings. Understanding children's language practices in maintaining a HL requires considering dynamic and interconnected patterns and ideas that emerged from the data of the online questionnaires and the in-depth interviews. Children are less categorisable when it comes to reasons and ideologies. As a result, their language practices may not fit neatly into predefined categories based on reasons and ideologies, but rather on different perspectives, as discussed in Section 5.4., 5.5. and 5.6.

5.3. Plurilingual child’s language repertoire and domains

The following section covers the children’s perception of the use of different languages and the domains wherein they use their HLs and links it to the theme of ‘language repertoire’ (see Section 3.7.4.). During the interviews, the children were asked what languages they use and with whom. The same question was also part of the online questionnaire, and the answers were very congruent. Children’s repertoires and language domains inform in more depth the query about the experience of plurilingual children in regional Australia.

5.3.1. Linguistic diversity

In response to Research Question 2 and its sub-question, “What languages do children speak and how do children feel about using their HL or other languages at school”, the data presented here suggest that the language repertoire of the child participant group was very uniform. This stands in contrast to the linguistic diversity of the parent participants who exhibited a large language diversity. Each family only uses one language apart from English and all interviewed children have learnt or are learning French at school. Julia learns German in addition to French and Chiaki decided to drop French and German to develop her HL Japanese via distance education. Nonetheless, the child participants seemed open to expanding their linguistic diversity “because some of my friends also speak different languages so they are all really interested in the other person's language” (Julia). Also, Chiaki said that “I was really sad that I could only choose one of the languages because I would have chosen German to do as well, because it was really fun”. Marc is experiencing a similar dilemma; he will have to choose one language after having had German and French respectively for a term each. “This year we did not get to choose but next year I will choose German”.

5.3.2. Children’s language domains

The child participants mentioned different domains where they use their HL. In response to Research Question 2 and its sub-question, “How does communication work in a multilingual family”, the children’s responses suggest that the most dominant domain is their family setting in Australia. As mentioned above, all interviewed children use English and an HL in their families daily. Sakura said, “So with our dad we always speak English and with our mum we always speak Japanese”. Evelyne’s family uses the same pattern. “Mummy speaks English and

she tries to understand what we say and Papa speaks French to me. I speak French to Papa". When Ole was asked whom, he speaks Danish with he answered:

> My dad. He says he does not understand me unless I do speak to him in Danish … he says he cannot understand any other language except Nepali[16]. I hear him speak to my mum a lot in English. He sometimes forgets that he says that and speaks to me in English, especially when Mum is around.

Ole likes to use both languages and happily plays along with his fathers 'Danish only' HL maintenance approach.

A similar scenario happens in the Swiss German family. Marc started explaining that "when we are around our dad, we speak Swiss German but with mum", and Julia continues, "and mum also understands Swiss German, but she doesn't speak it". Fiona then mentioned that "we also speak English with dad as well … well, dad generally, if we do say something in English he would say 'pardon' or something like that and we would have to repeat it in [Swiss] German". Marc emphasised that "he encourages us to talk with him [in Swiss German], and even around mum".

Extended family is the domain in which children use the HL less frequently. While Evelyne only mentioned godparents in France, all the other children have relatives in the country of origin of the HL parent. "Every week we talk to our Japanese grandparents and our Japanese aunt" (Sakura). Ole talked fondly about relatives in Denmark whom he only sees irregularly, and Fiona explained that "our grandparents only let us speak [Swiss] German". Fiona and her sister Julia and brother Marc have their grandparents close by in one of the towns, a Swiss German speaking aunt and cousins on the coast, and some other relatives still living in Switzerland.

The children also mentioned some families and friends in town where they have possible opportunities to use their HL language skills. Sakura explained that:

> Our friends are part Japanese, so we normally speak Japanese with them … most of the other kids in the Japanese community don't speak as

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[16] Family number 5 used to live parts of the year in Nepal, Denmark and Australia. Both parents have some proficiency in Nepali.

> much Japanese but if we talk to the kids we talk to them in English but if we talk to their mums then we always speak to them in Japanese.

Chiaki added that “it depends on like how fluent they are as well with Japanese or English, sometimes it’s a mix of both English and Japanese”. Evelyne said that “I have got a friend from school, Jeanne, whose dad is also French, but she has never been to France before. She does speak French, but not at school that much though”. Her dad added that “she does not want to speak French with her friends at our place even when the friends speak French”. Julia, Fiona, and Marc know a few Swiss people in the area, but they do not use these connections for HL use. Also, Ole explained: “Well, there is one Danish family that we know … they go to my school, but the oldest has left to go to high school. … She [mother of other Danish-Australian family] is talking Danish. She is talking Danish to us”.

The last domain of HL use is the country of origin of the HL parent. Prior to Covid-19, the four families made regular trips to the HL home country to visit relatives. The most frequent trips are “about every second year for Christmas, normally” (Sakura) and Ole’s mum Caroline explained that “there is a three month of monsoon period in Nepal where one year we would come to Australia and one year we would go to Denmark”. Since Ole started school, they have settled in Australia and the trips are less frequent but “we were in Denmark for Christmas last year, which was really special. It was Ole’s first Danish Christmas in Denmark. It didn't actually snow, unfortunately” (Caroline). Exposure to an HL in the country of origin can have an influence on the HL skills. “It was not until about three years ago after visiting France it just clicked and then it really became very natural” is how Jade explains her daughter Evelyne’s HL development. Also, Fiona and her siblings “spent a year and a half in Switzerland”, which was an experience that advanced their HL skills and created a connection to Swiss German and the Swiss culture.

The opportunities to use HLs vary greatly for all the plurilingual children in this study. Sakura and Chiaki have quite a big Japanese community in the area with children their age to communicate in Japanese with and celebrate Japanese cultural festivities. However, even though there are a few Swiss people living in the area, for Fiona, Julia, and Marc there is no big community to use their HL often outside of the family. “We do not usually use it outside of the house unless we are like shopping with our dad or something” (Fiona) and Julia explains a bit further:

> Well, you do not really have much of a chance to use our language other than our family. We can't really use it anywhere else because there is no one else to interact with, and even in the wider community, I had known a couple of people who used to speak in German but have since lost the language.

Evelyne and Ole's experiences are restricted to less than a handful of HL families. Evelyne mentioned that "I speak French with some of my friends at school" and Ole uses Danish with one of the mums at school.

However, as mentioned previously, the children do not use their HL often in a school setting. Most child participants reported using the HL with their HL-speaking parent and other adult members of their linguistic community in Australia or in the home country. Ole explained that "I quite like to speak Danish because then I can if there is someone in Denmark who doesn't know English" and Evelyne said that "I speak French with them [godparents] because they can't really speak much English". Thus, most children are aware of contexts where the use of English with HL interlocutors is "rude or inappropriate" or even impossible due to the lack of English, as revealed in responses which align with Park (2021, p. 6).

5.4. Plurilingual children's language ideologies

Understanding the child participant's ideologies in relation to language use contributes to answering the question about plurilingual children's experience. As presented above in Chapter 4, parents see HL maintenance as a tool for communication in the family, to identify with the HL culture, and as a great resource for their children's future employment opportunities. Some studies, however, have revealed that not every plurilingual child has a positive attitude towards the HL (Mu & Dooley, 2015; Park, 2021; Zhang & Slaughter-Defoe, 2009), whereas the children participating in this current study all seemed to have been positively impacted by their parents' attitude towards plurilingualism. So, this section continues the exploration of the themes presented in Chapter 3 (see Section 3.7.4.) and links to the theme of 'language maintenance practices and ideologies'.

5.4.1. Attitudes towards heritage language and English

During the interviews, the children were asked how they feel speaking more than one language and how they feel speaking the HL and English. In response to Research Question 2 and its sub-question, "What benefits do children perceive in speaking more than one language and having

experience of more than one culture", the data presented here suggest that all children reported to have a positive attitude towards their HL and therefore towards their plurilingualism. "I think it's pretty cool" (Fiona), and Marc added that "It is interesting, people find it interesting". The three younger children all feel that it is part of their upbringing and agree that there is no difference between using English or the HL. Ole feels happy using both languages and simply just likes them both equally. Evelyne also said that there is "nothing different really" and Sakura plainly said "I feel comfortable with it [using the two languages]".

Plurilingualism as a phenomenon is something all the participating children are content with. None of the children mentioned any negative feeling towards their own plurilingualism. Rather, they embrace its uniqueness. Chiaki feels that "it's fun to be able to speak both languages and in Australia it is a bit like having, like a secret language really. We are saying something that probably shouldn't be said out loud [laughs]". Fiona and her siblings experience this in the same way. "It also means that you can have conversations without other people overhearing what you are saying".

Reflection of the children's daily use of English and an HL occurs consciously, and they actively negotiate their language ideologies. All children prefer to communicate in English because "that is what most of the people we are around with speak" (Marc) and "it is what we get taught at school" (Fiona). Furthermore, Julia reflects that there are differences. "Well, in Swiss German our personality might be a bit different because you can't really ... if there is not the same words in English, probably you have to speak a bit differently", and her brother Marc highlights that "our vocabulary isn't quite the same in [Swiss] German as it is in English, obviously". Fiona mentioned that "we are not as fast in speaking [Swiss] German. So yeah, but I know I am not as fluent". Evelyne also prefers English to French because "it is easier to speak English, but French is good … it is nice to speak". The Japanese-Australian sisters also prefer English:

> I think for me it's … I like both languages a lot. But I think I like English a bit better because I can read and write better in English. Well in Japanese, I can read it, but I can't write it too well, so I think English is pretty. (Sakura)

Chiaki concludes:

> I also think because we use English a lot more than we would, like, use Japanese, in everywhere basically, at school umm. But I like Japanese

> because it’s sort of like cool, you know. Everybody speaks English around us but not as many speak Japanese and it’s fun.

5.4.2. Children’s view on the benefits of heritage languages

Building on the theme of ‘reasons and motivations’ (see Section 3.7.4.) the interviewed child participants acknowledged two major benefits in knowing more than one language:

- HL communication for use overseas and social benefits
- HL as an academic and cognitive asset.

The children’s answers highlight that the knowledge of more than one language gives them a certain advantage. Most of them provide illustrations to show how knowing an HL provides them with easy linguistic access to their parent’s home country and its people. Sakura explained that:

> Like, if we have guests from Japan or if we go to Japan and there are people who speak English. Then you can help translate between people. Or if we are [sic] in our life end up in either Japan or somewhere in Australia with Japanese people, so I can speak with people, lots of different people and meet different people.

Ole also recognises that being plurilingual offers benefits: “Well, English you can basically use around the world nowadays, but still, I prefer, I quite like to speak Danish because then I can if there is someone in Denmark who doesn't know English”. Evelyne feels that if she wanted to travel to France, it will benefit her in travelling around the country and Marc simply feels it is a benefit “if you find someone else that speaks that language”.

Most children also see a benefit in plurilingualism because of the cognitive and academic benefits. Evelyne feels “it is easier to understand different European languages when I understand French”. She experienced this when they were visiting Spain a few years ago. Reflecting on how languages are an advantage for learning other languages, Julia said that “I think it is really useful because then it is easier to learn another language. Say, I am finding learning French much easier than I did learning German. I think my brain is already adjusted to learning different languages”. Chiaki also sees an academic benefit. “I also want to do, or I am trying on doing Japanese as part of my HSC, so that’s another good thing of having another language that you can study for, like uni”. Her sister, Sakura, added:

> I think it will be pretty useful for me later on to be able to learn some other languages not just Japanese and English. And I already know how useful it is to know Japanese as well as English, so I think it helps me keep on learning French because I know how useful it can be if I learn it.

Although academic and cognitive assets dominate their view on plurilingual benefits, the children recognise the social aspects and enjoy the special attention they obtain from others. "I think people find it interesting if you know multiple languages" (Marc). Sakura feels happy about the special attention she gets:

> Well, I don't know if that is because I'm still at primary school, but everybody [is] still really like: How do you do that? And if I'm talking to my mum or my sister in Japanese then it's normally just questions like, "you're really good at speaking Japanese or what were you talking about?" That's a question they often ask. And sometimes they teach, they ask me to teach them how to say some Japanese words. And they go like, "wow, what are you saying, wow" [laughs].

Likewise, Evelyne accepts that "a lot of people ask me to say stuff in French".

5.4.3. Cultural and linguistic connections

While the children did not use the terms 'cultural heritage' and 'cultural identity', they did talk about these themes using expressions such as 'being Danish' or 'being Japanese'. Further, the children consider there is significant value in academic, cognitive, and social benefits, whereas cultural reasons seem less valuable. The question arises about whether the interviewed children value language for its academic, cognitive, and social benefits more because there is limited exposure to the culture of their HL.

In response to Research Question 2, "What are the experiences of plurilingual children in regional Australia in relation to their heritage language maintenance and personal identity issues", the child participants' responses suggest that the connection between identity, cultural belonging, and language is strong. "Most of the culture is in the language and is expressed in the language. The culture could not be expressed and handed on in any other way" (Fishman, 1996, p. 81). Therefore, maintaining language is vital for maintaining a connection to culture. In this current study, however, the language appears to be isolated from the culture in some cases. While the HL is maintained between parents and children, cultural aspects appear limited to New Year, Christmas, nation-specific festivities, and food. Furthermore, the children did not

report specifically a sense of belonging and cultural identity to one or the other culture. However, Fiona, Marc and Julia agreed that they socially and linguistically identify with the English language much more than with Swiss German, and identify unambiguously as Australian, even though they appreciate and completely accept their other cultural and linguistic background. Further, Chiaki also reported a sense of belonging and identity for her HL: "It's [Japanese] very important, we had it for most of our life, so it' sort of part of us", and her sister Sakura added that she likes "English a bit better because I can read and write better in English".

During the in-depth interviews, the children were asked about their connections to the culture of their HL. Chiaki and Sakura seemed to have the strongest connection to the culture of their Japanese mum. "My top three favourite foods are all Japanese foods", Sakura said. On the other hand, she sometimes feels the dilemma of growing up with two cultures. She stated that "when you're really angry or upset then you might think that you wish that you never were Japanese, but after, you realise that you never wished that you said that or anything". Chiaki illustrated her experience: "I don't think I ever thought I only wanted to speak English, sometimes, I don't know … like just being able to be part of, like, or experience the culture and all the different, like, books and shows and movies". They explained further:

> We do the girls festival, uhm, like children's fun things like put up some decorations and things … and also when we are in Japan then we celebrate New Year the Japanese way. … but if we are in Australia, we normally just do Australian things … [and] if my mum manages to find Japanese New Year food then we eat that as well ... our mum does quite a few things like uhm, she gives us Japanese food and she makes us listen to Japanese music.

Fiona, Marc, and Julia's family still celebrate Swiss National Day and "we make a lot of Swiss food at home" (Marc). When Fiona mentioned that she sometimes takes Swiss food to school for her German class the three children started to go into rhapsodies about Zopf (plaited bread), Birchermüesli (muesli), and Schoggiweggli (chocolate bun). Likewise, Ole seemed to make a connection to culture through food, like the very rich chocolate cake he gets for his birthday, which is a Danish tradition. Ole also mentioned celebrating Christmas in Australia on the 24th December, but otherwise he recalled traditions from when he was visiting Denmark, like "on New Year's you get to have fireworks there and everyone takes down their mailboxes so no one puts a firecracker in it". When asked whether they maintain these traditions in Australia, Ole

answered "No, because no one sells fireworks here. But if they did, and it was not against the law, it will probably work".

The (self-perceived) high level of HL skills (reported as 'good' to 'very proficient') allows the participating children to connect to their parent's culture easily, which offers a valuable resource for future endeavours to maintain the children's connection with their cultural heritage. While they may not strongly affiliate culturally, the linguistic knowledge connects them to another culture, and their sense of identity may influence HL maintenance for future generations (Fielding, 2011; Fielding & Harbon, 2013; García & Fishman, 2010; Joseph, 2004; Koshiba, 2020; Park, 2021; Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2017; WPP AUNZ, 2018).

5.4.4. Heritage language change (shift and loss)

Plurilingualism in the New England region is not exempt from language shift or loss. The research question asking about plurilingual children's experiences therefore addresses issues of language change as well. Factors that cause language shift have been outlined by Leitner (2004), and this study suggests that these factors must be considered in reversing language shift (RLS) in Australia, as illustrated in Section 2.4.1.2. above. The size of each language group in this study is a critical issue. Most children mentioned only small groups to a handful of other HL users in the area; therefore, there is no community support that allows further HL input. Furthermore, the domains and interlocutors are limited to the home setting, extended family overseas, and visits to the home country. Thus, as illustrated previously, most children feel that they are restricted in their HL use. Language shift in this case is an unavoidable outcome eventually if Leitner's (2004) factors are considered seriously. Nevertheless, the children's attitudes and ideologies suggest that the value of their HL in the community is considered high, which seems to affect their language maintenance positively, and some children develop their HL literacy skills through deliberate subject choices at school. Also, despite the children feeling much more comfortable using the dominant language of English, their responses during the in-depth interviews reflected a positive HL experience.

5.4.4.1. Emotions about losing the heritage language

During the interviews, the children were asked about how they would feel about losing their HL. The children described their feelings as being sad, upset, and disappointed in themselves. Ole mentioned in the interview that he was able to speak Nepali when he was younger but has

lost it and he feels sad about this. When asked about losing Danish he said that "I probably feel sadder because like my first words were actually in Danish, but Nepali was my first language that I knew all of it". Evelyne also feels that knowing a language is a valuable thing: "I think I would be a bit upset to lose French because it is nice to be able to speak it". Julia would also feel sad losing her Swiss German, and her sister Fiona even said that "I would be pretty disappointed with myself". The overall emotion about losing the HL is clearly distressing for them.

Emotional distress made the children think about why they would like to maintain their HL. The older children are aware that the HL is part of their lives and themselves. When talking about her wish to maintain Japanese, Chiaki said that "I wouldn't want to lose it because, it's very important. We had it for most of our life so it's sort of like a part of us". Marc simply said that "it's a pretty valuable skill". There was also the possibility of a feeling of resentment because of all the effort that went into growing up bilingual: "I would feel like I have lost something that I have already learned… because we also spent a year and a half in Switzerland. I would feel like I lost that connection as well" (Fiona). As described above, culture is expressed through language (Fishman, 1996), and Julia illustrates why maintaining the HL is important to her:

> We went to school there and have learnt how to interact with people. And I would feel pretty sad because you couldn't go over to Switzerland or something, because you couldn't fit in straight away, you would have to learn the whole new language again".

In the unlikely event of being removed from any HL speaker, Sakura even said, "I think, I would try to continue to practise Japanese inside my head because I wouldn't want to forget". Most children did not mention their parents' emotions regarding HL loss. Only Marc mentioned that "dad would feel pretty bad" if the children lost the HL and that his "parents are motivated as well" to help to maintain the HL. Therefore, it would appear that the children's determination to maintain their HL is fuelled not only by their emotional discomfort with losing something but also by their plurilingualism being part of their identity and from respect for their parents' efforts to raise plurilingual children.

5.4.4.2. Possible reasons for loss of heritage language

The participating children are all motivated to continue using their HL. However, some factors strongly point towards language shift, such as the location and size of the HL user group and the limited domains the HL is used in. Fortunately, the children's attitudes and beliefs about the HL and the value of the HL in the community has prevented an immediate loss.

As reviewed in Chapter 2, according to the literature, the nature of the language can impact on the speed of the shift. Dutch and German speakers tend to use English more easily at home because the languages are linguistically similar and this may lead to a faster shift (Clyne, 2005). In contrast, Asian and African languages are preserved longer in a home setting in an English dominant country like Australia. The cultural differences between the European and Asian family backgrounds may also be a reason for a slower shift. In the study reported here, participating families with an Asian heritage facilitate language learning outside the home setting, while the families with a European heritage seem to underestimate the power of formal language instruction recommended by scholars in the field (Chik et al., 2019; Kheirkhah & Cekaite, 2015; McCabe, 2014; McLeod et al., 2019; Oh, 2003; Oriyama, 2012; Park & Sarkar, 2007; Tatar, 2015). The only situation Chiaki can envisage that might lead to language loss is "if we got moved away from our parents and away from any other Japanese person in the world and we are by ourselves and only had English-speaking people with no access to Japanese culture, then probably". However, with the support she receives not only from her parents but also through formal instruction, Chiaki feels she will be able to preserve Japanese.

5.4.5. Plurilingual challenges

The ability to speak more than one language has some benefits, as demonstrated above in Section 5.4.2. However, plurilingualism presents challenges in some circumstances. The challenges children mentioned are identity issues and writing systems and links it to the theme of 'reasons and motivations' (see Section 3.7.4.).

5.4.5.1. Challenges related to identity

Linguistic intermarriage relationships sometimes also mean inter-racial relationships. While the use of 'race' has been reconsidered throughout, it has been retained when in connection with literature that mobilises (critically) this term (for example, Garcia, who uses the term specifically to raise awareness around race (see Section 7.4.2.1.), and when participants

themselves use the term. Due to the cultural background of most of the participating children, they have not had any severe racist experiences. Only Chiaki mentioned that "when you're like seven, kids are pretty brutal to each other. They say some mean things and you get a bit upset". Chiaki and Sakura have sometimes experienced difficulties with their Japanese background when they were younger; however, they now "both appreciate being able to speak [Japanese]" (Sakura). Felix, the father of Julia, Marc, and Fiona, mentioned during his interviewed that "the homogeneous nature of Swiss and Australian similar culture, there is no, there is no tension arising as a race". This suggests that children and families with a non-white background may experience racist attitudes from people with a white background in this regard. Maria, a languages teacher from Venezuela, mentioned racism in her interview, see Section 6.2.2.

5.4.5.2. Challenges related to writing systems

There are different ways to represent verbal communication in a writing system. The most common is the Latin alphabet (Vaughan, 2020). However, children of five families in this study use either the Japanese and/or Chinese writing system. These different writing systems impose another challenge and is apparent in Chiaki and Sakura's statements:

> I feel like my thing is always highly on speaking. Even our friends who can like speak Japanese and understand like the sounds the language, like, when it is spoken. But I think the struggle is because it's such a different writing system … specially in Japanese because it's so different writing structures for some reason. (Chiaki)

> Because I think if it was like a language where it still had the same, basically the same alphabet, it would kind of be easier to write. Well, it's like Chinese and Japanese that it's a completely different alphabet so it's kind of harder to remember how to … yeah, and the alphabet each letter has like three or four different ways to read each, so it's quite hard to remember. (Sakura)

In contrast to the other children in this case study, the two sisters have been educated in Japanese literacy from a very young age. The other children mainly developed their speaking and listening skills through the daily use of the HL and storytelling, which are the methods most HL parents said they implemented, as displayed in Section 4.5. above.

5.5. Plurilingual children's perspective on parental support

The role of parents is crucial not only in the development of HL literacy but also in the more general maintenance of an HL. The effect parents may have on their children's confidence in HL use is echoed in the data from the in-depth interviews with child participants. To develop literacy skills in plurilingual children, parents need a clear goal. Do parents only want their children to speak the HL, or would they also like them to read and write it? Essentially, "parents are the language planners … whereas the child is introduced to whatever linguistic environment is created" (Lambert, 2008, p. 27). These parental 'plans' or FLPs contribute to answer further the research questions related to plurilingual children's experiences and continue the theme of 'language practices and ideologies' (see Section 3.7.4.).

5.5.1. Supporting speaking and listening skills

As shown in Section 4.5., parents in this study report being the people providing the most frequent input into their children's speaking and listening skills. They also report (in Section 4.5.) that use of the HL is mostly in these domains of speaking and listening, for a variety of practical reasons. These findings are echoed in previous findings by Ellis et al. (2018, 2019), McCabe (2014), Piller and Gerber (2018) and Rubino (2021), all of whom have pointed out that without a speech community there is a lot of pressure on the HL parents to develop and maintain HLs. However, all the children feel supported in their HL speaking and listening skills.

The children provided several examples of how their parents support their use of HL during spoken interactions. Ole said that "my dad forces me to [speak Danish] … He doesn't answer unless I speak Danish. So, if I ask him something in English, he will not answer". Similarly, Fiona explained that "dad, generally, if we don't say something in English, he would say 'pardon' or something like that and we would have to repeat it in German". Chiaki and Sakura's Japanese with their mum seems more at ease: "with our mum we always speak Japanese", and Evelyne also mostly uses French with her dad because his English is limited, and Jacques feels that "the French between us is so natural". The use of English for better understanding between parents might hinder children's development of the HL but is widely accepted by the children. All of them reported that they feel that their parents do the best they can to support their plurilingualism.

5.5.2. Supporting reading and writing skills

Developing reading and writing skills requires that HL speakers perceive their HL to have "a high level of language vitality" (Tse 2001, cited in Lam, 2011, p. 208) in the form of parental and institutional and peer support. Oriyama (2012) illustrates that exposure to media in the form of book reading and TV programs also plays an important role in developing literacy skills. Book reading, motion pictures, and online language learning tools are parental support strategies children experience in their plurilingual lives.

Book reading is the most common form of literacy support the participating children receive from their parents. All children mentioned books. Chiaki said that "yeah, she [mother] buys us like the books and things, and our grandparents send them over. We have a lot of those". Likewise, Evelyne said that "papa and mummy have gotten me some books in French before, mostly papa. Papa used to borrow me textbooks in French". Julia and her siblings also "get lots and lots of books and stuff like that … and we read in German sometimes. And he [father] used to read German books aloud".

The second most common form of literacy support they receive is through other media like movies and online tools. Sakura said that "she [mother] makes us read Japanese books and listen to Japanese music", and Chiaki added that they also watch movies. The language learning website and mobile app Duolingo has been mentioned by parents and Evelyne used to use it but chose to stop. "It was too hard and some of the questions were either too hard and some were too easy. Listening and writing down English was easy but writing it in French was really hard". She shares this experience with Chiaki and Sakura and the other children who also feel that writing the HL is a challenge.

5.5.3. Community literacy support

The least support children have received was through classes commonly known as Saturday schools or community classes. As mentioned above, there often is only a handful of other HL interlocutors; therefore, face to face classes is a support structure parents cannot access readily. Only Sakura mentioned that "we did have Japanese classes with about five or six families every weekend but uhm, we don't really have that anymore, part of it being Covid … [and] two of the families moved, so the Japanese community has grown smaller". Also, none of the children mentioned watching TV in their HL on a regular basis even though it has been mentioned by

parents. Chiaki and Sakura's mother mentioned in her interview that she relied on her sister in Japan to recommend TV shows for the girls to watch. Further, Idna mentioned in her interview that she feels watching Belgium TV supports her children learning the HL in a wider range of contexts. Similarly, Oriyama (2012, p. 179) noted that "where HL input is limited, having access to a variety of . . . TV programs is important".

The importance of parental support seems the most obvious; however, as mentioned previously, literacy skills development requires input from different sources. Therefore, it is important to explore HL maintenance possibilities through school, a suggestion made by Fishman (1991) in his reversing language shift theory. Chiaki reported that "mum and dad organised to be able to do like a distance learning thing at [school] because there is no like Japanese teachers there". Julia and Marc are keen to learn German in their languages class to support their knowledge of Swiss German and this is encouraged by their parents.

5.5.4. Summary of children's experience of parental support

The support children experience from their parents in maintaining the HL is varied. Chiaki and Sakura receive input not only from their mother through formal instruction and knowledge of Japanese culture but also through the local Japanese community. Evelyne is exposed to a variety of reading material and there is a clearly defined OPOL approach in her family. The Swiss German sibling group experience their support mainly through verbal exposure to the Swiss German language but they are also exposed to books in German and were able to experience Swiss German and Standard High German during their 18-month stay in Switzerland a few years back. Ole also experiences his support only through verbal exposure because he has only recently started to read and write; Agnes also receives no formal Danish instruction. Evita and her younger sister are encouraged to use HLs material online visual media; and there is a clearly defined OPOL approach in her family. Itachi has had limited verbal and formal input until recently when his parents 'made him do Japanese' at secondary school. Some children experience their parents' support as a logical and natural thing, while others feel somehow pressured.

5.6. Perspectives on plurilingualism at school and in the community

This study set out to explore the experiences of plurilingual children in a regional setting of NSW, specifically the New England Region. In line with the research questions, this section investigates the role of teachers and the community in accommodating plurilingual children's linguistic knowledge and skills in school, in particular, in the additional language classroom and connects it to the theme of 'languages in education' (see Section 3.7.4.). To do this, the children's perspectives of their experiences in the education system are examined.

5.6.1. School support for language development

Mandatory language education is restricted to Years 7 and 8, the first years of secondary school, and thus, not every primary school offers languages. Ole, Evelyne, and Sakura are in a fortunate situation in that they receive some language instruction at school.

Ole has a short weekly French class and Evelyne's school offers an after-school language club. "They do a different language each semester and one semester it was French, and Papa, and we would do that. Papa would teach it. But there is not much for languages though" (Evelyne). Jacques feels that "it was a good experience for the kids. Probably good for me too, good for Evelyne to be shown as bilingual".

Sakura confirms a similar situation in her school: "We do have French classes occasionally, but then that's probably like once in a while". Also, Fiona said that "we have [French] for half an hour each week, we have a French teacher that comes in but not right now".

Ole's school seems more open for diversity, so in addition to the French lessons, "once they invited my dad as a Danish teacher ... I would actually like that a lot … instead of French", which he said is boring. However, introducing a HL to peers seems rare. School visits, as Ole described when his school invited his dad to teach Danish to Ole's class, are uncommon. But, some of the children mentioned occasions, outside the classroom, when they would 'teach' their peers. For example, "they ask me to teach them how to say some Japanese words" (Sakura) or Fiona reported that because some of her friends also speak different languages "they are really interested in the other person's language".

The participating primary school children all take advantage of some language education. Reporting on their experience being a third language learner (Ole and Sakura) and a background learner (Evelyne), helps to answer the research question about plurilingual children's experience in regional Australia in relation to HL maintenance because the participating children draw cognitive and cultural connections between the languages learnt at school and their HL.

However, according to the interviewed children, schools lack support for cultural and linguistic diversity. Sakura said that "we don't really celebrate other cultures".

5.6.1.1. Using and developing heritage language

Developing the children's HL literacy skills through school seems restricted to secondary school where there are more languages choices and distance education may be a possibility as portrayed in Chiaki and Julia's circumstances. However, all children are very keen to explore other ways of using their HL and sharing their cultural background. Sakura thinks that:

> It would be pretty fun to have not just Japanese but maybe more overall cultural kind of events at school, rather than just Japanese. And also, we have some, if it's like a national kind of celebration like 'harmony day' then we do that … So, I think it would be nice if they did that.

Fiona thinks "it would be more fun if they had like a session where you could teach your friends and school mates like how to speak your language so that they can, yeah, like coach and stuff". This idea of sharing linguistic knowledge among peers also appeals to Sakura, who said that "I think it would be pretty fun and it would be interesting for me to be able to show my class some Japanese but uhm, yeah it would be pretty nice".

Chiaki said that her school is "quite diverse like culturally, which is nice". Her school agreed to let her take Japanese HSC via distant education, so she believes everyone else should also be supported in their linguistic endeavours. However unlike with Japanese, there is no official standard for Swiss German. It is rather a collection of primarily spoken Alemannic dialects with no official written standard. Therefore, learning through 'Standard German' is the closest Swiss German-speaking children can get to literacy development (Dogan-Schönberger et al., 2021).

Except for Danish, all the HL languages in this study are taught in different schools in the New England Region. Therefore, developing literacy skills through formal education is possible for

Japanese, German, and French. However, this may be hindered by restricting attitudes from children, parents and teachers alike. For example, some participating parents may feel that HLs maintenance is strictly their responsibility, while at the same time, as found by Lee and Oxelson's results (2006), Languages teachers do not feel it is their responsibility to develop languages other than the target language.

5.6.1.2. Inclusion of heritage languages in class by teachers

During the interviews, the children were asked if the language teacher includes or could include their HL. Most children feel that their linguistic background knowledge is somehow acknowledged and even included, but Ole simply said, "No, probably not, because the Danish didn't go to France"[17]. As hilarious as this comment appears it provides insight into children's perception that it would be difficult for a language teacher to include another language if there is no connection, either linguistically or emotionally between the two, issues that were discussed in other studies too (Gkaintartzi et al., 2015; Leroy, 2017; Thompson, 2006). Nonetheless, Julia, Marc, and Fiona commented that their teachers attempt to include their knowledge. For example, Julia explained that "my German and French classes are pretty good because they always ask what is this word in Swiss German? And my German teacher always relates stuff back to Switzerland and stuff like that". Marc also feels some inclusion: "She [teacher] understands that I speak German and she encourages me to explain what words mean in German. Or sometimes she will ask me about a specific thing about Switzerland". This happens with languages that are either the target language or similar, such as German and Swiss German. Any other languages used by the children are disregarded, which is an experience echoed by the teacher participants and explored in Chapter 6.

5.6.2. Children's use of heritage language knowledge in the Languages classroom

The deliberate use and inclusion of HLs in school and in the Languages classroom in particular, was also raised during the interviews. This issue is promoted in the Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2017) which supports the use and inclusion of the knowledge of children with

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[17] The Vikings did actually invade France in the 9th century AD but were eventually defeated by the Franks.

different cultural and language backgrounds. Most children would welcome a deliberate inclusion.

> I think it would be pretty fun and it would be interesting for me to be able to show my class some Japanese but uhm, yeah it would be pretty nice. And our French teacher does occasionally mention things like, oh, how is it in, because in our class there is a few girls from Germany, some Malaysian people and some Japanese people also. She normally asks "what kind of traditions are there in your country?", when she is talking about traditions in France, yeah I think it's pretty fun (Sakura).

Fiona even believes it would improve her confidence. "I would feel more comfortable then. If they knew some German, if my friends knew some German then they wouldn't think it would sound so weird". Julia feels that "it would be pretty cool if they got to learn about it", and Marc said, "a couple of my friends did pick German and got interested in learning more about it so they can speak with me". The peer-to-peer dimension of the plurilingual experience is not something that was explicitly anticipated in the design of this research, there being a dearth of literature on this topic. The small amount of discussion of peer group influence on plurilingual identity and practises is therefore not only surprising, but important. It also offers a tantalising avenue for future research. Further, these answers suggest that the recommendation in the Australian Curriculum: Languages should be considered more seriously by teachers and schools, and that there should be HL inclusion beyond Harmony Day (Heugh et al., 2019).

5.6.2.1. Third language acquisition and heritage language knowledge

The effect on plurilingual students of learning a third language in regard to metalinguistic awareness, grammar, vocabulary, and cross-linguistic and communication skills is well documented (Bartolotti & Marian, 2017; Carvalho & Silva, 2006; Cenoz, 2003, 2013; Cenoz & Hoffmann, 2003; Cenoz et al., 2001; de la Fuente & Lacroix, 2015; del Pilar García Mayo, 2012; Kopečková, 2016; Llama, 2008). Some children are encouraged by teachers to adopt "strategies such as reactivating prior linguistic knowledge and exploring the formal differences and similarities between the languages present in the classroom" (de la Fuente & Lacroix, 2015, p. 45). This works well with languages from similar linguistic backgrounds, as Evelyne explained "it is a lot easier to understand other European languages if I have French". Swiss German frequently uses French words such as *velo* and *merci* instead of German vocabulary. Julia therefore feels "it actually helps because in French there are some … I would just know random words because they are the same in both languages, and that has just been useful, so

you do not have to learn it again". Children can make use of the common underlying proficiency (CUP) as illustrated by Cummins (see Section 2.4.1.1.), but also use translanguaging as a way of accessing different linguistic resources, as suggested by García (2009).

The participating Japanese sisters, however, faced a greater challenge. While their HL skills are proficient, Sakura feels "you can kind of piece together words of French and English, but I don't think you can do that with French and Japanese". Chiaki adds:

> Sometimes Japanese uses like similar words with German for like instead of calling Germany like Germany, they call it ドイツ [doitsu] which is kind of similar to the German word like *Deutsch*. So, there are some, like connections where they use the original, like language.

Chiaki also made another connection between Japanese and German:

> Because Japanese like have a lot of uhm, like sort of polite ways and impolite ways of speaking. So, it was easier to understand like why in German they also, like, have polite and impolite speaking ways. Because it is the same in Japanese. There are like sort of ways like speaking to a teacher, or ways to speak to your younger sister.

When Fielding (2015) researched plurilingual children in Australian suburbs, she found that children in that urban context were also able to report a variety of ways in which they mobilise their HL knowledge in the context of the mainstream classroom. On the basis of these findings Fielding concludes that schools should embrace children's HL and any existing literacy skills because these children "can be empowered to take an active role in their education, can capitalise upon skills they already possess in other languages and can experience greater academic success" (Fielding, 2015, p. 4). Similar findings have emerged from the current study, that is, children draw on their language repertoire in specific ways in the classroom and children are "able to develop skills and strategies that extended beyond the classroom to support language learning at home and build on existing plurilingual experiences" (Fielding, 2016b, p. 374).

Therefore, while the use of HLs in regional settings is restricted for the reasons presented above, the children's attitudes and overall management of languages reveal strategies similar to those used by plurilingual children in more urban locations.

5.7. Children's perspectives on plurilingualism in regional Australia

Exploring plurilingual children's daily experiences in regional Australia is the core of this study. The discussion above has presented many of the children's experiences with their HLs. The children were able to demonstrate how they live their plurilingual lives in a regional area, specifically their HL use in different domains, their attitudes towards plurilingualism, their cultural and linguistic connections, and their emotions regarding HL maintenance and language loss.

Contrary to expectations, this study did not find a significant difference between plurilingual children living in a regional area when compared with studies with plurilingual children living in a city (Fielding, 2016b; Fielding & Harbon, 2013). The only significant difference noted was that children would have more choices for language study in urban schools and that community language classes might be more readily available. Nevertheless, the participating children have embraced the opportunities they do have in the regional setting.

5.7.1. Size of community

According to Clyne (2005), and Leitner (2004), the language community is a vital part of HL maintenance. The exposure to different people in different domains using the HL allows plurilingual children to expand their vocabulary and to experience the language in various contexts. Children's access to an HL community in a regional area is small to scarce. Nevertheless, the children seem to take advantage of whatever opportunities to use the HL they are offered. Chiaki and Sakura have a lively Japanese community with which to practise their Japanese skills:

> In [town], ... the Japanese community was quite large … so we did have Japanese classes with about five or six families every weekend. But uhm, we don't really have that anymore part of it being Covid, but even that, two of the families moved, so the Japanese community has grown smaller … quite a few people come by and often just come by for a small thing and then leave. So, it's growing and then shrinking and then growing and then shrinking again. So, but I think there's always some Japanese people to talk to. (Sakura)

Another advantage for the two sisters is the local university:

> Because of the university, we are lucky in [town] because the university here, there are all the exchange students from Japan here. So, although there is none this year but every year there are about 20 Japanese students coming. (Chiaki)

Both sisters feel that they practise their Japanese with parents more than communicating with children:

> There are not too many of the kids, like the ones who spoke Japanese, the most moved away to Japan. Most of the other kids in the Japanese community don't speak as much Japanese, but if we talk to the kids we talk to them in English but if we talk to them mums then we always speak to them in Japanese. (Sakura)

Chiaki adds that "it's more sort of improving Japanese by talking to the parents than talking to the kids". The lack of a big HL community pleases Evelyne:

> Well, it is nice when there are some people who can speak French. But I like it when, like there are not many people who can … It is just nice because I am one of the only people who can [speak French].

The sense of exclusiveness is something Fiona also appreciates:

> "You don't often hear people speaking German around, whereas in Sydney I have heard other families speak German. So, you feel more special … it also means that you can have conversations without other people overhearing what you are saying."

According to Julia, "you have conversation starters".

5.7.2. Heritage language in the value system of the community

Mainstream Australian society is still characterised by a monolingual orientation (Clyne, 2005; Hajek, 2018). It is therefore interesting to note that all seven children in this describe a welcoming experience. This was particularly evident in relation to the benefits of plurilingualism as perceived by the children, as documented in Section 5.4.2 The children reported that feeling the admiration and respect of their community and peers for their plurilingualism allows them to freely practise their HLs. None of the children mentioned a situation where they have felt threatened because of their plurilingualism. They all feel safe using their HL openly.

Despite its regional context, plurilingualism seems to be an accepted phenomenon in the region. Julia said that "it is a pretty special town" when asked about how she felt living in this regional area. Chiaki also feels "lucky" to live in this town even though she mentioned a racist incident from a few years back but has since fully embraced her plurilingualism: "I don't think I ever thought I only wanted to speak English". Ole was the only child who suspected that speaking two languages may be something out of the ordinary. When asked how his friends react to his plurilingualism he said:

> Well, I do not actually remember how they did react at first, but they have got used to it … if they thought I was weird because I spoke two languages, I do not really care.

The fact that there is not enough provision in educational settings for plurilingualism in the New England region is an example of the monolingual orientation playing out at a structural level; however, it seems not to particularly concern the participating children. The reasons may be that the group of children are well integrated into the local community due to their specific background that is both Australian and non-Australian.

5.7.3. Research perspectives on supporting linguistic diversity

Two factors influence linguistic diversity in regional areas: one is the fact of language shift and loss being twice as common in regional areas than in cities and the second factor is that languages as a core area in the curriculum are still undervalued (Clyne, 2005; Hajek, 2018; Hajek & Benson, 2020). According to Clyne (2005) and Leitner (2004), competency in listening and speaking as well as reading and writing the HL is an important aspect of maintaining HLs. Most of the children in this current study receive some literacy input, either from home or through school, and very often, this is enough to avoid language shift. Chiaki explained what happens in the local Japanese community. "The kids understand Japanese but normally when their parents speak to them in Japanese, they like, answer back in English. So, they [the parents] go like, 'why can't you speak back in Japanese more, look at Chiaki and Sakura'". A shift is very evident from the second generation onwards if there is no formal instruction. The question therefore remains about the worth of the HLs.

This question has been addressed by the NSW Federation of Community Language Schools:

> The loss of languages in the second and third generations is identified as the main threat to the future of community languages in New South

> Wales. Mainstream schools and community language schools are identified as the main sites in which this threat can be met (Chik et al., 2019).

The report identified areas for improvement that are congruent with areas of this study. The children participating in this study suggested more language learning options being available in mainstream schools. “It might be cool to have more options for, and this probably [is] really difficult, but more options for languages to learn like as an elective” (Chiaki). The need for more opportunities is noticeable because plurilingual children are open not only to their HL but would also like to learn other languages. Evelyne’s HL is French but she “would like to learn Chinese or Japanese”. Sakura is also very interested in language learning:

> I think for high school instead of picking Japanese, I chose Japanese for the first few years and then later I decide to go with something like French or German, just because I would want to be able to speak more languages.

The expansion of language education in schools and the aim for every student to learn at least one language has been a goal of curriculum authorities for several decades (Chik et al., 2019; Clyne, 1991, 2005; Feneley & Calixto, 2016; Hajek, 2018; Hajek & Benson, 2020; Morgan et al., 2018) and is an important component in the national plan and strategy for languages education by the AFMLTA (2022). Integrating the work of community language schools or parents into mainstream education is a more recent suggestion (Chik et al., 2019) and as shown above is encouraged by children and, as reported in Chapter 6 by teachers too.

5.8. Summary of children’s experience

This chapter presented insights into the experiences of plurilingual children in regional New South Wales as reported by the children themselves. It revealed their linguistic diversity, HL domains, and ideologies. The most obvious finding to emerge from their world view was the commitment to the HL despite the limited exposure and use of the varied languages. Similarly, consistent with the literature, this study found that the children’s maintenance of an HL is actively influenced by support from their parents. Furthermore, it explored how children experience their plurilingualism at school and in the community. The findings raise intriguing questions regarding the nature and extent of language teaching and the possible changes needed in language education. Finally, the impact of the regional setting of this study on how plurilingualism is experienced is supported by evidence about plurilingual matters from

previous observations, but insights were also offered into less investigated aspects of plurilingual lives.

Chapter 6. Plurilingualism in Educational Settings

The role of teachers of Languages in supporting plurilingual students' linguistic knowledge and skills in their role as students at school and in particular in the additional Languages classroom in regional Australia is the focus of Research Question 3 (see Section 2.5.2.):

> What is the role of teachers of Languages in supporting plurilingual children's linguistic knowledge and skills in school and in particular in the additional language classroom?

In order to understand plurilingualism in regional Australia, in this study the teachers' perspectives are understood as being just as relevant as the parents' and children's contributions, as all three groups hold some stake in the experience of plurilingual children. The theoretical and conceptual framing outlined above (Chapter 2 and 3) established a base for the questions for the interviews from where the themes have emerged. These themes are used to organise key findings that contribute to answering the research question. Further, plurilingualism, an emerging issue in educational settings in Australia, and its possible benefits for the future Languages classroom is addressed in connection with Languages teachers' perspectives.

First, the chapter showcases the languages used, and taught, by the participant Languages teachers, in other words, recording their own plurilingualism as well as their perspectives on the topic. It then provides insights into teacher participants' teaching practices and beliefs in general. It also specifies in more detail how they as professionals approach their own perception of plurilingualism and the plurilingualism of others. This chapter also discusses the value of plurilingualism in schools and the management of it in a classroom setting.

6.1. Online questionnaire for language teacher participants

The contribution of language teachers, previously known as foreign language teachers or additional language teachers, constituted a substantial part of this study. Although they were only a small participant group because of COVID-19 restrictions, their input was critical to the analysis undertaken for this study. The teachers' interviews hold valuable information for the analysis. There were initially 15 teachers who participated in the online questionnaire. Unfortunately, five of the questionnaire participants withheld the town in which they were teaching and terminated the questionnaire without answering any of the following questions,

and an additional three stated that they teach English. Therefore, seven teachers made up the group of relevant participants who completed the questionnaire. There was one male teacher and six female teachers. Four teacher participants speak English as their first language and three use English as an additional language. Among them, they use five different languages excluding English, but only three languages are taught: Japanese, German and French. Three teacher participants teach in government schools, one teaches in a Catholic school, and another three teach in independent schools. The following sub-sections describe the language teacher participants' responses to the online questionnaires.

6.1.1. Use and support of heritage languages in schools

Teachers were asked how many students in their classes speak a home language that is not English. All Languages teachers have students with a HL background in their classes. Three teachers indicated that they have up to four students with knowledge of a language other than English, and four teachers indicated that they have more than five plurilingual students. The languages these teachers listed were Arabic, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Polish, German, French, Nepalese, Tagalog and Kurdish Kumanji. Kurdish Kumanji is the language used by the recently settled Êzîdî refugees in one of the larger towns in the region. All teachers except one believe that the plurilingual students feel moderately to extremely comfortable using the HL in school.

A further question was asked about whether the school is interested in supporting plurilinguals in general. Two teachers feel that their school definitely is interested in supporting plurilingual students and another three feel that the school is probably interested. Two teachers stated that their school probably is not interested in supporting plurilingual students in general.

6.1.2. Policies and strategies

A question about policies and school strategies to encourage intercultural awareness/competence was also raised. Two teachers understand that there are certain policies in place to encourage intercultural awareness and competence, four are unsure about policies, and one believes there are no policies in place. General policies about multiculturalism, anti-discrimination, and equal opportunity were listed by the language teachers. Similarly, teachers were hesitant regarding strategies. They only mentioned vague strategies like inclusion of refugee students into the mainstream classes and Harmony Day. One teacher even expressed

concern that there is little support for additional language learning and therefore no support for plurilingual students.

6.1.3. Language lesson planning and inclusion of heritage languages

The possibility of reviewing planning and programming in order to accommodate plurilingual students was a further question. Four languages teacher participants believe that it is moderately easy to support the use of HLs in a school setting, while the other teachers believe that it is slightly difficult to moderately difficult to support HL students in developing their HL in a school setting. However, all the teachers feel that they have an extreme to moderate influence in planning and programming to accommodate plurilingual students. Some of the teachers specified distinct tasks, like comparing the target language with other HLs in areas such as word order, origin of words, plurilingual story boards, vocabulary lists, and sharing cultural traditions like music and food. Most of these tasks require the language teacher to have knowledge about different cultures and languages. All teachers acknowledge that there is a need for further professional development regarding incorporating different languages into the language classroom, but around half the participating teachers feel that they already have enough training and experience in this area.

6.1.4. Parents' involvement

In order to link the teacher group with the group of parent participants, the questionnaire also asked if teachers experience that parents are interested in maintaining HLs within the family. All teacher participants believe that parents are interested in maintaining the HL, but only one teacher mentions the involvement of parents in developing the HL in a school setting. Two teachers feel that parents encourage the use of the HL at school while two feel the opposite. These results diverge slightly from the parents' answers, as parents seem to feel some support from schools, but the evidence lacks a sense of parents actively encouraging the use of HL in school; the reasons have been outlined in the previous chapter.

6.2. Overview of language teachers' interviews

The interview responses were collected after teacher participants completed the online questionnaire. There were six language teachers who took part in in-depth interviews. One

interview was conducted with two Languages teachers at the same time. Three language teachers were also included among the families researched in this study. These teacher parents were interviewed once with a combination of interview questions for parents and teachers.

The following analysis is organised around the main themes outlined in the Methods Chapter and illustrated in Figure 3.6. The analysis accounts for the teachers' language repertoire, ideologies, as in perceptions, beliefs and practices and plurilingual students and their HLs in the educational settings. Teachers' perspectives and attitudes on HL maintenance in school and in general can vary based on several factors. In Section 6.3. 'Languages teachers' perceptions, beliefs and practice' the defined themes are related to ideas expressed by the language teacher participants in their responses to the online questionnaires and the interviews, and as well as patterns of shared ideas that emerged across these responses.

Teaching in Australia requires appropriate teaching qualifications. Teaching languages is no different, although alternate routes to becoming a teacher are probably more common among language teachers than among teachers of other subjects. Speaking a language other than English does not make one a good teacher of that particular language, but it does imply a passion for and knowledge of a different culture. One teacher, Selma, said that "I love it. I like that you can access current events and news, especially big events in the world from various sources and from various perspectives". Françoise said:

> Speaking other languages enables you to explore other parts of yourself. The English-speaking me is a bit different from the French-speaking me, which is a bit different from the German-speaking me. So yes, it's something that matters to me.

This passion is an important factor in teaching languages effectively and was expressed on several occasions during the interviews and is also supported by other research (Ellis, 2018).

All six Languages teachers interviewed have distinct teaching practices and values that are informed by their background, and they are very aware that their identities impact on their pedagogies (Ellis, 2018). During the interviews, it was evident that all participants are passionate about languages and language teaching, which confirms the observation by Ellis (2018, p. 1) that "teachers of languages generally strive to pass on their love of language in their teaching". Considering the different language backgrounds of each teacher, they were divided into two groups: teachers with a SAE (Standard Australian English) background and teachers with a non-English background. The teachers teach in the following years as shown in table 6.1.

Table 6-1 Teaching years

Stage/ Teacher	Kindergarten Year	Years 1 & 2	Year 3 & 4	Years 5 & 6	Years 7 & 8	Years 9 & 10	Years 11 & 12
Maria			■	■	■	■	■
Selma					■	■	■
Françoise					■	■	■
Monique	■	■	■	■	■		
Martina					■	■	■
Anna					■	■	■

The following analysis is organised around the main themes outlined in the Methods chapter (Chapter 3) and illustrated in Figure 3.6. The analysis draws attention to the teachers' language repertoire, ideologies, as in perceptions, beliefs and practices and plurilingual students and their HLs in the educational settings.

6.2.1. Teachers with a Standard Australian English background

The role of teachers of Languages in supporting plurilinguals' linguistic knowledge and skills in school, can be influenced by the different language backgrounds of each teacher (Ellis, 2018; Lee & Oxelson, 2006). There were two language teacher participants with an SAE background who were interviewed. One was raised in a monolingual environment (Anna) and one has an immigrant background (Monique). Anna grew up in regional New South Wales, learnt German at school, and went on to study it at university. Monique has French-speaking parents who immigrated to Australia. The parents only spoke English with the children but they had a very multicultural home. The participant learnt French at school and went to France as a young adult.

6.2.2. Teachers with a non-English background

Four of the language teachers interviewed have a non-English speaking background. Two of the interviewed teachers of Languages grew up plurilingual in Europe (Martina, Selma) and two were raised monolingually in a language other than English outside of Australia (Maria, Françoise). Two of these teachers teach one of their native languages at one of the local schools and two teachers teach a language that was acquired at university.

The questionnaire results and the in-depth interviews identified several different languages spoken by the teachers; however, while the initial questionnaire only identified a few languages,

the interviews revealed an even wider spectrum of languages spoken by the language teachers. Every language teacher from abroad speaks at least one language other than English, as well as English, which makes these people "plurilinguals in current parlance" (Ellis, 2018, p. 1). During conversations with the teachers, it became apparent that they had a broad appreciation of their own plurilingualism and channelled this into the general promotion of plurilingualism in their students. As a "plurilingual you have access to so many more things just because of it ... It just makes everything look more interesting I suppose" (Selma).

However, some language teachers find that their plurilingualism is intimidating:

> I feel a bit targeted, to be honest. It is not quite that free to use, especially in a small town. There is not a lot of us [teachers] around, so there's not a lot of collegial efforts. I also don't think that, kids don't grow up hearing other languages. It is fairly one-directional, the exposure that they get. There is no appreciation for it and there's no exposure to it. (Selma)

> [In the regional town] where there is not that huge variety of languages, where there is a few speaking … they [HL students] feel a bit awkward. (Anna)

A more welcoming and also contrasting reception of plurilingualism is experienced by Françoise:

> The calibre of the people is … people are quite educated; people are well-travelled. And so, it's a country town where people are not narrow-minded in my view. I feel quite at ease.

These contrasting statements reflect the very personal aspects of this study and how some experiences determine the teachers' perceptions of plurilingualism and how they identify with the languages of their students and themselves.

Identification with a language also plays a vital role, and personal experiences contribute, consciously or unconsciously, to their teaching practices and general perceptions (Ellis, 2018). One of the questions raised during the interviews asked teachers about their different language learning backgrounds and how this affects their knowledge and beliefs about language teaching. It is evident from the participant teacher responses that language learning backgrounds and identification with languages implies an extensive impact on teaching beliefs and pedagogy (Ellis, 2013, 2018). On the one hand the teachers' love for languages fuels their passion for

teaching, but on the other hand, their perception of the low status of languages in schools and communities leads to frustrations, which is explained in more detail below.

All the participating teachers acknowledged that they are plurilinguals, although the terms *bilingual* or *multilingual* were used more deliberately by the participants. They also recognise that their personal language learning history affects their teaching practices in conclusive ways. Comparable with the different linguistic and cultural backgrounds of parents, the teacher participants' language backgrounds, family settings, and experiences of teaching languages varied. Raising plurilingual children may give language teachers an advantage in promoting languages in general and supporting students' HL; however, the following vignettes showcase that being a plurilingual parent may be valuable but is not necessary for integrating HL students' linguistic knowledge into the classrooms.

Maria, Selma, and Françoise do have experience in raising plurilingual children, but their experiences are vastly different from each other (see Chapter 4).

Teacher 1 (teaching French)

Maria Maria is very passionate about teaching languages. She teaches French at one of the independent schools in the largest town and teaches Spanish privately. Maria is a fierce advocate for plurilingualism. She feels that in her experience, plurilingualism is often seen as pejorative, and something that only 'coloured people' have instead of something that adds value to your CV and your life. She also feels that plurilingualism is very powerful. As a teacher of languages, however, she experiences that many students, mainly monolingual, white students, come to the classroom with a great deal of apprehension and prejudice. Despite her advocacy for plurilingualism in her own family setting, in her additional language class she only teaches the target language; however, she would consider supporting students if they speak the target language as a HL and provide them with material that is on their level and that would improve their literacy skills. She sees no advantage in adding other HL languages to her classroom, but is open to support them in other ways, such as through mediating with other language teachers to support HL students in their HL and recommending online options to parents.

Teacher 2 (teaching German)

<table><tr><td>Selma

As an early career teacher, Selma is still learning how to teach languages effectively and therefore sometimes finds it difficult to support native German speakers in their literacy development. She is open to helping HL students if they are proactive themselves, but she does not want to push them. If they are happy to just sit in class and help her to showcase examples, that is fine with Selma. In general, however, she encourages students to work from their HL if that is what helps them to learn the target language. However, she admits that these situations are rare and mentioned that it would be lovely to have a CLIL (content and language integrated learning) approach. This would require more support from the whole school, and she feels that languages are not a priority in her school. She also feels that parents are not necessarily interested in language education either. Selma has experienced parents being interested in developing the family HL, but this has rarely been in the languages offered at school (German, French). Some plurilingual students, who do not speak German as a first language, are keen and see value in learning a language but then chose other subjects that seem more important. Essentially, Selma is quite frustrated as she feels there is no support from school or the parents. They ignore language education even though some parents have mentioned to Selma how sad they are that they never really learnt another language, which is a topic she as a plurilingual herself is very aware off in her own family setting. Even though Selma teaches German, she sometimes uses French phrases to show the students that there is no competition between the two languages. All she aims for is that her students choose to continue learning languages.</td></tr></table>

Teacher 3 (teaching French)

<table><tr><td>Françoise

Françoise teaches French and business in a Catholic high school. She is passionate about language teaching and believes that every language is a little gem and was something she missed passing on to her daughter who is now learning beginners' French. Françoise therefore wants to celebrate languages. While being a French teacher she also is open to incorporating other languages into her teaching. Teaching languages for her is an exercise to open students' minds. In France, her mother was vilified for using Breton instead of French in the 1940s; therefore, Françoise feels strongly about social and cultural justice and even integrates elements of the</td></tr></table>

Anaiwan language (Aboriginal language used in the New England region) into her French lesson. Françoise is supported by her school and is granted some extra teaching material, although she feels a bit lonely and alienated sometimes as she is the only language teacher in the school.

Raising plurilingual children and teaching a language other than English may, as mentioned previously, be an additional asset for understanding plurilingual students. Françoise uses English with her child yet seems very passionate about valuing and supporting her students' HLs for the reasons illustrated below.

Teacher 4 (teaching French)

Monique

Monique teaches French in an independent school and also speaks Spanish. She enjoys teaching languages and has an urge to expand students' knowledge about languages in general and about culture. Monique has an immigrant background. Her parents are from France and Mauritius, but they never spoke French with their children. Monique then studied French in France and she feels connected to France. She enjoys reviving French culture because she experienced the lack of language maintenance herself. Her two older siblings feel very much Australian and have never learned French. Monique teaches French but does not feel comfortable enough to use French with her son. Monique feels very restricted in teaching French efficiently. She has 10 minutes in the lower primary years and 30 minutes per week in each Year 3 to Year 8 class, so time is a sensitive issue. As much as she would like to incorporate other languages into her lessons and support plurilingual students more, she is employed as a French teacher. Monique has only been teaching for just over two years, so her experience with incorporating other languages is limited. She also mentioned that she feels it would be great to teach Indigenous languages. In her view, there seems little value in teaching European languages because everybody speaks English anyway and therefore there is a lack of the motivation to learn another language. Monique believes teaching Indigenous languages may have a different appeal and would allow for a more coherent approach nationwide.

Martina and Anna are not parents, and therefore they have no experience in raising plurilingual children. Nevertheless, their own language learning journeys have assisted them in understanding students with varied linguistic backgrounds.

Teacher 5 (teaching German)

Martina

Martina teaches German in one of the government high schools. She grew up in Switzerland and speaks English, German and Swiss German fluently. She has intermediate language skills in French and Spanish and she also knows a little bit of Japanese and Punjabi. Knowing different languages allows Martina to connect with other people on a deeper level and understand their culture in more depth. Martina believes that knowing different languages helps with memory function and pronunciation and it boosts confidence in further language learning. Martina feels that her school lacks support for students with a background other than Australian; there are only two teachers who actively initiate multicultural activities and celebrate cultural diversity. Martina rarely includes plurilingual students' knowledge into her classroom. She feels that different languages have a different status and not every student is happy to share their linguistic knowledge. If they do, however, she has experienced that it gives them a sense of pride because it is part of their identity. Further, Martina doubts that plurilingualism increases the motivation to learn a third language but is convinced that if the motivation is there, it is easier for plurilingual students to learn another language. From time-to-time, Martina must explain to parents why learning an additional language can be of benefit, not only in knowing another language but also for improving English. Conversations with parents with an Anglophone only background frustrate Martina, but she also enjoys the challenge of working through that ignorance around language and culture. Her aim is to overcome ignorance and resistance and develop curiosity in her students to learn about other cultures and learn languages.

Teacher 6 (teaching German)

Anna

Anna teaches German and English as a foreign language in one of the government high schools. She also knows a little bit of Italian because her sister lives in Italy. Anna loves to travel and out of respect she always tries to learn at least a few phrases in the language of the country she is visiting. Anna believes that learning other languages helps building concepts for basic grammar rules in different languages but also helps in understanding people from another cultural background. Anna feels that there is minimal support for plurilingual students from the school. The school's focus is more on particular groups like the Êzîdî refugees and the

development of these students' English skills. Anna tries to integrate other languages into her language classroom, but only occasionally when she feels that plurilingual students feel comfortable to share their knowledge. Anna finds that languages can be treated differently. One year German might be 'cool' and French not, or vice versa, and this has an influence on how plurilingual students' languages are perceived by other students. Anna understands that students do have language preferences, and this influences their motivation to learn a new language. She is convinced, however, that if plurilingual students are interested and motivated, they can pick up a new language more easily. On the other hand, she feels restricted in her passion for languages as students are not very keen to learn languages in general. The students are in her class because it is compulsory and support from parents is non-existent if not hostile.

In summary, these vignettes illustrate that personal experiences contribute significantly to Languages teachers' views and practices. While some feel an urge to develop plurilingualism because of their own lack of language or even language loss, others embrace the fact that plurilingualism is a lifelong benefit. All teachers enjoy being plurilinguals, even if they do not necessarily use the different languages often.

6.3. Languages teachers' perceptions, beliefs, and practice

Language teaching beliefs are still often grounded in last century expectations of how languages should be taught and teachers are resistant to change (Gorter & Arocena, 2020; Lee & Oxelson, 2006). The teacher participants' self-reported perceptions, beliefs, and practices add to the scope of answering the research question regarding their role in accommodating plurilingual students' linguistic knowledge and skills in school This section highlights parents' perspectives on the role of teachers in accommodating plurilingual students' linguistic knowledge and skills in school and link it to the theme of 'languages practices and ideologies' (see Section 3.7.4.). While a traditional monolingual approach to teaching languages was noted in most of the teachers interviewed, in contrast to a plurilingual or translanguaging approach, they all have slightly different perceptions and beliefs. Individual experiences with plurilingualism add an extra element to the teachers' practices, e.g. openness towards other cultures and languages, knowledge of grammar distinctions in different languages. Some teachers hold on to these traditional practices while others try to explore new ways of teaching languages. Hence,

language teachers' beliefs "strongly influence their pedagogical decisions" (Haukås, 2016, p. 3), which is evident from the teachers' responses to the questionnaire and interview questions.

The major perceptions of the teachers emerging from their responses are that:

- the status of language education is low and insignificant in contrast to other subjects
- there is a lack of time allocation, language diversity (options) and teaching resources (staff)
- they are employed to teach the target language only.

While all teachers seemed open to plurilingual approaches as outlined in Section 2.4., these perceptions and beliefs influence their pedagogical approaches. Language teachers are concerned about the low status of language education in general and some even feel personally under siege. They also experience a limited time allocation for teaching the target language, limited options for a variety of languages, and a shortage of teaching staff. Furthermore, most teachers believe that their role is to teach only the target language such as French or German. The following section presents what teachers said about the broader context of plurilingualism and its limitations.

6.3.1. Status of language education

Language education in Australia moved from a high status in the 1960s with approximately 40% of HSC students studying a language to around 10% of HSC students learning an additional language in the last few years (Griffiths & Ikutegbe, 2018; Mayfield, 2017). Despite the efforts to raise numbers by implementing new policies, language choices in schools keep decreasing (Griffiths & Ikutegbe, 2018; Mayfield, 2017). Nonetheless, every participating language teacher in this study is passionate about promoting languages in schools. First and foremost, this relates to the language they are teaching but essentially, they wish to promote any language other than English. All teachers commented in one way or another on the lack of value placed on the teaching and learning of languages in Australia and the waste of skills that results from this. The participating teachers' comments support the many published articles on language loss over the last few years (Fukui, 2019; Karidakis & Arunachalam, 2016; Kohler, 2017; Morgan, 2015; Morgan et al., 2018; Ollerhead & Baker, 2019; Piller, 2014; Piller & Gerber, 2018; Stabelos, 2015; Watkins et al., 2015; Weinmann & Arber, 2016) and draw a dim picture for the future of

language education, which seems to have a low status in general already (Orton, in Morgan et al., 2018).

It appears as if teachers have a more pessimistic view than students. On the one hand, in some Languages teachers' experience, students and their parents lack interest in learning languages in general and, moreover, teachers of Languages feel no support from either their school or education authorities. For some students, there is "no need to learn a language other than English because everybody still speaks English. And you cannot actually use your French, except maybe with the lady in the patisserie" (Monique). Anna emphasises some of her students' arguments:

> "We never would leave Australia. We have no reason to ever go to Germany and we don't see Germans in the street that do not speak English". So, what on Earth is the purpose of learning a language that is useless to them? So, it's just clogging their mind with useless stuff and that is how they would see that.

Martina adds:

> A lot of the parents are like that. I rang some during COVID time and they are just like, "Well, I don't care about my kid learning German. I cannot help it that he has to be in your class, but I told him to prioritise more important subjects. German is not important to us".

A comment made by Maria speaks for itself. It demonstrates that the status of languages is low compared to any other school subject:

> It is really appalling that a person goes through five years of language learning and cannot speak a language. If you were going to five years of math learning and you could not do addition at the end, you would be totally outraged. We [would be] picked in front of the school in a manifestation, there will be a protest: "What is this?" So, there is a common belief that going through languages and not speaking it, is okay. It is not okay. It is appalling, it is unacceptable to learn the language for five years and not have any competence at the end … what I believe is that the expectation of parents, community, and students is so low with regard to the language. We speak, so low, that it is okay not to achieve.

Having very low expectations regarding students' communicative abilities is a concern shared by Turner (2019), and is reflected in "federal and state-level curriculum frameworks for languages in Australian schools" (Turner, 2019a). For example, one of her observations is the

little amount of time students spend in the language classroom, in Victoria for example, it is under one hour per week in the primary years, and this fact corresponds with the participating teachers' concerns. Another observation is the way language teachers communicate in the lessons, as usually teachers communicate in English. Even though this was not an interview question, only one participating teacher clearly stated that her approach is to use French only. "I teach through comprehension-based methods. So, I try to teach a 100% or over 95% in the target language. Therefore, I speak to my students in French … in the classroom and outside the classroom" (Maria). Through this approach she hopes to raise the students' communication skills. The teachers disclosed a wealth of information about teaching and also about issues beyond their pedagogical training. One of these issues is prejudice and it seems relevant to include this as part of the challenges language education experiences.

6.3.1.1. Prejudice as a restraint for language education?

Prejudice in language education was an issue only raised by Maria. She was the only one who talked openly about it, but some other teachers have experienced similar resistance from monolingual parents and students.

> Monolingual white children, because there is something about race that is really powerful too, that we do not address. They come to the classroom with a lot of apprehensions. I do not know how to say it in English, prejudgment? Prejuzgar? Prejudice! … You do not have to be a person of colour to speak more than one language. That it is rationally okay for a white person to speak more than one language. That it is not pejorative. That it is not a symbol of coming from a lower background. (Maria)

Additionally, teachers sometimes feel isolated because of the subject they teach. The collegial exchange is missing because they are in small and remote schools. Two out of the six participating teachers have no other language teacher in their school to support them in their endeavours to make their students in this region of Australia more language aware. Therefore, being the only staff member who has an extensive knowledge of another language may be a threat:

> In this school, it is okay to speak in other languages. In other schools where I have worked, I couldn't speak another language beyond the doors of my classroom because it was considered that the working language was English. It was disrespectful to speak another language in

> front of all the white people who were monolingual and could be vexed if they did not understand what was happening. (Maria)

Selma mentioned that she sometimes feels targeted too because “you stand out a lot and I do not like standing out and people tend to stare at you, which I don’t like”, which was one of the reasons she stopped using Swedish with her daughter. To investigate if other participating teachers have similar feelings was beyond the scope of this study. Nonetheless, this report acknowledges Maria’s comments about prejudice as it was an issue raised from other participants too and might therefore be relevant for further exploration in future studies.

6.3.2. Time allocation, language choices, and resources

The challenges of limited time, limited languages choice, and low language communication expectations at schools are faced daily by language teachers. They must not only meet curriculum demands but also satisfy students’ and parents’ educational expectations, and they therefore encounter many different objections. Interestingly, while the term time allocation was not asked about during the interviews, every teacher mentioned that teaching time, which refers to hours per week and years of study, is a real issue for quality teaching, as discussed in Chapter 2. Teachers of Languages lack the time needed to achieve their goals in language education that reflect their love for languages and compassion for other cultures (Dabroswki, 2015; Hajek, 2018; Morgan et al., 2018). “So, sadly, time is of the essence” (Françoise), and Maria confirms this is an issue for her:

> It is a fact establishing 40 years of second language acquisition research that we need extreme amounts of input. We need to process input that is comprehensible, so that our students develop an image of the language. That is not what is happening in the school.

In addition, some of the participant teachers teach in independent primary schools, mostly with very limited time allocations. For example, Monique has 10 minutes per week in each of her primary classes, and Maria reported that her hours in the primary years is insufficient: “We now have one hour of French [per week], which is not much”. Participant teachers believe that the current time allocation for language education is insufficient to achieve fluency for most students. The mandatory 100 hours are insufficient because reaching basic fluency requires from 480 to 720 hours depending on the language (Baker, 2021). Furthermore, the mandatory hours influence students’ motivation. “They are there because it is compulsory to learn a

language … it is what makes it harder” (Anna). Françoise, in contrast, sees the compulsory hours as an opportunity, stating that:

> I'm not particularly attached to the fact that it's French to me. Especially in Year 7, where we deliver 100 hours of mandatory language. Matters not what language it is, to me it's all an exercise in opening one's mind, and just exploring what language does and how world views are expressed in the different idioms.

The mandatory hours in Years 7 and 8 may be valuable for introducing students to an additional language, but some teachers feel that there needs to be more:

> What would be lovely to see, and this is probably not a high school thing, but in the junior school, is if they could take a little approach of incorporating language into the teaching of normal subjects … That [CLIL] would be something worthwhile, I think, but takes a bit of an attitude shift from everybody. (Selma)

Some of the participating teachers also face a dilemma. Selma said:

> You would think language is a language, but no, it is not like this. I mean, with the two [languages] we offer here, there is a clear divide. No, French is rubbish, German is great or the other way around. There is a clear preference… it is like science. Do you like physics or do you like chemistry?

In addition, Anna said that motivation to learn a language is connected to “whether they want to learn that particular language or not”. This is an obvious challenge in a regional area like the New England and links directly to the lack of resources, namely the language choices on offer. However, the question arises as to whether students would really choose a language subject more often if there was a bigger selection.

According to the ABS (2021), more than 80% of the Australian population live within the coastal zone of the country. It is therefore not surprising that this regional area lacks language teachers. During the interviews, the teachers were asked about how they feel about living and working in a regional area. Regarding the shortage of teaching staff, Maria sounds pragmatic: “The difference, I think, there is, is that we do not have access to the same pool of teachers. That makes a difference”. In addition, Selma feels the lack is not just the absence of language teachers but also a general lack of exchange opportunities amongst language teachers. “It is a bit isolated, to be honest. There is not a lot of us around, so there's not a lot of collegial efforts”.

Furthermore, the language choices schools offer, are often defined by the teaching staff available. Consequently, schools may be willing to offer a set target language but there are no language teachers available, so language choices change. Independent and Catholic primary schools often have languages taught but if teachers leave, the language lessons cease or are only held irregularly. This happened in two Catholic primary schools in the area over the last few years: one school is in a small town and the other is in one of the larger towns. Both schools taught Indonesian, but neither mention any new languages in their recent reports or on their websites.

> [Catholic school in larger town] doesn't teach foreign languages because the only person who was there, who was an Indonesian teacher, left. It is really appalling. It is really sad. It is really, super sad… If I were a school leader, languages would be a feature of the school, regardless of the staff. What happens or what has happened here [the school Maria is teaching at currently] is, the languages went down. Staff, you know, changed. (Maria)

Accordingly, language teachers face some challenges regarding time allocation, language choices, and teaching staff. German, French, or Japanese or a mixture are offered by a variety of secondary schools and independent primary schools in the region, but choices are, as mentioned above, vulnerable to teaching staff availability. For gaining a satisfactory level of communication skills, the 100 hours of mandatory language study in a 12-month period in Years 7 to 10 is a reasonable base but all the participating teachers advocate for more hours as language learning is a more intense process. The intensity of language acquisition is supported by many language researchers, and the consensus is that it generally takes five to seven years for an individual to achieve proficiency in a language (Cummins, 2000a; Dixon et al., 2012; Krashen, 1981, 1997; McHugh et al., 2007). In addition, recent journal articles also claim that Australia is reluctant to embrace its multilingual potential (Adoniou, 2015; Baker, 2021; Fielding, 2015; Fukui, 2019; Mayfield, 2017; Morgan, 2009, 2015; Ollerhead & Baker, 2019; Piller, 2014; Stabelos, 2015; Watkins et al., 2015; Weinmann & Arber, 2016; WPP AUNZ, 2018). The combination of limited hours for language teaching and an adverse language learning environment places language teachers in an uncomfortable position and compounds the circumstances that prevent them from teaching effectively.

6.3.3. Target language teaching expectation

During the in-depth interviews, the teachers were asked about the use of other languages during the target language class. Some teachers commented that they use the target language exclusively. "In my class I only do French. I do it in French, a 100% in French" (Maria), and Monique also said that "I am employed as a French teacher and that is my role. I am not here to accommodate other languages". This attitude has been observed in previous research (Lee & Oxelson, 2006), and it is interesting to see the reasons why teachers aim to use the target language exclusively. One reason is that the language classroom is in most cases the only place where students can practise the target language, and teachers therefore want to provide sufficient input for students. Thus, Maria strives to achieve a high level of communication competence. "I speak to my students in French. In the classroom, and outside the classroom. As their competence moves upward, I will have conversations with them outside the classroom. Like with the Year 10 or 11 or 12". Similarly, Selma explains that:

> I ask for it … if they can, it should be in German. By the time they get to their second year. I am like, "If you can't say it in German, it can't be that important. Think of a way". I do try and encourage even if it is grammatically incorrect or whatever to just try and get your point across.

The teachers' comments indicate that using the target language only is the ideal situation for achieving a high level of communication competence in an additional language. However, language proficiency is a goal that takes a great deal of time to achieve (Heugh et al., 2019, p. 9) and the participating teachers commented that parents often do not see value in learning a language over several years. While some parents may have unrealistic expectations of language education and expect fluency in an additional language in a short period of time, as commented on by Maria, a participant teacher, and also outlined by Hajek (2018, p. 6) other parents, as noted by the participating teachers, have no desire for their children to learn languages. So even if a teacher tried to achieve a certain level of communication skills, the effort could be crushed by students' attitudes towards language learning.

Nevertheless, "even if the teacher requires only target language use, students cannot forget the other languages they have in their minds" (Dégi, 2016, p. 13) an important fact for plurilingual students. The belief in 'target language only' education contrasts with recent developments in the field of language education (Dégi, 2016). Translanguaging, as illustrated in Chapter 2, is the

latest trend in language education research and the wording of the Australian Curriculum: Languages seems to align with a translanguaging approach. However, because the New England Region has a small percentage of HL users, teachers may not see the value in translanguaging in their classrooms. Still, Martina values the integration of languages in addition to the target language:

> I think it depends on the cohort of the class. I think if you just have one student from a different cultural background in your whole class, I think, perhaps, that might be too intimidating. Whereas, when you have more students, they feel more comfortable to share if they are not the only ones.

Thus, in general, teachers keep their focus on the target language and implement strategies and methods for the students to gain a certain level of language communication skills. While teachers may be aware of the flexible approach of the Australian Curriculum: Languages, of "providing a number of pathways and entry points of study to cater for background language learners, first language learners and second language learners" (ACARA, 2017), they seem unsure and cautious about how to implement translanguaging in their teaching and therefore remain with their familiar teaching practices (Haukås, 2016).

6.4. Plurilingual students in schools

The aim of the current study is to explore the extensive experiences of plurilingual children in the regional setting of the New England. Questionnaire and interview responses not only illustrate families' plurilingual experiences in a social context shaped by a monolingual mindset but also reveal some possibilities plurilingualism offers within the context of language education. This section reflects on the role of teachers in supporting plurilingual students' linguistic knowledge in the additional language classroom and on the teachers' experiences and perceptions and links it to the theme of 'languages in education' (see Section 3.7.4.).

Seeking out the linguistic background and resources of plurilingual students seems either to be neglected by language teachers or the data about plurilingual students are not made openly accessible to teachers by the school administration. Most language teachers lack information about students' language background. Maria explains that "we do not have a register of multilingual, plurilingual students where we can see in the school. Although we could potentially find the information by clicking on every student". This comment echoes most of

the participating teachers' situations. In addition, the plurilingual students in this study may not necessarily be recognised as speakers of more than one language at first as most of them do not have an accent when speaking English. Only a non-white appearance may suggest a multicultural background but a connection to plurilingualism may still not be necessarily made. Therefore, students are mostly treated and viewed as monolinguals by school administration and teachers alike.

6.4.1. Plurilingual students in the Languages classroom

Access and exposure to languages by monolingual and plurilingual students is beneficial for all, a benefit highlighted by Fielding (2015). Providing Language classes in every school is one way of achieving this but integrating the language skills and knowledge of HL users can enhance the process. Some participating teachers experience this in their classroom and are keen to pursue this plurilingual approach. Students need to be exposed to languages. "I don't think that kids grow up hearing other languages. It is fairly one-directional, the exposure that they get. There is no appreciation for it and there's no exposure to it" (Selma). During the interviews, teachers were asked how they think their plurilingual students feel about using their HL in the language classroom. Martina said: "I think if they are given the opportunity to share that they speak another language, there is some sense of pride and they are excited to share that if they speak another language because it is their identity"; however, Anna feels that:

> … it depends on what language it is and how many people there are in the community that speak that language … how the language is treated by the people around them. If it is considered cool to speak German then they are like, "Oh yeah, I speak German". Whereas, if no one cares about languages, they could be ... I guess they do not think about it either.

Selma mentioned a further aspect, which she experienced herself:

> I understand in a high school setting, a lot of kids do not want the spotlight on them as well. I think it is a personality thing as well. If someone is clearly uncomfortable, I wouldn't try and push it either because that was me. I was always the example for Swedish … I would have just rather 'give me the work and I will do it', be happy with that. I try to reflect back on, well, this is how I felt and probably how the majority of kids feel as well … I would like to offer opportunities if they wanted them. I guess this is where I see my role.

As previously mentioned, the group of participating teachers was divided in their approach to integrating different languages. While some teachers persist in only using the target language, some claimed that they make frequent use of their plurilingual students' linguistic knowledge. Françoise explains as follows:

> Should I be hell bent on French? My personal opinion is that I should not. But what I'm doing currently and in perhaps a too tokenistic manner within the guidelines, I don't know. But to me, it's something that I feel personally and educationally strong about.

Accommodating plurilingual students' linguistic knowledge is mostly done by asking plurilingual students questions like "How do you say, 'Hello, my name is …, in your language?' And we get them to share that with the class. But other than that, we do not get much further than that in Stage 4 [year 7 and 8]" (Martina). Monique has a similar approach, as she also asks students what certain words mean in their language, and she tries to find similarities or differences in languages. Françoise, who is teaching only in secondary school, states that:

> I look for example at the sequence of words, the adjective-noun sequence, if it's before or after. We might look at little onomatopoeias that I used when you say, 'Ouch' or when you say 'Yuck' or things like that, to look at how it is expressed in different languages. I might give them little homework, say, "Go and ask mum or dad how this is said and come back or how do you celebrate this tradition in your home country? Go and find out and get back". They get little homework like that and to me, it's really important to foster through.

The term *fostering* draws attention to some benefits of a plurilingual approach: it values the fact that plurilingual students add linguistic knowledge, describes a compassionate attitude towards HL users and their backgrounds, and also shows an interest in supporting diversity in language use. Selma states that:

> I think, too often kids here are probably discouraged from using their first language and I think [it] should be the opposite. Same as if they have Aboriginal languages or something. If that is what you have grown up with then use that to help you learn.

Translanguaging, therefore, could be an approach Selma could implement in her Languages classroom. Students "need more than just the parents" (Anna) to encourage them to use more than one language; therefore, schools and teachers play a vital role in fostering languages. Françoise believes that:

> It doesn't matter that they are being taught French or—the language doesn't matter. To me what matters is that we celebrate language and access to different languages and look at it for what it is—a little gem, a little treasure.

This approach may help plurilingual students to appreciate their HL, because it is not only exposure through the parents alone but there is also an interest from and output through school. There are different expectations when the target language is also the HL.

6.4.1.1. Target language for background learners

Only a few teachers participating in the study have taught students whose home language was also the target language. This situation is challenging in different ways, as the teachers explained and as illustrated by Selma:

> [It] comes down to a few things. One, you would need to establish where they are learning-wise so that you can set appropriate things. And because you can't devote class time for them, it is mostly independent, and I am finding Year 7 children either are not capable or not interested in independent things. It is also if you set the wrong topic. If it is not in their area of interest, the thing that you give them then, that also impacts it. It is almost like you need to have a separate interview with them to establish … or what is the level of knowledge here? What is the level of comprehension? Where do you want to get? What's the end goal here? I think it needs a separate process to actually deal with those students … If you give them easy things to do, they think, "Well, this is baby. Why are you giving me this? I'm better than this". Then if you give them the task that matches the sort of speaking, then the writing falls apart. It is that balance of what is right … It is always hard. It is hard when you get a native speaker. You think it is easy, but because I am still an early career teacher, I find it a bit, I do not quite know what to do with them if they are not proactive themselves and wanting to do more, which is often the case. They want to come in and have it easy, which I understand … For example, there have been a few. If they are not proactive and sort of going well, what more can I do or like "This is the level I work at. Can you give me some work to this level?" I find it hard to challenge them on their level. What I have tried to do is set up different units, but then of course they get caught up in the flow of the lesson and just want to be part of that, which is also fine. I don't push it either which way. I am quite happy for them to be a very good example of what we are doing at the moment with the whole class.

These challenges match the concerns from scholars in the field. “In either case, those with prior knowledge find themselves marginalised or demotivated by menial exercises that don't challenge or reward their prior leaning or experience” (Scrimgeour, in Morgan et al., 2018, p. 5). In addition, Selma expressed concerns about planning and implementation. “Because it has to be independent. I think that is the biggest challenge, because I can’t spend half my class time with the one student as it probably would be more beneficial for them, but you cannot sacrifice 29 other kids”. Maria is prepared to invest personal time. She explained that she creates a plan with the student. “I have had students who can speak French but cannot read. So, I taught them how to read. I will create an ad hoc plan for that student to continue progressing at their level”. These plans include voluntary reading and listening tasks, audiobooks, and movies. Her goal for the student is to receive input:

> So, I tutor them for free at lunch or after school, if they are my students. If they are not my students, I have no means to know what is happening. Unless I am contacted by a parent and the parent puts it out to me and says, “Okay. What do we do for my son? What do we do for my daughter?"

Despite the absence of a wide base for experiences with background learners in this study, the comments above demonstrate an issue that deserves to be considered more seriously by school administration and education authorities, especially in regional areas where there is no wide HL community base and, in contrast to bigger cities, no HL community schools. Therefore, schools and teachers adopt the role of fostering home languages in educational settings (Walton et al., 2013). Solutions can be found in either allocating time to language teachers to establish a support plan for each background learner (see Section 5.1.1.) or by implementing resources and support via online learning, as is done with distance education designed to teach subjects not available in certain regions (State of New South Wales Department of Education, 2021).

6.4.2. Benefits of plurilingualism in the language classroom

Plurilingualism offers benefits for the teachers and plurilingual students collectively. There are a variety of advantages, for example, children can use HLs communication skills as a resource in school contexts where other languages are used, demonstrating open-mindedness and plurilingual communication competency as a strength and a resource in pluralistic societies for both children and teachers (Gay, 2018). Further, research has shown the many cognitive, social and personal benefits of plurilingualism (Douglas Fir Group, 2016; O'Brien, 2017; AFMLTA,

2022; Valian, 2015) displayed in Section 1.3.3. Translanguaging, motivation, and flexibility are concepts that may add value; however, the challenge lies in how to use plurilingualism as an asset in a Languages classroom. The role of the teacher seems to be crucial in accommodating the students' linguistic assets. If not nurtured, plurilingualism stays invisible and provides no value to either teachers or students. The following section discusses the teachers' perceptions about the value for teachers and the benefits of plurilingualism in a school setting and the extent to which these align with the theories highlighted in Chapter 3. The first subsection discusses teachers' perceptions of the value of translanguaging, the second subsection discusses value in engagement and motivation, and the final subsection discusses the value of linguistic and cultural flexibility.

6.4.2.1. Value in translanguaging

As stated previously, translanguaging may be an idealistic goal, but valuing translanguaging allows for more acceptance of plurilingualism in educational settings. Translanguaging has been proposed as a resource teachers can use in the Languages classroom (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022b). Part of Research Question 3 also asks '*What are teachers' experiences of incorporating many languages into the additional language teaching classroom?*' This question is especially relevant when considering the region surveyed in the study reported here, where nearly 83% of homes use English (ABS, 2021) and where there is "little linguistic and cultural diversity" and "often no students with prior learning experience or home use of the 'second' language" (Scrimgeour, in Morgan et al., 2018). In the present study, the interviewed teachers all have at least one plurilingual student in their languages class, although not necessarily one who uses the target language at home. The participating teachers reported a range of views about how to incorporate HLs, i.e. valuing translanguaging, that were not the target of classroom instruction. Some teachers reported that they feel no obligation to incorporate other languages at all because they might only have one plurilingual student. Selma is the only teacher who mentioned an approach that was loosely connected to translanguaging. In addition to the usual cohort, she also works with Chinese students. She encourages them to work from Chinese, make notes in Chinese, and even translate straight to German instead of English first.

However, beyond this, Selma, nor any of the other teachers, did not report the use of "explicit strategies" to "ensure satisfactory performances" of students (Rafi, 2020, p. 3). In fact, in contrast to Selma's more integrative approach, some teachers made statements that indicate a different orientation to HLs in their classrooms. Monique stated "I am employed as a French

teacher and that is my role. I am not here to accommodate other languages". Similarly, Martina observed that "the school does not have a set-up [for something like translanguaging]". These comments are evidence that there is some opposition by Languages teachers to the idea of HL integration, either via translanguaging pedagogy or other means. This finding contrasts with the position expressed by teachers in Fielding's (2015) study of a suburban school community, where "positive educational and social outcomes by incorporating more opportunities for speakers of other languages" (Fielding, 2015, p. 224) was a main finding. Fielding (2016a, p. 166) in her report also noted that:

> …teachers seek to facilitate the socio-cultural connection, interaction and investment of their students in their bilingual identities and assist the students to develop a sense of belonging to two languages and cultures.

The teachers in the current study said that they see plurilingualism as a valuable asset for the individual student, but they lack the readiness to implement translanguaging, mainly because the schools in the New England Region, according to the participating teachers, focus on target language teaching. A translanguaging approach can help to incorporate HLs in the Languages classroom more effectively for example through 'natural', spontaneous, translanguaging or by adopting a specific translanguaging pedagogy for using different languages, as suggested by Williams (2012).

Consequently, translanguaging could be an artificial approach in a mostly monolingual classroom, given the regional setting of this study, and the lack of familiarity with translanguaging in language education in Australia.

6.4.2.2. Value in motivation and engagement

As shown in the previous section, several teachers feel that accommodating plurilingual students HLs in the Languages classroom is beyond their remit. However, those teachers value other aspects of their plurilingual students. For example, they value what they perceive as their plurilingual students' motivation and engagement. During the interviews, the teachers were asked about how plurilingualism influences the students' engagement and motivation to learn an additional language and how they contribute linguistic knowledge to the classroom. In other words, whether students' knowledge of other languages helps them to acquire an additional language or develop their HL.

All the teachers regarded such knowledge as an asset in the learning process because the students seem more aligned with language learning to begin with. Françoise said that "students are often more engaged in the language classroom because a foreign language as a phenomenon is something they're already familiar with", and Maria said that "they have a positive attitude toward languages". Monique also sees that some of the students are really engaged and motivated because they know another language. Plurilingual students in her Year 7 and Year 8 classes ask interesting questions regarding vocabulary and grammar. Monique is convinced that plurilingualism is the reason for their curiosity about other languages. On the other hand, as mentioned before, "while in some ways they can pick up the language more easily because they are in the practice of learning language, it also depends on whether they want to learn that particular language or not" (Anna). Furthermore, Martina doubts that "knowing other languages necessarily means that you are going to have a natural motivation".

The value of plurilingualism in relation to motivation and attitude presented some mixed findings. Overall, the teachers perceive plurilingual students to have a better attitude towards language learning in general and therefore perceive them to be more motivated. Thus, some of the participating language teachers' responses suggest teachers use their role to enhance plurilingual students' skills and to accommodate their linguistic knowledge because this could motivates students' learning of the language learned at school.

6.4.2.3. Value of linguistic and cultural flexibility

Plurilinguals have been shown to approach language learning more easily (Besemeres, 2004; Grosjean, 1999, 2010; Hopp et al., 2020; Volodina et al., 2020). This finding was supported by evidence emerging from teachers' interview responses. Linguistic and cultural flexibility, the ability to appreciate and easily move between different cultures, is a highly valued aspect of plurilingualism (Council of Europe, 2020; Piccardo et al., 2019) and is not only reflected in the students' language proficiency but also has the potential for better understanding of others and their cultural background.

Maria commented that "plurilingual children have already proven [to] themselves that they can speak more than one language … they seem to be more malleable, more flexible". Similarly, Anna explains that "in some ways, they can pick up the language more easily because they are in the practice of learning language", and Martina believes that "children who or people who

speak other languages are more open to meeting all kinds of people regardless of background and language … [and] it helps you understand other people better”.

All the teachers gave examples of how linguistic and cultural flexibility is a highly valued aspect of plurilingualism. Due to the diverse cultural background of the participating teachers, these findings were an expected outcome as they themselves have exhibited cultural and linguistic flexibility in their personal lives as plurilinguals (see Section 2.4.6.). However, if they are to enhance crosslinguistic awareness further, teachers will need to assist students in acquiring relevant learning strategies (McCabe, 2014).

6.5. Parents’ cooperation with schools

Parents’ interest in keeping HLs in use at home and their interest in the school encouraging HL use in school was one of the questions asked during the interviews with the language teachers. Promoting languages, at least according to the curriculum, is the role of the school and its teachers (see Section 1.3.1.). Nevertheless, parents, according to the participating teachers, have a considerable influence on how languages are promoted in schools. The participating teachers disclosed some encounters with both monolingual and plurilingual parents.

Teachers reported that some monolingual parents reject or disrespect language education for their children. Nonetheless, other monolingual parents want their children to learn languages because they have missed out themselves or have regrets about not continuing languages during their school career. Maria confirms this trend. “Many students complained that they didn’t have French. So even though I didn’t receive all the communications, I know that there is a community of parents who would like to see it … So, I believe that there is an interest from parents”. Selma, however, is unsure of what parents really want. She explains that there is no interest from parents, “Not in this country. Even though most of them [parents] then in the next sentence say, ‘Oh, I wish I had learned another one,’ which is a weird thing. You would not support your kid, but you are sad that you don’t. What are you actually saying?”

Another anecdote reinforces these ambivalent impressions: “‘Oh, isn't it lovely that she loves German?’ That is funny. I would have never thought it. [And then] she is struggling. ‘That is okay. Who cares? She can drop it next year, right?’ That is usually the conversation”. Perhaps it is a subliminal wish for students to learn languages, but the parents may not have the confidence to support their children. Selma finds that some of her students like languages, which

"is a nice little bonus", but very often parents prefer their children to choose other subjects, especially if the language choices do not fit into the timetable:

> Even the ones who have a [HL] - H. is a good example. She wanted to keep going with German, but her dad said no … I don't know where they are from: Iraq, Iran, Middle East somewhere. She wanted to keep going and her dad said, "No, you are doing Commerce". And she hates it. Just a shame … she could not choose, and she also does not like the subject that she was made to choose. (Selma)

Despite challenges with monolingual parents and a few plurilingual parents, the plurilingual parent group in general, according to the participating teachers, seem to be more accepting of language education. Most parents in this study would welcome their children improving their HL through language learning at school, but all are satisfied if their children can at least learn another language (see Section 4.6.). Nonetheless, teachers criticise parents' lack of effort to contact schools and promote their plurilingualism.

Raising awareness about plurilingualism in schools may help reverse the trend of plurilingual children becoming monolinguals by the time they finish secondary school (Cruickshank in Fukui, 2019). The days of assimilation are gone, and "there is very much a pride and a desire for retention" (Françoise), but for some reason, teachers only get to hear the odd comment from parents about language learning being of great value, but nothing more. On the other hand, plurilingual parents mentioned school visits and activities. Therefore, there is a discrepancy between parents' and teachers' perceptions of parental involvement in schools, specifically their involvement in the language area of the curriculum.

6.5.1. Parental involvement

Parental involvement seems a natural approach for promoting plurilingualism, and the discrepancy in the perceptions about parental involvement between the parents and teachers who participated in this study is of interest. Teachers feel that there is a lack of parental involvement, while the parents' responses show the opposite perception in some cases. To justify the teachers' perception, the participating parents are mostly involved in primary schools and most of the language teaching hours of the participating teachers occur in a secondary school setting. Nonetheless, it is clear that teachers experience a lack of parental involvement at secondary school level. This lack of involvement could be true for other secondary school subjects as well, such as music, history or art, perhaps encouraged by the previous Australian

government's emphasis on learning areas perceived to be more useful for gaining well-paid employment.

The lack of parental input and awareness at secondary school level can be seen in Felix commenting that "he [son Marc] doesn't do any languages or not to my knowledge" but the in-depth interview with Marc confirming that he attends French lessons. This might just be an unfortunate coincidence, but it illustrates absence of involvement even from HL parents. Unfortunately, parents of secondary school students have less contact with teachers in general and therefore promoting plurilingualism is a more difficult task.

Parents of primary school children seem to have closer contact with their children's teachers and may therefore be more involved in school activities overall. This situation may explain the absence of parental involvement encountered by secondary school teachers and the discrepancy in awareness that is evident in the study's findings.

6.6. Advocacy for plurilingualism

In the in-depth interviews teachers said that they have a vital function in the promotion of languages at school in general. Françoise for example said: "I don't know whether that I'm doing the right thing when I'm asking kids how things are done in other languages. Should I be hell bent on French? My personal opinion is that I should not" and she also mentioned that "I'll be looking at retention and promotion of Indigenous languages … promoting pride in one's cultural and linguistic home background". As was demonstrated in Chapter 5, some children in this study attend schools where languages are only taught sporadically but plurilingualism is still valued and promoted amongst children. However, this promotion is mainly due to the appreciation of plurilingualism by the plurilingual children themselves and their parents. The promotion of plurilingualism as part of the Languages teacher's role may need to be initiated through future professional learning and development for teachers of Languages, as suggested by the forthcoming National Plan (AFMLTA, 2022).

6.6.1. Teachers promoting plurilingualism

As mentioned previously, the teachers of Languages in this study reported being passionate about language teaching and learning. In general, they support the development of HLs because they themselves are either plurilinguals or have learnt a language in order to teach it. All the participating teachers said they feel respected by their schools even if they are the only

Languages teacher; however, most reported that teaching languages requires assertiveness and endurance. Most teachers reported that they feel very strongly about the lack of support from the school, but most also admit that there is a shortage of material and staffing resources to change this.

Martina is teaching in a large secondary school; she has found that any extracurricular matters require a lot of personal time:

> The school itself is not huge on celebrating or supporting cultural diversity and linguistic diversity for that matter. It is not the school's focus … Harmony Day that is something that has been driven mostly by two teachers of the school, and not all teachers are on board with it. And I guess the school is not on board with that compared to ... yeah. The amount of work that those two teachers have to put in to get it up and running and being successful was immense on them.

Maria and Selma also criticise the absence of support from their schools:

> There isn't an action by the school. It is not a question about interest in the school or not. There might be an interest. But the reality is what we do and what we don't in school … So, there is not a policy or an action or an action group tackling the issue of how to support multilingual children in school. There is not. (Maria)

> Interested? Probably. Supportive in a position to, probably not so much. Are other things more important? Probably, I don't think it is high on their agenda of importance. No one would ever tell you that it is not, but I don't quite see evidence saying the opposite either, if that makes sense. (Selma)

While Françoise experiences support for Indigenous students, there is no interest in supporting HL students:

> We've got a group called ATSI, that basically looks at integration for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, but when it comes to, you know, our international students or students who speak another language at home, no, I would say that is non-existent at this point in time and it's something that I'd willingly do.

The same challenges experienced by the Languages teachers in the study reported here, for example the lack of support and interest from schools to promote language teaching and personal determination to advocate for language teaching, and the same teacher scepticism have

been reported in other Australian studies (Cunningham, 2018; Dégi, 2016; Gorter & Arocena, 2020; Lee & Oxelson, 2006). Although Languages teachers in this study seem open-minded, they report often restricting themselves to the target language in their classrooms, as portrayed above. The participating teachers are not necessarily afraid of HL use in their classrooms but they advocate for the target language only, without acknowledging the curriculum's aim of including all languages and the more recently proposed resource of translanguaging in Languages classrooms (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022b; García & Otheguy, 2020; Gorter & Arocena, 2020; Turner & Lin, 2020).

6.6.2. Lack of advocacy

The interviews responses reveal that language teachers have a low regard for school administration with respect to language promotion in schools, let alone in promoting plurilingualism. In all cases in this study, language teachers reported that they do not have prompt access to students' background information and even if they did, it might not state that students are plurilingual. It is out of personal interest or prompting by students or parents themselves that language teachers explore the linguistic background of their students. Interestingly, however, plurilingual students and their parents often hesitate to inform their teachers of their knowledge of more than one language, which complicates the management of plurilingual students even further. As mentioned in Chapter 5, parents sometimes fear their children could be disadvantaged if a school knew of their child's plurilingualism. Therefore, Maria is convinced that:

> If we had an initiative, like a plurilingual group, a multilingualism group … and we had a panorama of the languages spoken in the community … we could run, across schools a program that supports multilingualism in the city for those families. But the community, because if in a small place like [local town], we do not unite forces between the plurilingual families across the different schools. It is very difficult that it is led by one school.

Fishman's (1996) question about "what happens with the mother tongue before school, in school, out of school, and after school" reinforces that school involvement is a vital element in HL maintenance and such an approach may support parents. At this stage this may happen subtly, in a way that embraces HLs as a treasure, as Françoise described it, or a school supporting a student to learn an HL through distance education if it is not taught at school.

Actions like this may encourage more plurilingual parents to maintain their HL within their multilingual families.

6.7. Summary of plurilingualism in education

The role of the teachers in accommodating plurilingual children's linguistic knowledge and skills in school has been explored in this chapter. The aim was to investigate teachers' views on the ways that plurilingual children apply their linguistic knowledge in a school setting and to investigate language teachers' practices, with a focus on the needs of both students and teachers. The themes that emerged from the teachers' responses to the in-depth interview questions were teacher practice and expectations, the low status of language education, time allocation, the benefits of plurilingualism, motivation, engagement, and flexibility. The information from the Languages teacher participants on how to manage the target language in cooperation with HLs showed that there is a lack of knowledge and restricted scope for inclusion of HLs in school language classes. It is evident that additional languages as a school subject can create conflict, which is a situation that reinforces the fact that a monolingual orientation remains influential in Australia and therefore hinders the promotion of plurilingualism. It is a gap identified in this study between the participating teachers of Languages and the Australia Curriculum: Languages. Due to the small number of participants, there is a need for further research in other regional areas on this topic to establish if the gap exists in other regions too.

The in-depth interview data also reveal that Languages teachers seldom acknowledge students' HL linguistic backgrounds during their language lessons. Most teachers seem to practise and also expect target language only communication in order to ensure adequate input. Also, teacher practice and expectations of the use of HLs is often restricted to illustrating cultural or linguistic aspects such as the comparison of vocabulary and grammatical similarities or differences. Only one teacher admitted to consciously comparing languages and making connections between them to raise students' awareness and to facilitate their language learning process. Most teachers interviewed reported to not feel competent enough to include children's HLs into their Languages classroom. Despite the instruction on inclusion of HL learners in the Australian Curriculum, they feel it is beyond the scope of the Languages classroom. There is a clear lack of knowledge how to theoretically and practically integrate HLs both theoretically and practically. For participating teachers of this study, the curriculum is essentially extending beyond what is known to be achievable. Further, most teachers have limited time to teach

languages satisfactorily and they feel isolated due to the lack of other language teachers in their schools. The low status of language education is a further strain and affects all participating teachers. One teacher in particular felt that this opposition to language education may result from prejudice.

All participating teachers see many benefits in being plurilingual, and they find that it is valuable having plurilingual students in their classrooms. Teachers appreciate plurilingual students' enhanced motivation and engagement and also their linguistic and cultural flexibility. However, while they appreciate these benefits, most teachers struggle to integrate and foster HLs in their classrooms. They remain focused on the principle of target language only and seldom encourage plurilingual students to draw on their linguistic background. All teachers also encounter difficulties in developing background learners' language skills due to the time involved in accommodating the individual children's needs. In addition, most teachers lack knowledge about how to foster plurilingual students' linguistic skills successfully in their classrooms, as every plurilingual student is at a different level.

Cooperation between parents and teachers is vital for ensuring the best possible development of plurilingual students' linguistic abilities; however, teachers feel that parents' efforts in promoting the family's multilingualism is inadequate. This is especially true in a secondary school setting, as parents of primary school aged children seem to be more active. Promoting language education and developing language learning strategies for plurilingual students is a task that requires effort not only from the language teachers and multilingual families but also from schools and government bodies. All the participating teachers are passionate about language education but experience some frustration due to the isolation of being a sole language teacher at a school, indifference from other subject teachers and parents in general, and lack of advocacy from school leaders and the government. The teacher's role in accommodating plurilingual children's linguistic knowledge and skills is restricted to personal initiatives with individual children and possibly with their parents. Teachers acknowledge that the focus is on teaching their target language and it is not their role to incorporate any HLs into their Languages classroom, nor to support HL students in general; however, they may do so in circumstances where they see value in comparing different languages and where the HL is the target language.

Chapter 7. Discussion of plurilingual experiences

This chapter concludes the study by revisiting the research questions and the units of enquiry; and linking these to the literature and theory. Additionally, the chapter considers the implications for multilingual families, their plurilingual children and teachers of Languages in a regional setting like the New England Tablelands of New South Wales in Australia.

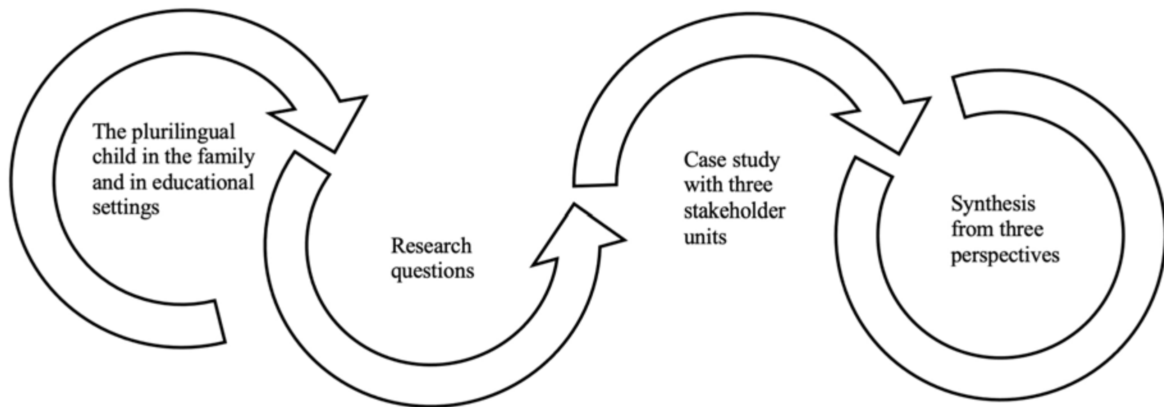
7.1. The development of this study

This study began with an overarching idea found in the question posed by Fishman (1996) about what happens with children's use of HLs before school, in school, out of school and after school (see Section 1.4.). Originating from this general question, two key elements, namely the plurilingual child in the family and the plurilingual child in educational settings (see Chapter 2) evolved into research questions, the case study and its three stakeholder units and the synthesis of the three units of enquiry.

As part of the method and the interpretivist nature of this study it was necessary to embed the study in multiple literature. This enabled clarification of which ideas are useful for the analysis of this project and which ideas were unsuitable. One of the dominant paradigms for thinking about language and plurilingualism in education were, for example, Cummins' (1979a) model of communicative skills and academic language proficiency and García's (2009; 2014) approach to translanguaging where its focus is not on languages themselves but rather on how plurilinguals apply their languages in a variety of domains. Analysis of the data collected revealed that some of these theories were not particularly useful.

The process of the development from a general posed question to the understanding of a complex issue with different units of enquiry is illustrated in Figure 7.1 below.

Figure 7-1 Process of development



The plurilingual child was the focus of this study; however, including the perspectives of parents and teachers of Languages allowed exploration of the issue of what is happening with children's use of HLs in more depth. The perspectives of the three different stakeholder groups are most important and therefore the three key research questions directed the design and implementation of this study:

> Key Research Question 1: How and why do parents share and maintain heritage languages in regional Australia?
>
> Key Research Question 2: What are the experiences of plurilingual children in regional Australia in relation to their heritage language maintenance and personal identity issues?
>
> Key Research Question 3: What is the role of teachers of Languages in supporting plurilingual children's linguistic knowledge and skills in school and in particular in the additional Languages classroom?

This chapter will revisit each of the research questions and will conclude with a section that examines some practical implications of the findings and offers suggestions for future research. The following sections are structured according to the three units of the case study and the key research questions but are also informed by the themes emerging from the data (see Section 3.7.4.).

7.2. Key Research Question 1: Parents of plurilingual children

How and why do parents share and maintain heritage languages in regional Australia?

The analysis presented in Chapter 4 revealed that parents in linguistic intermarriage families have different approaches to HL maintenance and reasons for wishing to share and maintain their HL with their children. Four main reasons for HL maintenance were identified, and most parents demonstrated some or all these reasons, with much in common. The reasons were:

- HL for communication with HL parent, extended family and overseas use;
- HL as linguistic and cultural heritage and identity;
- HL as an academic, cognitive asset, and
- HL for social and life choice advantages (see Section 4.4).

This is also reflected in the benefits parents identified for raising children plurilingually. The findings of this study in relation to the vital role played by schools in HL maintenance are similar to Fielding's (2015) findings in regard to the role of school and HL maintenance. According to Fielding (2016b, p. 374), it is "becoming apparent that learning additional languages also benefits the maintenance of heritage, community and home language". However, parents feel unsure about how they themselves and the school can work cooperatively to this end. Further, the findings indicated that most parents feel that they are no more disadvantaged raising plurilingual children in regional Australia than if they were in an urban setting. This finding differs from statements made by Clyne in his 2005 study, in which he identified disadvantages for plurilingual families in regional areas due to lack of large communities of speakers of HLs (2005, p. 83).

In assessing how and why parents are maintaining heritage languages in regional Australia, this key research question was guided by a number of sub-research questions and emerged themes directly associated with the question and discussed below.

7.2.1. Parents' views about plurilingualism

The parents' views about plurilingualism and their reported feelings about speaking more than one language were addressed in-depth in interviews. Online questionnaire results from English-speaking parents, however, illustrated that only a few parents find it easy to communicate in

one of the HLs, while most find it moderately hard to extremely difficult, due to their lack of language proficiency in the HL. Results also illustrate that some of these parents consider the HLs easy to understand, whereas others find them moderately challenging and exceedingly problematic.

The responses to the online questionnaire and the interview questions imply that the English-speaking parents perceive their own plurilingualism (generally discussed using the terms *bilingual* and *bilingualism* by the parents) to be moderately problematic, mostly due to hardship in grasping different languages. These responses, therefore, revealed that communication abilities impact feelings about plurilingualism. These results echo contributions to this field of research. For example Diskin-Holdaway and Escudero (2021) highlight that parents who speak their non-native language with their children feel less secure in their parenting role. Further, Torsh (2020a, p. 126) indicates that mothers primarily hold themselves responsible for their children's language development and "parent gender may be as or more relevant than language background in understanding the dynamics of language in the family". Grosjean (2015) and Schüpbach (2009) both emphasize that HL communication between children and parents can be important, but that there are different ways to implement HL maintenance.

The complexity of HL proficiency and attitudes towards plurilingualism in this study reflect in particular Torsh's findings (2020a, p. 121) where English-dominant parents' attitudes towards HLs are mostly positive, despite their own lack of proficiency in the HL. Further the above studies have indicated that the most crucial factor in determining whether the children maintain the HL or undergo language shift is the attitude of their parents toward their own language or the HL. These studies imply that when the parents view plurilingualism positively, it has a significant impact on the number of languages that their children will adopt. The positive views are also referred to in a handbook by Harding-Esch and Riley (2003) who described parents' views of plurilingualism, and indicated that when living in a rural community, the parent's attitude toward the language is critical, as their only interlocuters are their own children (Harding-Esch & Riley, 2003, p. 82). Further, findings by Piller and Gerber (2018) showed that personal bilingualism is generally described in very positive terms and is conceptualised as a gift from parents to offspring. The current study revealed this attitude too. Most parents, English speaking and parents using a language other than English, see plurilingualism as a benefit for their children. Nonetheless, the notion of multilingual advantage is not always realised in the form of successful bilingual parenting methods.

Given the findings discussed above, it is worthwhile to conclude that different parents have deviating views about plurilingualism, which may impact how the children learn to speak more than one language. Variations of maintenance preferences revealed one aspect of parent views about plurilingualism. The self-perceived impact of having deeply committed parents varies greatly from that of wavering parents and reflects similar findings, for example, by Torsh (2018a, p. 192). Their responses to the questionnaire and the interview questions revealed that parent participants who have been coded as 'deeply committed' and 'committed' generally have children whose HLs are stronger (perceived by the children to be spoken and understood extremely easily to somewhat easily) than children with 'wavering' parents (HL perceived to be spoken and understood somewhat easily to with somewhat difficulty)

Furthermore, the motivations for maintenance of HLs often defines parents' views on plurilingualism as well. These motivations were found, for example, in the study by Ellis and Sims (2014), and are explained in more detail in the section below (7.2.2.).

7.2.2. Parents' perceptions of the benefits of plurilingualism

When exploring the benefits that parents perceive in speaking more than one language within the family and community, the study found that the major reasons for or benefits of HL maintenance perceived by parents include HL enhancing communication with them as HL parents and extended family as well as use of the HL overseas. Additionally, the study findings showed that HLs are perceived as linguistically and culturally important, and that there is an identity component in the perception of benefit, connecting to their family's origins.

Furthermore, the findings also illustrated parents' beliefs that the HL acts as an asset in academic settings and enhances cognitive development. The findings include the participating parents' belief that HLs offer people advantages in making social and life choices. Therefore, these results show that parents believe speaking more than one language is beneficial for interacting with others, locally and internationally and that this motivates their use of HLs. The findings align with other small-scale studies (Berardi-Wiltshire, 2017; Ellis & Sims, 2014; McCabe, 2014). Berardi-Wiltshire (2017), for example reported on parental ideologies and FLPs among immigrants. Her results presented the importance of parents' beliefs about the value of HLs, about the value of plurilingualism and beliefs about language acquisition. Ellis, Sims et al.'s (2014) study identified parental motivation as essentially benefiting the raising of children bilingually in remote areas with no "co-located speech community" (2014, p. 1),

findings which, as illustrated in Section 4.4.1, align with those of this study reported in this thesis. Further, McCabe's (2014) study investigated parental experiences with children's HL maintenance and loss and the benefits parents perceive in maintaining HLs.

Participating children perceive similar benefits to their parents. Thus, Lambert's (2008) statement, that the perception of the advantages of speaking multiple languages are critical when it comes to learning and maintaining languages, echoes the views of these participating groups. Since parental attitude is a factor that impacts children's motivation to learn any language, this perception can be applied to parental HL maintenance as well (Ellis et al., 2019; Torsh, 2020a; Van Mensel & Deconinck, 2019). Therefore, it is possible to conclude that communicating with family members in Australia and extended family members and other people overseas, as well as experiencing language in relation to culture and identity, are major benefits that motivate participating parents to speak more than one language with their children. These findings are similar to other studies presented in Chapter 2 (Berardi-Wiltshire, 2017; Ellis & Sims, 2014; Ellis et al., 2018). This study contributes to a research gap in the literature (see Section 2.5) that has been widely acknowledged concerning how parents identify the benefits of speaking more than one language with their children specifically parents of families living in regional Australia.

7.2.3. Heritage language support tools for plurilingual children

When considering the question about whether the parents support their children in using HLs, the findings revealed that parents in regional areas are the most regular boosters of their children's speaking and listening abilities, and the family home is the most visible domain for HL usage in the plurilingual children's everyday lives. This is because the possibilities for using the HL are restricted for the given reasons, outlined above (see Section 4.3.). In comparison to studies based in cities or communities with more HL speaking members, the importance of parents' support, is not less important. Pauwels (2005) endorsed that parents have the most influence in HL maintenance even in communities with community language schools. Confirming other studies, these findings suggest that parents offer their children the most significant support for ensuring they grasp more languages, not only English.

Schools as potential supporters for HL maintenance and development, as proposed in the academic literature currently (for example Gay, 2018; Mayfield, 2017) and illustrated in Chapter 4, had not occurred to participating parents. Supporting HL maintenance and

development already takes place when the school allows and organises a student to enrol in a language class via distance education for the HSC. Either parents have not considered such an intervention at all, or they have purposely established other support practices. These parents' approaches seem to run counter to the prevailing academic view. Nonetheless, some parents acknowledged that they would appreciate having the school as a reliable partner in their children's HL development and maintenance as they feel that school plays an important part in "the formation of language habits" in general.

The most common form of literacy assistance provided by participating parents was reading books to their children in the HL. According to Shen and Del Tufo's (2022, p. 1) study, book reading is a "vital component" in the development of literacy skills for both monolingual and plurilingual children. Therefore, by using book reading as a tool for HL literacy development and maintenance, parents in this study are implementing research recommendations. They listed book reading as a tool for HL maintenance support without mentioning research evidence. The parents' responses to the questionnaire and interview questions revealed that other forms of media, such as movies and internet tools, are the second most common source of HL support children receive. These findings suggest that parents engage their children with various support tools that encourage them to use the HL regularly.

While parents reported that they provide many opportunities for their children to experience the culture and language of the HL, the children's responses, in contrast do not always support these statements. The children, rather, reported that they are given books to read, are allowed to watch movies in their HL and some attend an occasional cultural event where the HL is spoken (see Section 5.5.). One of the potential reasons for this difference in perception is that, due to parents' efforts, the children have adapted an international "global plurilingual citizen" identity and plurilingual children consider the blend of cultures they grow up with as normal.

Implementing the approaches listed above seems to fulfil two purposes of HL learning. On the one hand, participating parents use the tools and approaches to develop and maintain HL for communication reasons; while on the other hand, they pursue their children's linguistic and cultural heritage so that their children develop into global citizens. The children's linguistic and cultural heritage can enhance their communication skills, deepen cultural understanding, provide a global perspective, and enable them to act as a bridge between cultures. Regarding the regional context, these two aspects are perplexing but probably are a distinct and purposeful attitude, which may contrast with multicultural metropolitan areas where orchestrated cultural

and language connections are less necessary, as the families have more options to meet other plurilinguals across different domains, and not only, for example, at community language schools and playgroups but also in church communities and as groups of work colleagues and friends (Cruickshank, Jung, et al., 2020; Fukui, 2019; Matsui, 2022). In summary, parents in this study reported that the linguistic support tools and approaches offered, help children select languages to use and cultural activities for engaging with the languages.

7.2.4. Parent's feelings about language loss or shift

In the context of the feelings of parents concerning language loss or shift, the findings demonstrated that because most parents only mentioned, apart from tiny groups to a few other HL users in this regional area, there is no local support other than parents themselves that enables further input in the HL. Additionally, since the domains and interlocutors are restricted to the home environment, extended family living abroad, and visits to the home country, there is some chance of language loss or shift at the individual level.

The findings described above are usefully considered in light of a study by Leitner (2004), who investigated the history and current use of the many different languages spoken in Australia. He highlighted that the move in Australia's current language habitat from Anglophone to organised multilingualism symbolises a transition from the European-British legacy to a recognition of the country's location in the Southeast Asian and Pacific region. Despite Australia's multilingualism, language loss and shift is a significant topic amongst multilingual families. The findings of this study compare with those of Kouritzin (2000, p. 313) who noted that the greatest contributor to language loss is a shift from the family's HL towards the majority language. Torsh (2020a) similarly illustrated that parents, and especially women, feel that language shift may not only cause eventual language loss but also a loss in family relationships.

Thus, while parents feel it is their responsibility to achieve successful HL maintenance to then enable the children to take advantage of the benefits mentioned above, parents are aware that essentially, in the end, it is the children who have the final choice about whether to foster the HL as part of their lives. This uncertainty causes sadness and disappointment in most parents and even personal failure in case of loss as has been noted in previous studies. Ortman (2008), for example revealed the importance of the English language in children's lives and how difficult it is for parents to slow down this constant shift toward the dominant language. She also points out that children make their own decisions regarding language use and that this may

hurt parents' feelings. Lam's (2011) study especially talks about the loss of effective and meaningful communication between parents and children, and in this way relates to feelings of uncertainty expressed by participant parents in this current study.

7.3. Key Research Question 2: Plurilingual children

What is the experience of plurilingual children in regional Australia in relation to their heritage language maintenance and personal identity issues?

The analysis established that plurilingual children in regional Australia experience their plurilingualism mostly as a positive part of their upbringing. They acknowledge that there are many benefits but also some challenges, especially regarding language maintenance. Most of them feel that schools could support HL maintenance more but are restricted due to the limitation of language choices in schools, which in many cases do not include their HLs.

In determining the experiences of plurilingual children in regional Australia, several key themes emerged from the quantitative and qualitative data. These are discussed below.

7.3.1. Children's identification with English and heritage languages

In evaluating the experiences of plurilingual children in regional Australia, it was valuable to know whether plurilingual children identified with one language more than another. An expected outcome was that all children identified with the English language more than with their HL. Other studies have also found that plurilingual children living in an environment with one dominant language usually tend to relate to the dominant language easily. The findings presented in Chapter 5 echo previous studies that while the second generation tends to use the HL with parents and maybe siblings, they use English in all other domains, and they may experience a shift to the sole use of English during their lifetime (Ortman, 2008; Schüpbach, 2009).

Further, as part of the inclusion criteria for participating in this study, most children are attending an additional language class, particularly in Years 7 and 8, when language study is part of the NSW Government's obligatory 100-hour language learning program. Participating children in Years 9 and 10 said they continued to attend an additional language class as they could see benefits in language education. However, it was also found that several children who

attend primary school cannot access regular language sessions but instead have access to local HL interlocuters and HL communities on only a few occasions a year.

The current study's findings are consistent with those of other studies conducted to evaluate the extent to which plurilingual children identified with two or more languages (Grosjean, 2010; Joo et al., 2021; Rubino, 2021). These evaluations revealed that bilinguals are likely to identify with an identity shaped by two or more languages and two or more cultures. Also, in line with the current study findings, Fielding (2011) investigated the perception of children using different languages on the benefits of bilingual identity. The findings revealed that language and culture influence the identification of self in children, and thus children's sense of belonging to their initial languages and cultures is a significant component of their identity. This issue is of particular importance when considering that the plurilingual children participating in the study reported here say that they can adapt their behaviour across multiple linguistic and cultural situations, as they have not only an Australian background but also have experience of another language and culture. However, if the HL background is concealed by a 'monolingual image', found with a number of children in the study, then a potential risk factor is the loss of the plurilingual experience. Nevertheless, from the above statements made by the child participants, it is worthwhile to conclude that speaking more than one language is beneficial for their identity. They said it allows them to be engaged with communication globally, or at least across multiple languages and cultures and social and national contexts.

Therefore, in conclusion it can be established that plurilingual children report making use of linguistic knowledge in their family setting as well as in educational settings as part of their plurilingual identity. Nonetheless, the child participants' results, which found that most of the children feel comfortable in using the HL outside the home, indicate that there may be a shift in children's identification towards their HL. The children's outlook on HL maintenance was found to be fairly positive and the children's answers indicated they would be greatly disappointed if they were to lose the knowledge of their HL in the future. This result raises the questions about whether the loss of HLs by the third generation, concerns raised by Leitner (2004) and Clyne (2001), is still certain, or whether multilingual societies have started to strengthen the concept of 'side stream' (see Section 1.3.3.), which encourages plurilinguals being able to identify with more than one language and culture and promotes positive diversity and acceptance experiences. Positive peer group influence is very important to HL speaking children and this fact also offers a tantalising avenue for future research. The participating

children's answers revealed such a tendency and potentially lay the groundwork (in the second generation) for trends observed by recent research which found that "some communities now show high levels of community language use even in the third generation" (Chik et al., 2019, p. 9).

7.3.2. Children's perception of plurilingual benefits

During interviews the children reported two major benefits from knowing more than one language. These are using their HL for communication overseas as well as social benefits. They also considered the HL to be an academic and cognitive asset, for example when learning a third language. Other benefits included being able to enjoy special attention from other people because of their ability to use their HL. The results mentioned above were similar to findings of studies conducted by Lambert (2008), Valian (2015) and Douglas Fir Group (2016), who noted that when it comes to learning and transmitting languages, the benefits of speaking more languages are crucial. Therefore, acknowledging the benefits of being plurilingual, also motivates the participating children to maintain the HL.

Frequently parental motivation influences children's motivation to maintain the HL. Lambert (2008, p. 25) illustrated that parents' attitudes are "a factor that determines children's motivation in language learning". The participating children often mentioned the influence parents have on their HL maintenance. While the children reflected on their parents' sometimes tedious reminders to use the HL, they all, even the younger children, realise that plurilingualism is a unique opportunity and this realisation motivates them to continue to use the HL.

7.3.3. Assessment of regional Australian living

Research Question 2 specifically asked about children's experiences in the New England region. The child participants thought that city schools would have more language study options, and community language classes might be more accessible. However, the child participants also appreciate the opportunities they have in the regional context.

Studies in urban settings, including those by Cruickshank (2020), Hajek (2018), Dabroswki (2015) and Feneley and Calixto (2016) have established that, due to cultural and social attitudes toward learning languages, as well as the accessibility of language programs in schools, Australia is in a precarious situation in terms of language teaching. Australian education authorities appear to be ignoring its population's significant language assets. Nevertheless, it is

noteworthy that all child participants from the New England region feel comfortable being plurilingual and have hardly any conflicting situations in their lives related to their HL use. This aspect may be truly exclusive to the investigated area and may indicate a particular positive outlook for plurilingual families in the New England region. It might also be the case, however, that attitudes to diversity are changing nationally, and internationally, with greater acceptance and celebration of that diversity.

While the positive experience of plurilingual children in the New England region may be exclusive to this region, it is critical to investigate the potential of language instruction for plurilingual children, how these children feel about language shift and loss, and, in particular, how to make use of available resources to support the maintenance of the children's HLs.

7.3.4. Children's feeling about language change

How the child participants feel about language shift and loss was assessed in order to answer Research Question 2. Because the community values the children's HLs, the children's feelings and ideologies about language maintenance are generally positive. Most children reported being confident of maintaining their HL; thus, there is no change from using English instead of their HL. This appears to have a beneficial impact on language maintenance, and some children strengthen their HL literacy skills through conscious subject selections at school. Moreover, although the children felt considerably more at ease speaking English, their replies during the in-depth interviews revealed a different viewpoint. Some children felt that losing their HL would impact their identity. Chiaki was most particular about it by saying: "I wouldn't want to lose it [Japanese] because, it's very important, we had it for most of our life, so it's sort of like a part of us". In line with the above, Fishman (1991, 2001) linked the loss of languages to the loss of identity and hence argued that languages should be developed and enhanced as a resource (Fishman, 1991).

A previous study conducted in Australia by Joo et al. (2021) has demonstrated that the shift to English monolingualism within several generations remains an ongoing process but that some young HL users continue a high level of HL maintenance. The participating children are well aware of the risk of language loss and this knowledge positively influences their attitude towards language maintenance in their own families. Therefore, based on the findings discussed above, when the participating children's attitudes and ideologies about plurilingualism in general and their HLs in particular are promoted, children said that their languages are

maintained, and their linguistic skills strengthened. In contrast to identified hardships in promoting languages education by many studies and reports, the children participating in the study reported in this thesis seem to have a positive perspective on their future plurilingualism despite the sparse opportunities to develop and use their HLs. These children are ‘bucking the trend’, a term used in an ABC news article (Fukui, 2019), as well as in a study by Joo et al. (2021) and reflected in a study by Forrest et al. (2020).

7.4. Key Research Question 3: Teachers of Languages

What is the role of teachers of Languages in supporting plurilingual children’s linguistic knowledge and skills in school and in particular in the additional Languages classroom?

Participating teachers’ responses to questions about the role of teachers of Languages in supporting students with an HL established, as key factors, the status of Languages education in general and the teachers’ own attitudes towards plurilingualism in educational settings. Participating teachers’ perceptions of their role in accommodating plurilingual students’ linguistic knowledge and skills in their classrooms vary greatly, although most recognise that plurilingualism has benefits for the plurilingual individual as well within the Languages classroom.

7.4.1. Teachers’ perception of influence of plurilingualism on engagement and motivation

Responses from both the students and the teachers to the survey and interview questions reveal that students’ plurilingualism, the ability to use multiple languages, does have a number of advantages. These include students’ motivation to learn an additional language, as well as their capacity to adapt to using an additional language and use translanguaging as a resource for learning the language, The challenge faced by teacher is how to exploit students’ plurilingual repertoire as an asset in the Languages classroom.

Although pedagogical translanguaging (see Section 2.4.1.3.) is self-evidently still not a very common practise in most Australian classrooms, participating teachers value the concept as it provides for a greater acceptance of plurilingualism in educational contexts (D’warte & Slaughter, 2021). The findings revealed that participating teachers seem unfamiliar with translanguaging methods in the Languages classroom. Translanguaging, as a mode of using

different languages spontaneously to communicate, appears, according to the teachers, to be an unexplored method in predominantly monolingual classrooms, as in the remote setting of this study. Most participating teachers admitted that they value student's plurilingualism but would not consider promoting a language other than the target language during their classroom time. Still, the study's findings suggest that, according to the teachers of Languages, plurilingualism has positively affected children's motivation to learn an additional language even without translanguaging practices.

It is worth noting that all participating children in Year 9 and upwards were motivated to continue language studies after the mandatory Year 7 and 8 study of Languages and all the younger children intended to continue studying a language in the future. Over the last two decades studies on the impact of learning a third language on plurilingual students had become a major area of research (see for example Carvalho & Silva (2006), Abu-Rabia & Sanitsky (2010), and Bartolotti & Marian (2017)). Many of these studies have emphasised that students' plurilingualism has a substantial positive impact on language learning in the additional language classroom, for example, through the development of metalinguistic awareness, grammar, vocabulary and cross-linguistic and communication abilities. However, none of the studies addressed the impact of students' plurilingualism on engagement and motivation. Teachers in the study reported in this thesis see plurilingualism as having an invaluable effect on children's engagement and motivation to learn an additional language and/or to maintain HLs. Teachers did not take on explicit responsibility for this effect; however, their passion for languages during the interviews may transfer to their students. Ellis (2018, p. 1) is convinced that "[t]eachers of languages generally strive to pass on their love of language in their teaching", an experience that is shared by participating teachers, not only for plurilinguals but for all children learning languages.

7.4.2. Teachers' planning and programming to accommodate plurilingual children

The teachers' responses to the survey and interview questions revealed the extent to which they shape planning and programming to accommodate plurilingual students. All the teachers of Languages indicated that supporting the use of HLs in the classroom is reasonably easy, but some teachers feel that supporting HL students in developing their HL in the classroom is slightly challenging to moderately difficult. However, according to Lee and Oxelson (2006, p.

456 and 468) teachers' positive attitudes towards HLs is the "most valuable practice teachers can take up in encouraging the maintenance of heritage languages", and their "willingness to value it publicly" in the school environment "can reinforce student's desire to maintain their HL" whether the teachers have proficiency in that language or not (see Section 2.4.6.). Despite all participating in the study reported in this thesis believing that the presence of plurilingual students in the Languages classroom has a moderate to significant impact on the planning and programming of their lessons, they have no specific plans to accommodate plurilingual students. Instead, most of the participating teachers believe they are employed to teach the target language only, despite the stipulation for inclusiveness of other languages in the Australian curriculum, and they do not feel competent enough to include children's HLs into their Languages classroom. Nevertheless, they reported that it is easy to support the use of HLs in the classroom but have no specific strategies to develop children's HL. Thus, there is a conflict between monolingual orientation and plurilingual perspectives previously addressed by Gay (2018, p. 96) (see Section 2.4.5), who argues that it is vital to equip children with various linguistic skills. She argued that English and HLs can "enrich each other" and can be used alongside each other.

The findings mentioned above also differ from the recommendations presented by Ellis (2013), Paris (2011) and Ansó et al. (2021), who indicated that teachers must devote themselves to appreciating the plurilingual student to facilitate conversation between teachers and students and to make plurilingualism the standard in today's society. However, despite the clear instruction on inclusion of HL learners in the Australian Curriculum, participating teachers feel it is beyond the scope of their Languages classroom.

Ladson-Billings (1995) has argued that in order to protect HLs, schools should collaborate with families and communities, an argument recently elaborated in more detail by Chik et al. (2019) and Cruickshank et al. (2020). As a result, language teaching necessitates teachers, students, and the entire community to explore cultural and language awareness. The findings discussed above show that teachers claim to plan their lessons to enhance the accommodation of plurilingualism.

The findings also revealed that teachers of Languages participating in the study reported in this thesis may not currently have sufficient training and expertise in how to accommodate plurilingualism into their classrooms. Nonetheless, teachers recognise that there is a need for additional professional learning in terms of introducing multiple languages into the Language classroom within the scope of the curriculum. Moreover, most of the participating teachers

struggle to see that teaching a target language and accommodating HLs at the same time is a beneficial concept for everyone involved. Participating teachers have a personal desire to collaborate more intensely with HL families and communities but veer away from direct involvement as professionals. The ideal vision of incorporating plurilingual children's knowledge in the Languages classrooms therefore cannot be achieved. Most participating teachers indicated that there is need for further professional development in plurilingualism or translanguaging issues, but access to good professional development may be a challenge for these teachers due to the regional location. However, online access to professional development is available (NSW Education Standards Authority, 2018); therefore, it seems that teachers are either not able or not willing to invest time in reflecting on their pedagogical practices and experiences. Thus, the teachers' issues complexify the current curriculum request, recommendations by recent reports and the global shift towards plurilingualism.

7.4.2.1. Additional languages, the BICS/CALP model and translanguaging

Cummins (1981b) first developed the dual-iceberg model for second language learners. This study adopted the model for third and background language learners (see definition in Section 1.3.1.). The two icebergs represent the two languages spoken by bilingual children (Figure 2.1). The tops of the icebergs represent the communicative skills children use in their day-to-day life (BICS). The first languages, English/dominant language and HL, both appear above the line with various degrees of communicative skills. Below the line, at the bottom of the icebergs, there is also likely varying knowledge and skills in academic proficiency (CALP); however, according to Cummins' common underlying proficiency (CUP) model, both languages support, influence and complement each other on the CALP levels. In the case of learning languages at school, the dual iceberg may expand to a triple iceberg, as shown in Figure 7.2.

Figure 7-2 Triple iceberg model (adapted from Cummins (1979a; 1981b, p. 24))

First language A (dominant language in society)
First language B (heritage language)
Additional language (different to first languages)
BICS
CALP
CUP

There are two ways in which a third language in the form of an additional language at school influences the iceberg model:

- The additional language is different from HL; the model extends to a triple iceberg.
- The additional language is an HL; the model remains dual iceberg.

Extending the dual iceberg model to a triple iceberg model may seem like a straightforward process, as the third language contains a tip that shows the communicative skills of the plurilingual child but also a hidden base of CALP and CUP that interweaves with the other languages as they support, influence, and complement each other in various ways, like vocabulary, grammar and general language awareness. Therefore, as studies into third language acquisition have shown, the result of adding a third language to the model is a substantial expansion of CUP capacity (Bartolotti & Marian, 2017; Cenoz, 2003, 2013; Cenoz & Hoffmann, 2003; de la Fuente & Lacroix, 2015; Westergaard et al., 2017). However, it can be a challenge to access CUP effectively to generate benefits for CALP, not only for the dominant language English but also the HL and eventually the additional language.

When the additional language taught at school and the HL are the same, the dual iceberg model remains. However, in this case, there are components that influence the model on the BICS and CALP levels. The iceberg of the HL is more fragile in most cases of plurilingual language use as it is "typically heavily imbalanced in favor of the dominant language" (Polinsky & Scontras, 2020b, p. 5). The HL benefits from an invaluable chance to develop when being integrated and even taught at school, not only for students but also teachers (Ollerhead & Baker, 2019). This

view gives the impression that plurilingual children should be given the opportunity to learn their HL at school in a manner similar to how efforts in language maintenance in immigrants and refugees have been promoted (Ollerhead & Baker, 2019). Extending skills and proficiency in both languages through their use at home, and through teaching and learning at school can therefore be beneficial as the resources of the linguistic reservoir (CUP) develop both languages as illustrated in the dual iceberg model.

The relevance of either option of Cummins' BICS/CALP model presented above is significant for this study as the proficiency level of the different languages may reflect the experience that plurilingual children have in both their language learning in school and language maintenance at home and in the community. In addition, however, Flores (2020)a strong critic of Cummins' work, "is not claiming that certain approaches to teaching academic language are problematic, but rather that academic language itself is a raciolinguistic (i.e. racist) ideology" (Flores, 2020). Flores' perspective illustrates a further layer to plurilingual children's experiences in a monolingual minded society, especially if they have a mixed-race background. This view is also in line with García and Sylvan's (2011) and García and Otheguy's (2020) approach to the ideological struggles around race and class.

Complying with the interpretivist nature of this study reported here, it was necessary to embed the study in a wider range of literature. One of the dominant paradigms for thinking about language and plurilingualism in education is that developed by Cummins, García and Fishman. While Cummins and Gracía provided some useful background knowledge, their paradigm has proven to be unsuitable for analysing the data collected for this study. None of the participants' responses reflected Cummins' model, despite them having some ideas about languages enforcing the learning of other languages. Cummins' model is helpful in establishing plurilinguals' language level and use, but there is a slight risk of misinterpretation (Flores, 2020; Flores & Rosa, 2015; Rosa & Flores, 2017), and discussion needs to be broadened to include other theoretical positions. As for translanguaging in a Western context, most participants talked about languages as being bounded objects, which is not really compatible with the idea of translanguaging in a family setting, nor in an educational setting. Therefore, it would be interesting to see if teachers in more urban educational settings have similar views about translanguaging and if they use translanguaging in their classrooms. Such research may help to determine if a translanguaging approach is only attainable in bilingual or immersion settings.

7.4.3. Assessing the support by schools to use and improve heritage languages

In evaluating the support by schools to use and improve the HLs, the findings indicated that in their responses to the survey and interview questions, some teachers appeared unsure about their school's support for using and improving students' HLs, while most believe there is none. However, those who noted that there is support for improvement referred to a list of general policies such as multiculturalism, anti-discrimination, and equal opportunity rather than specific support for HL development. This aligns with a recent study by Cruickshank et al. (2020) that found there was little appreciation of Languages as a subject (2020, p. 53) and a lack of status and support for languages teaching and learning (2020, p. 56), as also noted similarly by teachers in the study reported here.

Furthermore, all the teachers who took part in the interviews believe that parents are part of the support as they care a lot about the use of HLs. This is due to the fact that most parents support the use of the HL at school because there are no sociodemographic issues in the parent group in this study. All participating families are well integrated into the community and parents work in well-respected professions. Teachers, as well as parents, feel that the plurilingual children are well integrated into their classes and do not experience any social discomfort.

The Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2017) states that when implementing the curriculum, teachers and schools must examine the issue of the shift from the HL to the dominant language by taking into account each student's linguistic history. And while, according to the interviewed teachers, school principals may like the idea of HLs, there are limited proactive support systems for these languages, a finding which is in line with previous studies in other school settings (Cruickshank, Black, et al., 2020, p. 74). More recent studies (Chik et al., 2019; Cruickshank, Black, et al., 2020; Hopp et al., 2020) advocate for a more comprehensive language learning approach across families and schools to establish bridges between languages and to develop metalinguistic and cultural awareness as a resource that can be accessed via various languages. Notably, addressing the limited metalinguistic preparation of teachers in teacher education courses in Australia is a recommendation in the Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations' national plan and strategy for languages education (AFMLTA, 2022).

Based on these findings, the participating teachers were either hesitant or not consistent in their responses about the various supporting strategies available in their classrooms or provided by

their schools. The mixed views on support strategies by the participating teachers reinforce the need for further teaching strategies and professional learning to develop new approaches and awareness. The role of teachers in supporting plurilingual students' linguistic knowledge and skills in school and in the additional language classroom is illustrated in the literature. Specifically, though, there is yet little research into HL language support set in regional Australian (Languages) classrooms. This study revealed legitimate concerns and uncertainties regarding schools' support of HLs use and development, and highlights the need for further investigation, and wider studies to gain broader understandings, especially specific investigations in classrooms.

7.5. Conclusion

The purpose of the study reported in this thesis was to investigate the core idea found in Fishman's (1996) query about what happens with children's usage of HLs before, during, after, and even outside the school. In addition, the study aimed to contribute to practice in the field of effective language pedagogy for plurilingual children in regional schools in general, and additional Languages classrooms in particular.

The conclusion reached was that parents in this study make considerable efforts to maintain their own linguistic and cultural background within the family, which may help their plurilingual children to excel in HL literacy skills. It also found that these parents have various means to ensure the maintenance of a HL with their plurilingual children, including book reading, exposure to TV, online channels, and media, organising community gatherings, and enrolling their children in formal HL classes. Additionally, based on the presented findings, it can be concluded that children's own commitment to maintaining the HL impacts on their experience of plurilingualism, such that many children in this study remain committed despite their somewhat limited exposure. It was also found that the participating regionally based children heavily rely on their parents' support to maintain their HL actively. A further conclusion is that there is a lack of knowledge and restricted scope for inclusion of HLs in Languages classes to make it possible to manage the target language in cooperation with HLs.

However, with support from parents and input from the teachers, it is clear from the participants in this study, that from their perspectives there are many advantages to being plurilingual. It is also clear that many of the participants, and teachers in particular, felt that having plurilingual children in their classrooms is beneficial. Therefore, the conclusion reached on the basis of this

study is that there are valuable experiences among plurilingual children in regional Australia. Furthermore, fostering language education and designing language learning methodologies for plurilingual children is a challenge that involves collaboration from not just teachers of Languages and multilingual families, but from schools and government agencies as well. This collaboration is indicated because learning a language helps to promote interpersonal communication and understanding among individuals from various nations. In a multicultural and multilingual Australia, language learning fosters plurilingual awareness and intercultural sensitivity. In this way plurilingualism can be an important commodity in a super diversified world. According to the various studies reviewed in Chapter 2, language learning is amongst the most fundamental of learning opportunities that every citizen should have access to, to fully engage in global understanding.

Studies of 'plurilingualism' tend to focus heavily on educational settings, with a focus on improving language awareness, fostering the use of plurilingual repertoires and building a deeper understanding of intercultural dynamics. Plurilingual pedagogy has multiple applications in language teaching classrooms. However, it could also be adapted in other learning settings, for example, a classroom in which other learning areas are taught and which do not concentrate on language teaching as researched by Turner (2019b) and D'Warte and Slaughter (2021). Using multiple languages to teach and learn in more than one learning area would promote awareness and acceptance of difference that can be shared, as well as cross-cultural communication, and the advancement of belonging and civic participation in Australia (D'warte & Slaughter, 2021). While most of the research using plurilingualism as an analytical lens has concentrated on linguistic learning environments and primary and secondary schooling, a growing body of literature focuses on plurilingualism as a lens through which higher education learning and teaching can be viewed.

7.5.1. Practical implications

A number of practical implications may be derived from this study. Firstly, the findings of this study will be valuable to teachers of Languages and school leadership in the schools where these teachers are involved since the findings provide a better understanding of plurilingual children's experience in HL practice and in language repertoire and domains. Secondly, the findings of the study reported in this thesis provide multilingual families with information on other families' experiences and therefore can offer first-hand support for the venture of raising plurilingual children.

Further, the importance of the study in regional New South Wales and around the world has been sketched in this research, highlighting the demographic shifts, the relationship between plurilingualism and education, and the profound meaning of plurilingualism for individuals and society in contexts that provide both formal and informal learning. This study also offers insight into plurilingual children's experience in regional schools, the issues about their well-being and academic accomplishment, socio-cultural issues, HL learning, and many topics relating to immigration and multiculturalism. Lastly, the study findings will be beneficial by adding to the body of knowledge and practical implications for researchers who investigate the prevalence of plurilingual understanding in both family and education within Australia.

7.5.2. Future research suggestions

Future studies could investigate the same topic using a larger sampling frame that spans a wider variety of teachers, children, and parents to provide a broader perspective on the study aim. In addition, future studies should involve observations in different sized schools and evaluate whether there were differences in children's and teachers' experiences in HL practice and inclusion of linguistic knowledge. The in-school research should also include interviews with principals and other school leaders to add a further perspective to plurilingual languages education. With the involvement of school leaders, systemic issues could be addressed to ensure multicultural and multilingual education is delivered more systematically and effectively. This could, for example, also engage HL parents more concretely and address the distinct roles of HL parents in this regional setting.

In addition, the findings of the study reported in this thesis raise some questions regarding the prevalence of plurilingualism in the New England region. First, it investigates the status of different HLs in comparison with English as a global language and the dominant language of the New England area. This raises questions about what HL maintenance would look like in an area where the dominant language is not English. Some parents participating in this study, especially those with an Asian background, perceive English as a prestige language and for that reason sacrifice their HL (see Miyako and Howin's statements in Chapter 4). In order to maintain HLs, the status of English needs to be questioned.

Another question worth exploring is how HLs can be revitalised, for example in connection with schools, as suggested by Fishman (1991). Some suggestions have been made in this study. Multilingual families depend on opportunities to be exposed to the HL through visits to the

home country and local exposure in community groups. But what will happen when the HL is lost? HLs have been lost to families in the past and many of them have never been revitalised. The flow of people with HLs other than English is continuing as people continue to migrate to Australia, so Languages education will play a vital part in the maintenance of HLs into the future, and new policies and approaches are inevitable (AFMLTA, 2022). While regional areas like the New England Tablelands may not feel the need for more plurilingual approaches in schools yet, the trend in cities will eventually prevail into every school in Australia. Therefore, the question of what happens with HLs before school, in school, out of school, and after school remains a vital issue for multilingual families and school communities. Every plurilingual child and every multilingual family has their very own way of communicating and Australian society should embrace this linguistic resource and recognise that all these kinds of meaning making as a valuable contribution to everyone involved. Thus, the last question to emerge is the following:

Is the general population in regional Australia ready for a more resourceful plurilingual approach?

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Appendices

Appendix A Information sheets

Information sheets:

Parent participants

7–8-year-old child participants

9–11-year-old child participants

12–14-year-old child participants

15–17-year-old child participants

Teachers of Languages

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INFORMATION SHEET

For Parents/Carers

I wish to invite you and your child(ren) to participate in my research project, described below.

My name is Tina Dettwiler and I am conducting this research as part of my PhD in the School of Education at the University of New England. My supervisors are A/Professor Susan Feez and Professor Anne-Marie Morgan.

Research Project	Plurilinguals' experiences in the languages classroom in regional New South Wales (New England Tablelands)
Aim of the Research	The research aims to explore the experiences of plurilingual children in regional Australian and to link these experiences to family and educational settings. 'Plurilingual' is a word that is used for people who use more than one language.
Interview	I would like to conduct an online interview (Zoom, Skype or FaceTime) with your child/children and one with yourself. The interview will take approximately 30-45 minutes. With your permission, I will make an audio recording of the interview to ensure that I accurately recall the information provided. Following the interview, a transcript will be provided to you if you wish to see one. There will also be an online questionnaire to complete, which will take around 10 minutes.
Confidentiality	Any personal details gathered in the course of the study will remain confidential. Your child/children and yourself will not be identified by name in any publication of the results. All names will be replaced by pseudonyms; this will ensure your child/children's and your anonymity. If you agree I would like to quote some of child/children's and your responses. This will also be done in a way to ensure that no one is identifiable.
Participation is Voluntary	Please understand that their/your involvement in this study is voluntary and I respect your right to stop participating in the study at any time without consequence and without needing to provide an explanation. The interview data can be withdrawn too.
Questions	The questionnaire and the interview questions will not be of a sensitive nature; rather they are general and will enable me to enhance my knowledge of the experiences of plurilinguals in regional Australia.
Use of Information	I will use information from the questionnaire and interview as part of my thesis, which I expect to complete at the beginning of 2021. Information from the questionnaire and interview may also be used in academic journal articles and conference presentations before and after this date. At all times, I will safeguard the identity by presenting the information in a way that will not allow any of you to be identified.
Upsetting Issues	It is unlikely that this research will raise any personal or upsetting issues but if it does you may wish to contact your local Community Health Centre (Armidale 02 6776 9600, Inverell 02 6721 9600, Guyra 02 6738 4000, Uralla 6776 1201, Glen Innes 02 6739 0100, Tenterfield 02 6739 5200) or Lifeline on 13 11 14.

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INFORMATION SHEET
For Participants
(7-8 years old)

Plurilinguals' experiences in the languages classroom in regional New South Wales (New England Tablelands)

Hello,

- We are doing a research study to find out how children who speak more than one language feel, especially in school.
- A research study is a way to answer questions about a special topic and to learn more about people.

- If you want to join in, you will be asked to answer a questionnaire and take part in an interview.

- The interview will take about questionnaire about 15 minutes and the interview 30-45.

- You can change your mind anytime if you don't want to do the questionnaire or the interview.

- When we finish the questionnaires and interviews, I will write a report for your family and your teacher.

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INFORMATION SHEET
For Participants
(9-11 years old)

Plurilinguals' experiences in the languages classroom in regional New South Wales (New England Tablelands)

Hello,

What is the research about?

We are doing a research study to find out how children who speak more than one language feel, especially in school. A research study is a way to answer questions about a special topic and to learn more about people. So we would like to get answers about what you experience in school and in the languages classroom.
We hope that this study will help your teachers and school understand how you feel speaking more than one language.

What does the study involve?

We want you to tell us in 2 different ways about you and about speaking more than one language: first in an online questionnaire and second in an interview with the students researcher.

There will be an online questionnaire and an interview with the student researcher. Due to COVID-19 each interview session will be held using Zoom, Skype or FaceTime.

After the questionnaires and the interviews are done, the researcher will write a report about what you and other children have been telling her.

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INFORMATION SHEET
For Participants
(12-14 years old)

Plurilinguals' experiences in the languages classroom in regional New South Wales (New England Tablelands)

Hello,

We are doing a research study to find out how children who speak more than one language feel, especially in school. A research study is a way to answer questions about a special topic and to learn more about people. So, we would like to get answers about what you experience in school and in the languages classroom.
We hope that this study will help your teachers and school understand how you feel speaking more than one language.

1) What is the study for and why is it being done

We hope that by doing this study, we will learn more about how bilingual and plurilingual children use their 'home' language at school. Bilingual people speak two languages, plurilingual people more than two languages. This information will help us to support you, your parents and teachers so that they can do the best job in helping you as a bilingual/plurilingual child. There has been little research in this field, so hopefully you can help us in finding out more about this.

2) What do I need to do if I take part in the study?

We want you to take part in two different ways of telling us about you and about speaking more than one language.
There will be an online questionnaire and an interview with the student researcher. The online questionnaire takes about 15 minutes and the interview 30-45 minutes. Due to COVID-19 each interview session will be held using Zoom, Skype or FaceTime.

3) Will my parents have to do anything?

Your parents will have to make sure you are happy to participate in this research project.

4) Parent Interview

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INFORMATION SHEET
For Participants
(15-17 years old)

Plurilinguals' experiences in the languages classroom in regional New South Wales (New England Tablelands)

Hello,

We wish to invite you to participate in a research on the above topic. Tina Dettwiler has been a teacher in schools for many years and is now doing a research Master of Education at the University of New England. Tina Dettwiler has been a primary school teacher, English and textiles teacher in Switzerland, the UK and Australia. Tina Dettwiler will be referred to the student researcher throughout this Information Sheet.
We are currently doing a research study that is trying to find out more about how young plurilingual people use their knowledge of another language in school and in the additional languages classroom i.e. French, Italian, Indonesian. Bilingual people speak two languages, plurilingual people more than two languages, so we are using the word plurilingual for everyone speaking more than one language.
We are hoping that young people who are plurilingual will help us by taking part in this study.
This Information Sheet has the answers to many of the questions that you and your parent(s) may have about the study. There is a lot of information in here so don't worry if it is too much for one read. Just read through a bit at a time if you want.

1) What is the study for and why is it being done

We hope that by doing this study, we will learn more about how plurilingual children use their 'home' language at school. There is a lot of research about growing up plurilingual, but not very much on how children can use this in school. This information will help us to support you, your parents and teachers so that they can do the best job in helping children to keep their 'home' language alive and even contribute knowledge in the additional languages classroom. There has been little research in this field, so hopefully you can help us in finding out more about this.

2) What would I be asked to do if I took part in the study?

There will be an online questionnaire, which you will fill out before you tell us more about yourself (the questionnaire takes about 10 minutes). This will help us to get to know you a bit better.
We want you think about you being plurilingual and we will ask you questions about this.

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INFORMATION SHEET
For Teacher Participants

I wish to invite you to participate in my research project, described below.

My name is Tina Dettwiler and I am conducting this research as part of my PhD in the School of Education at the University of New England. My supervisors are A/Professor Susan Feez and Professor Anne-Marie Morgan.

Research Project	Plurilinguals' experiences in the languages classroom in regional New South Wales (New England Tablelands)
Aim of the Research	The research aims to explore the experiences of plurilingual children in regional Australian and to link these experiences to family and educational settings. 'Plurilingual' is a word that is used for people who use more than one language.
Interview	I would like to conduct an online interview (Zoom, Skype or FaceTime) with you. The interview will take approximately 30-45 minutes. With your permission, I will make an audio recording of the interview to ensure that I accurately recall the information provided. Following the interview, a transcript will be provided to you if you wish to see one. There will also be an online questionnaire to complete, which will take around 10 minutes.
Confidentiality	Any personal details gathered in the course of the study will remain confidential. You will not be identified by name in any publication of the results. All names will be replaced by pseudonyms; this will ensure your anonymity. If you agree I would like to quote some of your responses. This will also be done in a way to ensure that no one is identifiable.
Participation is Voluntary	Please understand that your involvement in this study is voluntary and I respect your right to stop participating in the study at any time without consequence and without needing to provide an explanation. The interview data can be withdrawn too.
Questions	The questionnaire and the interview questions will not be of a sensitive nature; rather they are general and will enable me to enhance my knowledge of the experiences of plurilinguals in regional Australia.
Use of Information	I will use information from the questionnaire and interview as part of my thesis, which I expect to complete at the beginning of 2021. Information from the questionnaire and interview may also be used in academic journal articles and conference presentations before and after this date. At all times, I will safeguard the identity by presenting the information in a way that will not allow any of you to be identified.
Upsetting Issues	It is unlikely that this research will raise any personal or upsetting issues but if it does you may wish to contact your local Community Health Centre (Armidale 02 6776 9600, Inverell 02 6721 9600, Guyra 02 6738 4000, Uralla 6776 1201, Glen Innes 02 6739 0100, Tenterfield 02 6739 5200) or Lifeline on 13 11 14.

Appendix B Qualtrics online questionnaire

Qualtrics online questionnaire:

Parent participants

7–11-year-old child participants

12+ year-old child participants

Teachers of Languages

Qualtrics Survey for parents

In this document all questions are visible. In the actual online format, some questions will only show when certain choices have been made (display logic). The most important display logic will be for the collection of personal details for an interview. This field will only show when 'Yes' has been selected in one of the three questions.

<u>About you and your languages</u>

Gender
Male, Female, Prefer not to say, Other

Are you a native English speaker?
Yes, No

What is your mother tongue?
Choose (drop down)

What is your partners mother tongue?
Choose (drop down)

What languages do you use? Click on your mother tongue and/or English if you use English in your everyday life or if you are a native speaker.
Add any other languages.
English, Language 2, Language 3, Add language

How easy do you find speaking ...?
English, Language 2, Language 3, +

Extremely easy, Somewhat easy, Somewhat difficult, Extremely difficult

How easy do you find understanding ...?
English, Language 2, Language 3, +

Extremely easy, Somewhat easy, Somewhat difficult, Extremely difficult

How easy do you find reading ...?
English, Language 2, Language 3, +

Extremely easy, Somewhat easy, Somewhat difficult, Extremely difficult

How easy do you find writing ...?
English, Language 2, Language 3, +

Extremely easy, Somewhat easy, Somewhat difficult, Extremely difficult

<u>Your language use</u>

How often do you use ...?
English, Language 2, Language 3, +

Daily, A few times a week, Once a week, Every few weeks, A few times a year, Never

Whom do you speak English with and how often?

Children, Partner, Extended family (parents, siblings), Friends and community members

Daily, A few times a week, Once a week, Every few weeks, A few times a year, Never

Whom do you speak (English, Language 2, Language 3, +) with and how often?
Children, Partner, Extended family (parents, siblings), Friends and community members

Daily, A few times a week, Once a week, Every few weeks, A few times a year, Never

<u>Your language(s) in the community</u>

How do you/your partner feel about using the home/heritage language outside the home? For example, when you go shopping with your children.

Extremely comfortable, Somewhat comfortable, Somewhat uncomfortable, Extremely uncomfortable

Is your/your partners home/heritage language spoken by other people in the wider community?

Yes, Maybe, No

How many people speak it/them approximately?

1-5, 6-10, more than 10

<u>Your home language at school</u>

How do you think your child/children feel(s) about using the home/heritage language in school?
Extremely comfortable, Somewhat comfortable, Somewhat uncomfortable, Extremely uncomfortable

Is the school of your child/children interested in supporting students that know a language other than English?

Definitely yes, Probably yes, Might or might not, Probably not, Definitely not

How is this demonstrated? Elaborate (dot points).

What additional language(s) does/do your child/children learn at school? Multiple answers possible.

French, Italian, Spanish German, Japanese, Mandarin Indonesian, None, Other

Does your child's/children's languages teacher include the home/heritage language in the lessons?

Always, Usually, Sometimes, Rarely, Never, I do not know

Would you be interested if the languages teacher included your home/heritage language and maybe other languages in the lessons?

Extremely interested, Somewhat interested, Not so interested, Not at all interested

Would you be interested if the school/classroom teacher included your home/heritage language and maybe other languages in lessons?

Extremely interested, Somewhat interested, Not so interested, Not at all interested

How could the classroom teacher/languages teacher include the language in the lessons more often, even though the language is not taught at school? Write down some ideas (dot points).

What is the status of the language in the community/school?

Very accepted, Accepted, Not accepted, Banned

Why do you think this is the case?

Language shift and loss

Is there language shift or loss happening? In other words, you use English more than your home/heritage language(s), so you might lose it/them.

Extremely likely, Somewhat likely, Somewhat unlikely, unlikely

How would you feel if you lost your home/heritage language(s)? For example if no one in your family spoke it/them anymore.

Extremely sad, Somewhat sad, Neither happy nor sad, Somewhat happy, Happy

Are you interested in keeping your home language in use in your family/community?

Definitely yes, Probably yes, Might or might not
Probably not, Definitely not

How do/could you encourage the use of it at home? Write down some ideas (dot points).

Contact Details for Interview

Would you be interested to tell the researchers more about your daily language use in an interview?

Yes, No

Would you be interested for your child/children to do a similar questionnaire?

Yes, No

Would you be interested for your child/children to tell the researchers more about their language use in an interview?

Yes, No

Thank you for your support. Please leave your contact details and we will get back to you shortly.

Full Name
Email Address
Confirm Email Address
Contact Phone Number

Qualtrics Survey for Children 7-11 years old

In this document all questions are visible. In the actual online format some questions will only show when certain choices have been made (display logic).

<u>About you</u>

How old are you?

7-8, 9-11

What stage are you in?

Stage 1 (Years 1-2), Stage 2 (Years 3-4), Stage 3 (Years 5-6)

Gender

Boy, Girl, Prefer not to say, Other

In what town do you attend school?

Armidale, Uralla, Guyra, Inverell, Glen Innes, Tenterfield, Other

<u>Your language use</u>

What languages do you use? Please write up to 3 languages. First click on English and add any languages you also use.

English, Language 2, Language 3, more languages

How easy do you find speaking ...?
English, Language 2, Language 3

Extremely easy, Somewhat easy, Somewhat difficult, Extremely difficult

How easy do you find understanding ...?
English, Language 2, Language 3

Extremely easy, Somewhat easy, Somewhat difficult, Extremely difficult

How easy do you find reading ...?
English, Language 2, Language 3

Extremely easy, Somewhat easy, Somewhat difficult, Extremely difficult

How easy do you find writing ...?
English, Language 2, Language 3

Extremely easy, Somewhat easy, Somewhat difficult, Extremely difficult

Your language use

How often do you use ...? Drag and drop
English, Language 2, Language 3

Daily, A few times a week, Once a week, Every few weeks, A few times a year, Never

Whom do you speak English, Language 2, Language 3 **with and how often?**

Family members (mum, dad, siblings), Extended family (grandparents, cousins), Friends and community members, At school

Daily, A few times a week, Once a week, Every few weeks, A few times a year, Never

Languages at school

What additional language(s) do you learn at school?

French, Italian, Spanish German, Japanese, Mandarin Indonesian, None, Other

How many students are in your additional languages class?

less than 10, between 10 and 15, between 16 and 20, more than 20

How many students in your class speak a language other than English at home?

None, 1-3, more than 3

Your language at school

If you use your home/heritage language at school, for example when parents drop you off. How do you feel about using your home/heritage language?
Extremely comfortable, Somewhat comfortable, Somewhat uncomfortable, Extremely uncomfortable

Do you think the school is interested in children that know another language?

Definitely yes, Probably yes, Might or might not, Probably not, Definitely not

How is this demonstrated? Write down some dot points.

Do any of your teachers include your home/heritage language in the lessons, for example asking you what a specific word means in your language.

Always, Usually, Sometimes, Rarely, Never

Does your languages teacher include your home/heritage language in the lessons, for example asking you what a specific word means in your language.

Always, Usually, Sometimes, Rarely, Never

Would you be interested if your languages teacher included your language and maybe other languages and cultures in the lessons?

Extremely interested, Somewhat interested, Not so interested, Not at all interested

How could your languages teacher include your language in the lessons more often, even though it is not the language taught at school? Write down some ideas (dot points).

What do your friends think of you using a language other than English at home or maybe even in school?

Very accepting of my other language, Accepting my language, Not accepting my language, I am told not to use it

Why do you think it is like that?

Is your home language spoken by other people in the wider community or in your school?

Yes, Maybe, No

How many people speak it/them approximately?

1-5, 6-10, more than 10

<u>Language shift and loss</u>

Do you think you could forget your home/heritage language(s) if you use English more and more? Drag and drop.

Extremely likely, Somewhat likely, Somewhat unlikely, Extremely unlikely

How would you feel if you lost your home/heritage language(s)? For example if no one in your family spoke it/them anymore. Drag and drop.

Extremely sad, Somewhat sad, Neither happy nor sad, Somewhat happy, Happy

Do your parents want you to keep using your home/heritage language?

Yes, Maybe, No

If yes, how do they encourage the use of your home/heritage language(s) at home and in school? (dot points)

Qualtrics Survey for Children 12+ years old

In this document all questions are visible. In the actual online format some questions will only show when certain choices have been made (display logic).

About you

How old are you?

12-14, 15-18

What stage are you in?

Stage 3 (Years 5-6), Stage 4 (Years 7-8), Stage 5 (Years 9-10, Stage 6 (Years 11-12)

Gender

Boy, Girl, Prefer not to say, Other

In what town do you attend school?

Armidale, Uralla, Guyra, Inverell, Glen Innes, Tenterfield, Other

Your language use

What languages do you use? Please write up to 3 languages. First click on English and add any languages you also use.

English, Language 2, Language 3, more languages

How easy do you find speaking ...?
English, Language 2, Language 3

Extremely easy, Somewhat easy, Somewhat difficult, Extremely difficult

How easy do you find understanding ...?
English, Language 2, Language 3

Extremely easy, Somewhat easy, Somewhat difficult, Extremely difficult

How easy do you find reading ...?
English, Language 2, Language 3

Extremely easy, Somewhat easy, Somewhat difficult, Extremely difficult

How easy do you find writing ...?
English, Language 2, Language 3

Extremely easy, Somewhat easy, Somewhat difficult, Extremely difficult

__Your language use__

How often do you use ...? Drag and drop
English, Language 2, Language 3

Daily, A few times a week, Once a week, Every few weeks, A few times a year, Never

Whom do you speak English, Language 2, Language 3 **with and how often?**

Family members (mum, dad, siblings), Extended family (grandparents, cousins), Friends and community members, At school

Daily, A few times a week, Once a week, Every few weeks, A few times a year, Never

__Languages at school__

What additional language(s) do you learn at school?

French, Italian, Spanish German, Japanese, Mandarin Indonesian, None, Other

How many students are in your additional languages class?

less than 10, between 10 and 15, between 16 and 20, more than 20

How many students in your class speak a language other than English at home?

None, 1-3, more than 3

__Your language at school__

How do you feel about using your home/heritage language(s) in school? For example, if your parents attend a school event with you.

Extremely comfortable, Somewhat comfortable, Somewhat uncomfortable, Extremely uncomfortable

Is the school interested in supporting students that know another language?

Definitely yes, Probably yes, Might or might not, Probably not, Definitely not

How is this demonstrated? Write down some of your observations (dot points).

Do any of your teachers include your home/heritage language in the lessons, for example asking you what a specific word means in your language.

Always, Usually, Sometimes, Rarely, Never

Does your languages teacher include your home/heritage language in the lessons, for example asking you what a specific word means in your language.

Always, Usually, Sometimes, Rarely, Never

Would you be interested if your languages teacher included your language and maybe other languages and cultures in the lessons?

Extremely interested, Somewhat interested, Not so interested, Not at all interested

How could your languages teacher include your language in the lessons more often, even though it is not the language taught at school? Write down some ideas (dot points).

What do people think of you using a language other than English at home or maybe even in the community?

Very accepting of my other language, Accepting my language, Not accepting my language, I am told not to use it

Why do you think it is like that? Write down some of your observations (dot points).

Is your home language spoken by other people in the wider community or in your school?

Yes, Maybe, No

How many people speak it/them approximately?

1-5, 6-10, more than 10

<u>Language shift and loss</u>

Is there language shift or loss happening? In other words, you use English more than your home/heritage language(s), so you might lose it/them. Drag and drop

Extremely likely, Somewhat likely, Somewhat unlikely, Extremely unlikely

How would you feel if you lost your home/heritage language(s)? For example, if no one in your family spoke it/them anymore. Drag and drop.

Extremely sad, Somewhat sad, Neither happy nor sad, Somewhat happy, Happy

Do your parents want you to keep using your home/heritage language?

Yes, Maybe, No

If yes, how do they encourage the use of your home/heritage language(s) at home and in school? (dot points)

Qualtrics Survey for languages teachers

In this document all questions are visible. In the actual online format some questions will only show when certain choices have been made (display logic).

<u>About you and your languages</u>

Gender
Male, Female
Prefer not to say, Other

Are you a native English speaker?
Yes, No

What is your mother tongue?
Choose (drop down language list)

If you are plurilingual yourself. What other language do you use?
Choose (drop down language list)

<u>About your school and the languages classroom</u>

In what town is the school you teach at?

Armidale, Uralla, Guyra, Inverell, Glen Innes, Tenterfield, Other

What type of school is it?

Government school, Catholic school, Independent school

How many students are there in the whole school?

Which stage(s) do you teach in?

Early Stage 1 (Kindergarten), Stage 1 (Years 1-2), Stage 2 (Years 3-4), Stage 3 (Years 5-6), Stage 4 (Years 7-8), Stage 5 (Years 9-10, Stage 6 (Years 11-12)

What language(s) do you teach?

How many students are in your classes?

<u>Plurilinguals in your school</u>

How many of your students speak another language than English at home?

1-4, more than 5, Do not know

How many of those are plurilingual (one parent speaking English, one a language other than English)? And what languages do they speak?

How do you think they feel about using their home/heritage language in a school setting?

Extremely uncomfortable, Moderately uncomfortable, Slightly uncomfortable, Slightly comfortable, Moderately comfortable, Extremely comfortable

Is the school interested in supporting plurilinguals in general?

Definitely yes, Probably yes, Probably not, Definitely not

Are there any policies in place that encourage intercultural awareness/competence?

Yes, Maybe, No

What sort of policies?

Are there any strategies and methods are in place to accommodate plurilinguals linguistic knowledge?

No strategies and methods in place, Some strategies and methods in place., Strategies and methods in place.

What kind of strategies and methods are in place? Elaborate (dot points).

How difficult is it for the school or teacher to support the use of home/heritage language(s) in a school setting?

Extremely difficult, Moderately difficult, Slightly difficult, Slightly easy, Moderately easy, Extremely easy

How well can you influence planning/programming in order to accommodate plurilingual students?

Extremely well, Very well, Moderately well, Slightly well, Not well at all

How are you doing this? Elaborate (dot points)

Do you have any training/experience with incorporating different languages in your additional language teaching classroom?

Definitely yes, Probably yes, Probably not, Definitely not

Is there a need for further professional development in this area in general?

Definitely yes, Probably yes, Probably not, Definitely not

<u>Language shift/loss and parents' involvement</u>

Is there language shift happening, endangering the use of home/heritage languages within families?

Definitely yes, Probably yes, Probably not, Definitely not

How does it differ between languages? Elaborate (dot points)

How do you feel about language shift and or loss?

Extremely sad, Slightly sad, Slightly happy, Extremely happy

Do you think parents are interested in keeping their home/heritage languages in use within the family?

Definitely yes, Probably yes, Probably not, Definitely not, Do not know

Do they encourage the use of it in school?

Yes, No

How do they encourage the use of the home/heritage language at school?

<u>Contact Details for Interview</u>

Would you be interested to tell the researchers more about your language teaching in an interview?

Yes, No

Thank you for your support. The researchers will contact you shortly.

Full Name
Email Address
Confirm your Email Address
Phone Number

Appendix C Interview invitations, consent forms and interview questions

Interview invitations, consent forms and interview questions:

Parent participant

7–11-year-old child participant

12+ year-old child participant

Teacher of Languages

Interview invitation for parents

Hello

Thank you very much for your time to answer the questionnaire about 'Plurilingualism in the New England Tablelands'.

You indicated to be interested in:

- telling the researcher more about your daily language use in an interview
- having your child/children answer a similar questionnaire
- having your child/children telling the researcher more about their daily language use in an interview

Please find attached an information sheet for your child/children to read before taking the questionnaire.

Below is a password protected link to the questionnaire. There is one for children aged 7-11, and one for 12+. Please select the appropriate link for your child/children and guide them through. For layout reasons a tablet, laptop or desktop is recommended.

For younger children it is advised to sit with them, while they answer the questions.

Online questionnaire for 7–11-year-olds:

Password: Plurilingual

Questionnaire 7–11-year-olds

Online questionnaire for 12+ year-olds:

Password: Plurilingual

Questionnaire 12+ year-olds

If your spouse/partner has not yet participated in the questionnaire and would like to, they can do so by going to the Facebook page or by clicking on the direct link.

Please let me know a suitable time for your interview on either Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday between 9am – 4pm or weekends.

Please also let me know what platform works best for you (Zoom, facetime, WhatsApp).

Thank you again for your support and talk soon!

Warm regards Tina Dettwiler

Script for recorded consent parent

My name is Tina Dettwiler, and I am a student researcher at UNE. I am interested in your experience as a parent of plurilingual childer. The research is being conducted in the New England Region to find out how plurilingual children feel about being plurilingual at home and at school. Plurilingual means being able to speak more than one language.

The information provided will remain strictly confidential and you will not be identified in any way. Please know that I will do everything I can to protect your privacy. Your identity or personal information will not be disclosed in any publication that may result from the study. Notes that are taken during the interview will be stored in a secure location. You may choose not to answer any question.

Remember that your participation is voluntary and that you can stop the interview at any time.

I can put you in contact with people who know about this study if that is helpful. The interview will last 30-45 minutes (parent).
Before we start, please answer the following questions with yes or no:

Participants to give consent

Do you agree to participate in this activity, realising that you may withdraw at any time? Do you agree that research data gathered for the study may be quoted and published using a pseudonym?

Do you agree to having your interview audio recorded and transcribed? Would you like to receive a copy of the transcription of the interview? Are you older than 18 years old?

Do you have any questions before we get started?

Questions for Interview with parent

1) What languages do you speak and whom do you speak them with? 2) How does communication work in your family/with friends? Explain.

3) How do you feel speaking more than one language? For example how do you feel speaking language x and y? (i.e. interviewees' view of plurilingualism)

4) Which language do you more identify with? And why?

5) What do you think are the benefits of speaking more than one language?

6) What connections do you have to the culture(s) of the language(s) you speak?

7) How do you as parents support your children in using the home/heritage language(s)?

8) Do your children's teachers know that they speak a language other than English?

9) How could the school support them in using/improving your home/heritage language(s)? How can you support your children in using your home/heritage language in school/at home?

10) How would you feel if your children could use your other language at school? e.g. in the additional languages classroom?

11) How is your children's plurilingualism influencing the engagement/motivation to learn an additional language? How do you think students can add linguistic knowledge to the classroom?

12) In a big city more people speak your home/heritage language(s). What does living in a regional community mean for your and your family's use of your home/heritage language(s)? How do you feel about living in a regional community as a parent?

13) How do you feel about language loss or shift?

Script for recorded consent child participant

My name is Tina Dettwiler, and I am a student researcher at UNE. I am interested in your experience as a plurilingual child. The research is being conducted in the New England Region to find out how plurilingual children feel about being plurilingual at home and at school. Plurilingual means being able to speak more than one language.

The information provided will remain strictly confidential and you will not be identified in any way. Please know that I will do everything I can to protect your privacy. Your identity or personal information will not be disclosed in any publication that may result from the study. Notes that are taken during the interview will be stored in a secure location. You may choose not to answer any question.

Remember that your participation is voluntary and that you can stop the interview at any time.

I can put you in contact with people who know about this study if that is helpful. The interview will last 20-30 minutes (child).
Before we start, please answer the following questions with yes or no:

Participants to give consent/children to give assent:

Do you agree to participate in this activity, realising that you may withdraw at any time? Do you agree that research data gathered for the study may be quoted and published using a pseudonym?

Do you agree to having your interview audio recorded and transcribed? Would you like to receive a copy of the transcription of the interview? Are you older than 18 years old?

Do you have any questions before we get started?

Questions for Interview with children 7-11

1) What languages do you speak and whom do you speak them with?
2) How does communication work in your family/with your friends? Explain.

3) How do you feel speaking more than one language? For example, how do you feel speaking language x and y? (i.e. interviewees' view of plurilingualism)

4) Which language do you like better? And why?
5) What do you think is good about speaking more than one language?

6) Do you celebrate special things from the culture(s) of your home/heritage language(s)?

7) How do your parents support you in using the home/heritage language(s)?

8) How do your friends react when they hear you speak your home/heritage language? And how does this make you feel?

9) Does your teacher know that you speak a language other than English?

10) How could the school support you in using/improving your home/heritage language(s)?

11) How would you feel using your home/heritage language(s) and culture(s) at school? e.g. in the additional languages classroom?

12) Do you use your home/heritage language in the additional languages classroom? e.g. knowing French and learning Italian, so words are similar.

13) How is your plurilingualism influencing your engagement/motivation to learn an additional language? e.g. because you can make connections between words you know more than your friends.

14) In a big city more people speak your home/heritage language(s)? What does living in a regional community mean for you and your languages? How do you feel about living in a regional community?

15) How do you feel about losing your home/heritage language if you do not use it enough? (interviewee's view of language shift/loss)

The nature of in-depth interviews may lead to further questions not listed here.

Questions for Interview with children 12+

1) What languages do you speak and whom do you speak them with?
2) How does communication work in your family/with your friends? Explain.

3) How do you feel speaking more than one language? For example, how do you feel speaking language x and y? (i.e. interviewees' view of plurilingualism)

4) Which language do you more identify with? And why?
5) What do you think are the benefits of speaking more than one language?

6) What connections do you have to the culture(s) of your home/heritage language(s)?

7) How do your parents support you in using the home/heritage language(s)?

8) How do your friends react when they hear you speak your home/heritage language? And how does this make you feel?

9) Does your teacher know that you speak a language other than English?

10)How could the school support you in using/improving your home/heritage language(s)?

11) How would you feel using your home/heritage language(s) at school? e.g. in the additional languages classroom?

12) How do you use your knowledge of your home/heritage language in the additional languages classroom? e.g. knowing French and learning Italian

13) How is your plurilingualism influencing your engagement/motivation to learn an additional language?

14) In a big city more people speak your home/heritage language(s)? What does living in a regional community mean for the way you use your other language/s? How do you feel about living in a regional community?

15) How do you feel about losing your home/heritage language if you do not use it enough? (interviewee's view of language shift/loss)

The nature of in-depth interviews may lead to further questions not listed here.

Interview invitation for teacher of Languages

Hello

Thank you very much for your time to answer the questionnaire about 'Plurilingualism in the New England Region'.

You indicated to be interested in:

- telling the researcher more about your language teaching in an interview

Please let me know a suitable time for your interview on either Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday between 9am – 4pm, evening or weekends. The interview last approximately 30 minutes.

Please also let me know what platform works best for you (Zoom, facetime, whatsapp).

Thank you again for your support and talk soon!

Warm regards Tina Dettwiler

Script for recorded consent teacher of Languages

My name is Tina Dettwiler, and I am a student researcher at UNE. I am interested in your experience as a parent of plurilingual childer. The research is being conducted in the New England Region to find out how plurilingual children feel about being plurilingual at home and at school. Plurilingual means being able to speak more than one language.

The information provided will remain strictly confidential and you will not be identified in any way. Please know that I will do everything I can to protect your privacy. Your identity or personal information will not be disclosed in any publication that may result from the study. Notes that are taken during the interview will be stored in a secure location. You may choose not to answer any question.

Remember that your participation is voluntary and that you can stop the interview at any time.

I can put you in contact with people who know about this study if that is helpful. The interview will last 30-45 minutes (parent).
Before we start, please answer the following questions with yes or no:

Participants to give consent

Do you agree to participate in this activity, realising that you may withdraw at any time? Do you agree that research data gathered for the study may be quoted and published using a pseudonym?

Do you agree to having your interview audio recorded and transcribed? Would you like to receive a copy of the transcription of the interview? Are you older than 18 years old?

Do you have any questions before we get started?

Questions for Interview with teacher of Languages

1) What languages do you speak and what languages do you teach?

2) How do you feel speaking more than one language? For example, how do you feel speaking language x and y?

3) What do you think are the benefits of speaking more than one language?

4) What connections do you have to the culture(s) of the language(s) you teach and speak?

5) You know that some of your students speak another language in addition to English. How are you and/or the school supporting them in using/improving their home/heritage language(s)? Is the school interested in supporting plurilinguals in general?

6) What are your experiences with incorporating many languages into your additional language teaching classroom? What further professional development is needed?

7) How do you think your plurilingual students feel using their home/heritage language(s) at school? e.g. in the additional languages classroom?

8) How is plurilingualism influencing their engagement/motivation to learn an additional language? How can plurilingual students add linguistic knowledge to the classroom?

9) How can you influence the planning to accommodate plurilingual students? Is the delivery of the languages curriculum influenced by having plurilingual students in the classroom?

10) What sort of policies are in place in your school/classroom that encourage intercultural competence?

11) What kind of strategies and methods are in place in your school/classroom?

12) What strategies are used when the heritage/home language is viewed as a problem and there is a demand for assimilation and integration by the school/community?

13) Are parents interested in keeping home/heritage languages in use and how do they encourage the use of it in school?

14) In a big city more people speak your student's home/heritage language(s). How do you feel about living in a regional community as a language teacher?

15) How do you feel about language loss or shift?
The nature of in-depth interviews may lead to further questions not listed here.

Appendix D Ethics Approval

Research Services
Armidale NSW 2351
Australia
Phone 02 6773 3715
humanethics@une.edu.au
www.une.edu.au/research-services

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

MEMORANDUM TO: Dr Sally Dixon, A/Prof Susan Feez, Prof Anne-Marie Morgan (ADJP) and Mrs Tina Ursula Dettwiler-Hanni

School of Education

This is to advise you that the Human Research Ethics Committee has approved the following:

PROJECT TITLE: Plurilinguals' experiences in the languages classroom in regional New South Wales (New England Tablelands).

APPROVAL No.: **HE20-097**

COMMENCEMENT DATE: 12 August, 2020

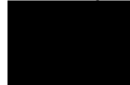
APPROVAL VALID TO: 12 August, 2021

COMMENTS: Nil. Conditions met in full

The Human Research Ethics Committee may grant approval for up to a maximum of three years. For approval periods greater than 12 months, researchers are required to submit an application for renewal at each twelve-month period. All researchers are required to submit a Final Report at the completion of their project. The Progress/Final Report Form is available at the following web address: http://www.une.edu.au/research/research-services/rdi/ethics/hre/hrec-forms

The NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans requires that researchers must report immediately to the Human Research Ethics Committee anything that might affect ethical acceptance of the protocol. This includes adverse reactions of participants, proposed changes in the protocol, and any other unforeseen events that might affect the continued ethical acceptability of the project.

In issuing this approval number, it is required that all data and consent forms are stored in a secure location for a minimum period of five years. These documents may be required for compliance audit processes during that time. If the location at which data and documentation are retained is changed within that five year period, the Research Ethics Officer should be advised of the new location.



Bethany Ayers
HREC Secretary
Research Ethics Officer

08/03/2021 A20/7