Shaping Children’s Identity in Bilingual and Bicultural Families: Parents’ Perspectives

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For Sofia and Hanna,
my ultimate source of joy and multicultural learning hubs.
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Abstract

This is a master's thesis, which has been designed and conducted as a part of the Childhood Studies program (NOSEB)\(^1\), by NTNU\(^2\) in Trondheim, Norway.

Living in a multicultural world gives us a wider perspective on what it means to blend cultures and languages on a daily basis, also by children. In my research I am showing how the socio-structural aspect of children, their agency and living as social actors is not left without a major influence by those surrounding them and caring for them in the first place - their families. The cultural identity is a process that cannot be left untouched by the effect and influence of the external factors. This research took place in Trondheim, by using 4 methods, which are semi-structured interviews, home visits with participatory observation, photographs and an online questionnaire with open questions. All together the research includes 123 participants: 15 people were interviewed, 5 children took photographs, there was 3 home-visits and 100 respondents answered the online, anonymous questionnaire. All of the participants are either parents raising children bilingual and bicultural, or they are the children themselves being raised in mentioned styles.

The main findings point out that the context of upbringing, the family and its cultural background, play a fundamental role in the process of shaping child’s cultural identity. Despite the long and complex time-period it takes for it to be finalized, to some extent, if not fully, it is the family of the child that sets the first base for it to grow and develop and discover who she or he is, also in cultural matters. Children’s agency can only be acted on when given a chance and such an option. The question is not whether a child has agency, but here I was searching to see how is it executed in such a specific setting as the bilingual and bicultural families.

The multicultural lifestyles of families that are the context for the process of cultural identity formation of children, include languages and cultural diversity. The methods how those languages and other elements of culture are incorporated in the daily life of the family are often unique for each family individually. Agency of bilingual and

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\(^1\) NOSEB – Norsk senter for barneforskning (Eng: Norwegian Center for Child Research)
\(^2\) NTNU – Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet (Eng: Norwegian University of Science and Technology)
bicultural children is also present and active when facing negotiations of more than two cultures and two languages as a standard way of life.
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List of acronyms

List of acronyms used in the text of this thesis, organized in alphabetical order:

1. IFES – International Fellowship of Evangelical Students
2. IOM – International Organization for Migration
3. SWPS – Szkoła Wyższa Psychologii Społecznej, Eng: University of Social Science and Humanities

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Every culture is different and rich in their unique set of values, customs, traditions and language, even if the language at first can seem to be similar or the same as other (British English, American English, Canadian English, Australian English etc). Every human being has a sense of their roots, in most cases at least, immigrants, refugees, world travelers or you and me. Culture is complex and often difficult to define in one universal form. Many fields have its own definition of it, anthropology, psychology, and sociology, even economics. In 1952 Kroeber and Kluckhohn identified 162 various definitions and presented them in their book Culture: A Critical review of Concepts and Definitions Eriksen, T.H., (2009 p.26). Samovar et al. states that

“culture is a set of human-made objective and subjective elements that in the past have increased the probability of survival and resulted in satisfaction for the participants in an ecological niche, and thus became shared among those who could communicate with each other because they had common language and they lived in the same time and place.” (Samovar, L.A. et al, 2007 p.23).

This way of perceiving culture emphasis three important aspects: that it is human creation, so non-biological; it is subjective yet common for specific society (Values, beliefs, attitudes etc.); the importance of common language as the source and way of communicating between members of one society.

The function of each culture, according to Trindis, lays in the intention of making life easier by helping in adopting and assimilating to a specific group of people, society. There are five elements common for all cultures: history, religion, values, social organizations and language. Culture is often below conscious level, since very rarely we stop to rethink our own culture, and the influence it has on our lives. “This unconscious or hidden dimension of culture leads many researchers to claims that culture is invisible.” (Samovar, et al, 2007 p.28). Edward T. Hall in Hidden Dimension says that “the presence of culture is so subtle and pervasive that is simply goes unnoticed.” The first, and most significant platform for identity development, including the cultural aspect, is being created at home by family, through parents and closest relatives (Milhouse, V.H. et al, 2001). It is at home where first tastes, music, clothing,
customs and habits are learned and passed on to next generations.

1.1 Rationales for choosing the topic

I am fascinated with cultures and the diversity people from different parts of the world represent. Four main aspects inspired me to design and conduct a project about and on culture. The first inspiration comes from my Master Studies I undertook in Warsaw, in the field of Clinical Psychology at SWPS University\(^3\). I was comparing the emotional intelligence between students in Warsaw and in New York City, on the ground of multiculturalism of two metropolises, yet with substantial difference in size and representatives of different cultures. The research itself was a major inspiration and a great learning opportunity while meeting people with different cultural backgrounds, speaking many new to me accents and often representing vast nationalities.

The second is the anthropology class that I have attended during the first semester in NOSEB, NTNU. That was my first such close and in-depth encounter to that field, which made me even more interested in other cultures. I really enjoyed it and learned a lot. This particular class helped me out to get a clear vision of what I am aiming at when eventually it was time to decide on the area I wanted to write this master thesis on.

The third inspiration is rooted in the family and home (in Poland) I grew up in. My both parents were, and still are, very much engaged in a work in international Christian ministry by IFES\(^4\). Since I can remember our home was always open to guests and friends from all over the world. That’s where for the first time, my brothers and myself have seen and experienced what cultures are, more clearly our own, through the lance of other’s perspective and other people’s from different countries. I heard different accents and dialects in spoken English, in which we mainly communicated with our guests, depending where our friends came from. I learnt about different customs, food and traditions. It taught me respect and tolerance to new and different.

And the last, but not least, if probably not the most important reason for me to pick this topic is the fact that I am a mother to two little girls. They are 6 and 3 years old at the

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\(^3\) SWPS University of Social Science and Humanities, Warsaw, Poland

\(^4\) IFES –International Fellowship of Evangelical Students
moment, and together with my Norwegian husband, we are raising them bilingual and bicultural, Polish-Norwegian. Watching our daughters juggle between the two languages and absorb elements of our cultures makes me want to look deeper into the area of cultural identity of children.

1.2 Aims, objectives and research questions

The aim of the project is to produce knowledge on cultural identity in the context of bicultural and bilingual families and their children in today’s era of globalization. My goal is to present the key aspects in children’s cultural identity shaping process, through their family setting. Here are the following objectives and research questions of my thesis:

1.2.1 Objectives

• To explore the process of identity formation of children raised in bicultural and bilingual settings;
• To understand the influence of social structures and parental guidance in the process of identity formation of a child, alongside with the respect of children’s agency;
• Explore family context as a major background for any act of agency in children life

1.2.2 Research questions

• How do parents pass on to their children their cultural background and heritage?
• In what ways does growing up in bicultural contexts influence children’s cultural identity?
• How does biculturalism influence the families’ ways of ‘doing family’?
• What are the most common obstacles and challenges in raising children bilingual and bicultural?
1.3 Background and context of the research

The research site includes Trondheim, where I have conducted interviews and home visits with parents and their children of bilingual and bicultural families. I would like to present in more details the city of Trondheim and its multicultural side in order to show the proper background of life of multilingual and multicultural families in this particular place on the globe.

1.3.1 The city of Trondheim

The population of Trondheim, the third biggest city in Norway, is 196159\(^5\) where 10127 are immigrants. Norway’s full population is at the moment 5328212, with 944402 amounts of immigrants in the whole country, from 247 countries. Only in 2017 Trondheim and its closest county received 3700 immigrants from abroad. The three biggest groups of immigrants come from Poland, Sweden and Germany. 17% of all immigrants in Trondheim had children born in Norway. The main reason for people to migrate to Trondheim is labor, family reunion and education, just to mention 3 main ones. City is multiethnic with various of multicultural events, support programs for refugees and immigrants etc.

Trondheim growths and develops very rapidly. Its majority of population is young, most of them are students coming to one of the best universities in the country NTNU (Norwegian University of Science and Technology) which is a harbor for circa 75% of technology professionals in Norway. Students coming to Trondheim have possibility to also study medicine, psychology, childhood studies or fine arts, just to mention few. In 2018 NTNU was a residence to 3572 international students from all over the world. The city is attractive to young people with it’s high reputations and standards university, vast possibilities in spending free time, great nature and accessible with close by airport. In combination with a Norwegian social support system for families and children, study and work possibilities, Trondheim is an attractive place for both students and families.

City of Trondheim was the place where I have met my participants face to face for interviews and home-visits. However it is important to mention another aspect of the study and it’s wide and international site – the online world of social media.

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\(^5\) Ssb.no is the source for all the statistics about the city of Trondheim in this paragraph
1.3.2 The international world of internet

Parents of bilingual and bicultural homes from all over the world have filled out a questionnaire that I have designed. However more significant, I think, is and always will be the face to face interaction, also when conducting scientific research, yet the possibilities that internet gives is unspeakable. The main reason I have decided to include the online questionnaire was the ability of reaching much further sample of data, without time or space limits per se. Internet is such natural and obvious tool for communication these days; also among families, parents and research that I believe it is only beneficiary to include it when seeking answers, also for research questions.

1.4 Significance of the study

This study is an important addition to the findings on children’s agency and their identity forming process, in context of family relations and sociological structures of existence of the child. The study also fills in the gap by presenting the perspective of parents who have an important role of socializing children, an area that seems to have been overlooked by childhood studies, with its focus on ‘child’s voice’. It is safe to say that a family is a natural agent of socialization for children. It is first and most important social group that children interact with; they are literally born into it. It is not possible to ignore the huge and significant influence and importance of family in one's life. My study reflects that, by showing how much parent’s care for passing on the culture of their origins to their children becomes often a signpost to many decision-making in the life of a family. It becomes part of the doing-a-family routine.

1.5 Limitations of the study

I am aware that in my study I have used relatively small sample of participants, both children and adults. This aspect should be expanded if any research similar to that one should be conducted in future. Another characteristic is the fact that most of the participants are women, speaking on behalf of both parents. I wish that I have had encountered more men, fathers, and their opinions on the topics I am interested in here.
1.6 Structure of the study

In the following chapter the reader will be introduced with theoretical background (second chapter) of the study with emphasis on the social studies of childhood as main starting point and base for the further debate. I will also discus the notion of agency, culture and the role of the sociological context the child is being raised in, for example a family, as a strong influence on identity development process.

The third chapter is a presentation of how was the actual research and fieldwork conducted. It contains detailed methodology description, tools that have been used and aspect of participants, thanks to whom the fieldwork could take place.

Moving on to the fourth and fifth chapter, I will present the data and the findings of my research. I will expose some parts of the interviews, both with parents and with children. I include children’s pictures and also the information I gathered from the online questionnaire.

In the sixth chapter I will move on to the summery of the findings and will present the final comments on the research, with suggestions for further study.
Chapter 2. Theoretical concepts and reflections

In this chapter I will present the key theoretical concepts that I lay foundation to my findings. I will start from the concept of a child and childhood by showing how multiple disciplines defined it and understood it. I will mainly focus on the sociological theory of a child as a socially-constructed, active actor in society with it’s personal agency. Then I will move to the concept of identity and how it is being created, already in the early stages of our lives, what are its components and, how does it correlate with the sociological aspect of human life’s. In the third part of this chapter I will move on into culture and it’s meaning in shaping child’s identity. Last but not least I will present the aspect of being raised bilingual.

Before I get into the collected data, that was a result of the conducted research we must first define the topic and areas of interest in regard to mentioned research. Those areas are child and childhood, identity, culture and biculturalism and bilingualism. The chapter is divided into subchapters. As the main characters of the research are children, I would like to begin with presenting the definition of children and childhood from the sociological perspective, which will later be a background for the rest of the chapters and a general highlight of the thesis.

2.1 Child and childhood - social construction approach

Definition of a child finds its place in many various of academic fields, from medicine, psychology, but also politic science, sociology and anthropology. As much as all of them contribute a lot to the understanding of who a child is, here I will mainly concentrate on the social-construction of a child, it’s approach and it’s definition. The most acclaimed and worldly accepted form, talking about global rights of children, is United Nations’ Children’s Rights Convention (UNCRC). Among it’s 54 articles it is defining a child, as the person below the age of 18 years old, unless a law of a country says something else. UNCRC was created to protect all the children in the world, by establishing a set of rights, which would be then protected from breaking. Yet, as much as the intention was noble, it doesn’t quite grasp the big global picture. The aspect of institutionalisation of the role and meaning of children become a primer model of theorising children. Aries shows how through the years a value and a picture of children
in society have been changing, from perceiving them as miniature-adults to a tribe-child and socially-constructed.

Many has criticised UNCRC for example for not including all the children in their document. What about the orphans, the street children, those that work, those that become parents before they turn 18 years old? Those and many more circumstances where not taken in consideration, what made UNCRC a difficult material to use in a global and universal communication about child per se. Because of the way the world is, there is no place for universal child. There is not one model every child would fit in. Yet, many scientists try to find one, suitable to all.

Jean Piaget, the psychologist from the seventies build his cognitive-development theory on two major elements regarding child’s intelligence. If people can reach their full potential, intelligence and simply, development, not before reaching their adult years, that means the period of childhood is just an element necessary to reach the stage of adulthood. By following such way of thinking, we can only look at a child as “becoming”. Yet, it does not mean that the sociological perspective totally neglects the biological aspect of children’s development. As James (1998) explains, it still “shares certain chronological and incremental characteristics with the naturally developing model.” (James, 1998, p.23).

At the same time, social studies follow a child’s development not in an assumed-natural-order but rather in what way does the society naturally demands of the child (James, 1998, p.23). The development understood by the social studies, as they refer to it themselves, is socialisation, the process, which children undergo learning to conform the norms that are laid out but the surrounding society children are raised in. Thanks to that concept, James continues, societies are able to sustain themselves from one generation to another, reproducing the social norms and orders. I will talk in more details on the concept of socialisation and reproduction later in this chapter, also by showing how my gathered data in my research reflects that process (both by children and their parents).

Jenks criticises Piaget’s approach by pointing out that “childhood is not a natural phenomenon but instead a social phenomenon” and therefore it cannot be studied and defined as such (1982, p. 12). James and Prout underline the significant issue with the development psychology explaining childhood: “It is a self-sustaining model whose
features can be crudely delineated as follows: rationality is the universal mark if adulthood with childhood representing the period of apprenticeship for its development.” (James et al, 1990, p.10). At the same time, it is important to mention that not all psychologists where ignorant to the sociological aspect of child’s development. Ericson, in contrast to for example Freudan model of growth (Briggs, J.L. 2008), based on 3 stages that are strongly rooted in the body-libido correlation, includes the unique variations in the development for every child that are consequences of the different sociological experiences that everyone goes through. Erikson draws a strong relation between emotional development and eight psychosocial tasks that everyone goes trough. They are “the acquisition of trust, autonomy, initiative, industry, identity, intimacy, generativity, and ego integrity.” (Briggs, J.L. 2008, p.187). As many other conclusions and models, this one also was criticized for describing the western, middle class, white child. Nevertheless, Erikson’s social element of the development should not be missed or disregard.

Developmental psychology draws focus on both changes behaviour, mental, cognitive and emotional growth. It points out the two aspects of each person’s development throughout the time of life which is through biology, the inherited DNA and all the spectrums that are transmitted through it into next generations, and the social, the external part of everyone's upbringing. The inborn characteristics are looks (the resemblance to biological family), personality traits and the behavioural styles. The external aspects influencing child’s development, not biologically determined are so called socio-cultural context. Scholars points out the wide range of sociological contacts and diversity around every child.

Lee (cited in James, 2009, p. 34) talks about visible social division between independent, serious and complete adults who engage in various of important social issues like work, politics etc., while children are perceived as less-valued, chaotic and incomplete future versions of adults. Their “being” is often neglected by focusing only on their progress of “becoming” with the invisible goal she or he will and has to reach one day ahead – adulthood. (e.g. Durkheim, E.,1982). Corsaro (2009) admits that the world, or culture, of adults, for a child is in constant negotiation with their own, culture of childhood. At the same time they are dependant of adults, but also are active participants of both cultures, being active and creative. A child being born in a family setting begins it's journey of continues dual interactions between them and their parents.
Despite fragility of an infant, lack of words and full dependency on its caregivers it mark it’s presence from the first seconds of its life and continues to do so through the whole life. Nothing is constant, only change is. What William Corsaro refers to is that change, the notion of *interpretative reproduction*, meaning that a child reproduces the cultures, social norms and order by living them out, while being raised in a certain family, time and place. At the same time this process of socialisation affects both the child and it’s parents, siblings, society. The child is actively influencing it’s surroundings, making changes while *being* and *becoming*. I will focus more on the impact of a family, the role in child’s social development it plays and the theory of socialisation in the later part of this chapter.

2.2 Children’s Agency

I want to look closer at the idea of child’s *agency* now and turn to the direction of three great scholars, Allison James, Chris Jenks and Alan Prout and their theory. In their book called “*Theorizing Childhood*” James et al. (1998) address the need of reconstructing child and childhood by pointing out to the constantly changing times. They argue that the perspective of child no longer belongs only to development psychology and has to be considered as a valuable and active sociological actor. Bukatko (2008) calls children the *active players in the process of development* (p.6).

“Children are not passive recipients of the environment or blank slates on which it writes. Their own capacities and efforts to become immersed in, to get “mixed up” with, their physical and social world often modify what happens to them and can affect their development and organising ways of thinking, feeling and communicating to assist them in making sense of the world. Children formulate these conceptualizations to help them respond to and understand the rich array of physical and social events they experience.”

(Bukatko, 2018, p. 6)

The role of a child, it’s meaning, has been changing through the centuries. One of the first one, who contributed to the new wave of socially constructed child was a French historian Philippe Aries, who has brought to a day-light the archaeology of a child in his book on history of childhood (Ariues, P. 1982; Corsaro, W., 2011). Social studies
of childhood bring a new light on evaluation of a child within the social construction and moving away from becoming to being, here and now (Jenks, C., 1982). Through my research, the data I have collected, allows me to see how the theory mentioned above functions in the reality of children’s world. It is not a passive world. My young participants where happy to introduce me to their own understanding of the social circumstances they are set in. For more reflections on the finds from the research I have conducted, follow to the chapter of analysis.

Moving away from the fully dependant, vulnerable and weak into active actors with their own culture, sense of expertise over their own beings. Since the new perception of a child, as a strong one, one that has an agency, in years of late 70s and 80s there has been multiple actions initiated by various of scholars, establishing new research programs; organisations and political bodies getting involved with a process of changing so far static and now conservative picture of a child. One of the first one, who contributed to the shift in understanding the complex concept of child and childhood was A. Giddens, when in 1979 he has published his analysis of the social world by arguing that the there is an interaction between structure and agency (Qvortrup, 2009, p. 39).

Year 1979 was called the International Year of a Child, which was aiming to bring better understanding to the new perspective and to challenge the previous believes. That’s when suffering of children, different kind of abuse, famine, war or pathological family settings was brought into the light basically breaking up with the so far notion that all the children are happy, safe and free. (James, 2009). Since those times a term of an agency in regards of children world-wide was adopted in the social studies of children. A child as a social actor, not passive members of society ruled by adults and their norms, but creative, capable of making things happen became the model to measure up to. James and Prout talked about children who have their own culture, opinions, skills, and are active, independent from adults' way of facing issues and challenges (James, et al, 1990). By acknowledging children as their own experts (because no one knows better how it is to be 6 years old, then a 6 years old person) the whole period of childhood gains new dimension in the aspect of sociological roles and identities in society.
“Children are and must be seen as active in the construction and determination of their own social lives, the lives of those around them and of the societies in which they live. Children are not just the passive subjects of social structures and processes.” (James, et al, 1990, p. 8).

Childhood is no longer seen as becoming, it is now also, at the same time, being. Since children are active members of society, the phenomena of childhood have a mouldable form, which is both structured and structuring (Alanem, L. 2001).

Jens Qvotrup (2002) shows that childhood shouldn’t be considered in an individual perspective, but rather structural. The reason for it is the sociological, structural context it is always set up in relations to other structural forms. Also Qvotrup moves away from the view of a child to childhood as a specific structural form by, for the need of re-evaluating child’s position in society, generalising it and giving it the characteristics that are comparable to a class in a society. So literally what do they do, how do they speak, how do they spend their time etc., (Qvotrup, 2002, pp. 47). Another aspect that shows how childhood can be compared with other sociological groups, like adulthood for example, are all the changes it overcomes by being constantly exposed to other social activities, forces even, as Qvotrup (2002, pp.48) calls it himself. Child being part of a sociological micro-group, his or her family will go through regular changes and modification that child himself will have influence on, and be influenced.

Since childhood is socially constructed, set up in a certain time and place and a history, and it is inter-relating with adulthood, since having an adult caretaker, it is not simply independent from other sociological structures, but exists only in a light of other, adulthood. The same with adulthood - every single adult once was a child, and so there would be no children if there weren’t any adults. It’s a closed circle of coexisting social structures. Jenkins (2004) concludes that “much as similarity and difference cannot make sense independently of each other, childhood and adulthood depend on each other for their meaning.” Also Abebe, T. (2019) talks about the natural interdependence within a family, between children and their caretakers.

As much as the concept of child’s agency becomes a very strong notion and one might even say that it is no longer theoretical but also philosophical, we should look at it also from a wider perspective. Abebe in his article argues that the danger of not engaging with the double-sides of the agency concepts, risks misunderstanding and neglecting
some of the groups of children around the world. He also points out that the concept of agency cannot be measured quantitively and therefore it is only possible to describe it and observe in a contextualised matter. Since it has been clearly studied and shown that all children have agency, the more important issue is how do children use and express their agency.

„The actor is someone who does something whereas the agent is someone who does something in relation with other people and, in doing so, makes things happen. This distinction implies that actor is about performativity (i.e., accomplishment) whereas agent is about relationality, including intergenerational relationships within which processes of social and cultural reproduction are embedded.” (Abebe, T., 2019, p. 6)

Also, referring to Panelli et al (2017), Abebe agrees and reminds that children are doers and they are thinkers, therefore their agency should have yet another depth, instead only noticing, if it exists or if it doesn’t. Another assumption that Abebe deals with is that agency has a tendency to be usually, if not always, presented as something positive and admirable. Often in regards to children in Africa, those in particular who are challenged with everyday life by malnutrition, broken families, war or living on a street. If all children have an agency, are they able to act on it? What kind of agency has a child with AIDS, living on a street? Abebe underlines the need of further study on among others, political reality that affects children’s life and through that, their agency, the choices they make and the lives they live. “An important but under-theorized set of questions relate to the spatial, political, and material factors that shape the lives of children, the ‘choices’ they might confront, and the types of futures they might expect, experience, negotiate, and navigate.” (Abebe, 2019, p.12). This is a very important debate, which I also lighten up through this thesis and my research. Agency does not exist without a context. None of the choices made by children, however free and outspoken they may seem in showing and acting on their agency, are not fully independent, but rather pre-determined by earlier choices of their parents. The relational agency refers to, for example, a family, which is basic and first arena for children’s agency to develop. In my research, each of the family created such unique arena for their children. The country they call home, the food they serve, the music they listen to and the traditions they keep. Also, those arenas always contain of other family members with their personalities, roles, skills etc. Through relationships with children
parents and siblings, an agency is created. The style of parenting can differ, the social standards, expectations towards a child, set of boarders and limitations, yet, however different, the first place of the agency to flourish is ones family.

2.3 Identity - Social-constructed definition

There are several options on findings where we come from. At the moment there are more and more popular DNA tests where everyone can find out what is one’s heritage. There are companies, which deal only with that. 6 People have a natural curiosity of who they are, where they come from and where do they belong to. It is a common desire that if not fulfilled can lead to many frustrations and self-doubt, lack of integrity, dysfunctional picture of self etc. Jenkins in his book on social identity says that..

“(…)we can’t live routine lives as humans without identification, without knowing – and sometime puzzling about – who we are and who others are. This is true no matter where we are, or what the local way of life or language. Without repertoires of identification we would not be able to relate to each other meaningfully or consistently. We would not have the vital sense of who’s who and what’s what. Without identity there could be no human world.” (Jenkins, R. 2004, p. 6)

Nobody is born with an identity. Identity is something that one develops in the social and cultural world in which one grows up. There is a complex correlation between the context we are raised in, including family setting, culture, language, gender and then the decision we take in our later years likes profession we pursue, moving abroad or staying in the land where one was born and raised, the relationships we develop, if we have children or not, hobbies etc. The numbers of different elements that all together define and construct us are infinitive. One of those elements is the culture and language we are brought in. I will return to language in further part of this chapter.

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6 You can purchase a tool online, gather your own saliva into a special little container and send it back from detailed analysis of your DNA, kinship or current or potential future health difficulties you might face. (www.myheritage.com/dna). Popular Tv shows like Finding Your Roots With Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Who Do You Think You Are?, Long Lost Family or Genealogy Roadshow created to discover family heritage.
The individual, personal identity is always unique and one of a kind. From the beginning, when a baby is born, its identity starts to form. It is always a two-way collaboration - the baby and its caretakers. Following Jenkins (2004), we can also say that every identity has two components, internal and external. Internal identity states for self-definition and the external is based on what other people think of us and how they perceive us. At the same time, we have to recognise a family as a first social group a person joins when is born. Such family is constructed of individuals with their own identities, set in a certain time and place. Therefore, supporting mentioned earlier Jenkins, nobody is born to a neutral setting, free of external influences. The family is characterised by its interdependence between its members, which directly has an impact on their individual identities (Manzi, C. and Scabini, E. 2011).

2.4 Family

Before I continue to discuss multicultural childhood, I would like to present the basic theories on a family. It is important to understand that socially constructed phenomena when referring to it as a central contributor for child’s development and identity formation. Among many other ones, we can distinguish 3 main theories on sociology of family: 1) structural – functional, 2) symbolic interactionism and 3) conflict theories. Each one of those theories represent different approaches and understandings of what family is and how does function, what is its role.

The first one mentioned, the functional theory of family, come from functionalism, which portrays society as a system. It is build from many different parts, which together create one whole piece. A family is one of those parts. Shared values and order lay in the core foundation of the theory. Without them there can be only anarchy expected. Murdock, in 1949 describes a family as

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7 One can find many more theories of family, but for the purpose of this thesis I have decided to present only those few most relevant ones to this topic.
“a social group characterised by common residence, economic co-operation and reproduction. It includes adults of both sexes, at least two of whom maintain a socially approved sexual relationship, and one or more children, own or adopted, of the sexually co-habiting adult.” (cited in Kidd, 2001, p. 40)

According to Murdock and the functional theory of a family, the key roles for the family are sexual, reproductive, economical and educational. The first two keys simply talk about reproducing and creating new members of the society, giving them at the same time home and a sense of identity and belonging, which is the economical function. The educational is very much understood here as the socialisation. Murdock perceives a family as a source of learning opportunities. Family teaches about rules and norms, language and culture, values and obligations, all of which are very important for the rest of the society, expecting to receive another member with similar culture and values like the rest of it. The briefly described theory received much criticism for it’s idealistic approach, ignoring the struggles and challenges the families face on daily basis. Yet, it is hard not to agree that families are major part of societies, being a foundation for the individual development.

The models of families are not the same around the globe, not all of them are the exact mirror of Murdock’s understanding of a family (Kidd, 2001). Many aspects have a tremendous impact on how do families look like and what defines them. History, politics, basic needs and, sometimes, extraordinary circumstances people find themselves in bend the model. Yet, many sociologists and anthropologists believe that no matter what place on earth, the family is universal and there can be distinguished traits common for all of them. Family exists in all societies and cultures, being viewed as universal social institution. Family and their members are bonded with unique sociological interdependence, carrying for children, emotionally connected and loyal to each other.

One of the theories, that would oppose the one earlier suggested by Murdock, comes from Marxism. As much as the functionalism cared most for the function of family, the supporters of Marxist doctrine viewed family as a familiar and a safe place of rest, in oppose to the harsh reality of daily labour in the work place. By such association, the theory perceives family as nothing else, but another social institution (just like, according to Marxsim, religion, mass media, the state etc.) which serves capitalism.
Another family theory, the symbolic interactionism (LaRossa, 2009), believes that every society is a set of interactions with symbolic meanings behind them. That includes family relations, multicultural interactions, different role models we take on, responsibilities that are expected or put on us etc. This theory puts the biggest focus on the meanings. Every situation that involves human interaction can be analysed and be given meaning (Hammond, 2010).

Third theory mentioned here, the conflict approach is based on the lack of harmony, in direct opposition to the functional theory. The problem of inequality lays among social classes and genders, which leads to conflict (feminism).

Referring back to the functionalism theory of a family for a moment, scientists have laid out several reasons to argue that a family have a right to be considered universal. The main arguments supporting this view were rather criticised and dismissed. They include the biological tie between mother and a child – which doesn’t show the significant role or need of a father per se. The theory states that family naturally fulfils the need for care for the children, where the critics pointed out that the world has been dealing with parental responsibilities in various of ways, and that it is not only a biological family that takes care of a child. Another argument, that within the family the sexual needs are met, has been also criticised since today’s standards of relationships or simply satisfying ones sexually needs, have been long gone form just-within-the-marriage approach. Other theories, like mentioned above (conflict, feminism, based on Marxism) would underline that a family, as one of many social institution is not natural, but created by men. However it is, it is worth saying, that the institution of a family, even when very different from one another, is still a solid and undeniably best platform for children to grow and develop. Bauman (Kidd, 2001) confirms that thought by arguing that the roles and the relationships learnt in the family are crucial for future identity development of an individual. The inner circle of the family bond he calls the “insider group, a closed set of intimate relationships that gives us a sense of belonging and define for us who we are, and therefore who we are not.” (Kidd, 2011, p. 128).

Everyone is somebody’s child. Every child is highly depended on its parents or caregivers. Such relationships highlight the significance of understanding intergenerational interdependencies (Abebe, 2019). Through out the research among
children in UK Mayall (2002), shows that already very young children are not only learners but also contributors to the family dynamics in their time of childhood. They do need care and attention from adults, but simultaneously they can and they do actively use their agency when, for example they dress or wash themselves, or regulate their own thirst. Just like the systems theory, for example, says that “all members influence one other simultaneously and that the interactions flow in a circular, reciprocal manner.” (Bukatko, 2008, p.342) Which means that whenever there is a change in the family life and dynamics (start of school, crisis, moving, divorce), family readjusts to the new routines of a child. This approach does not dismiss child’s agency, nor the fact that context of the child’s growing up period correlates with adults who care for the child and make major decision about their life’s. It is in line with what Abebe says:

“although children have personal agency, which shapes their individual actions, this depends largely on and is regulated by familial contexts, opportunities/constraints, and interpersonal relationships. Because different forms of inter and intra-generational relationships moderate children’s lives, children’s needs are interdependent with those of their siblings, parents, and other members of their social networks. Moreover, whereas dependency on adults defines childhood; it does not necessarily mean that adults are independent.” (Abebe, T., 2019, p. 9)

Often the period of childhood is called innocent and free, and that’s also the picture drawn by many scholars in the earlier days, they would underline the significant role of play and lack of worries for the young ones. Yet they are dependant and fully relying on adult’s (Frønes, 2009)

The identity that can be shared with a group is called social-identity. It describes a group of people with common elements, which distinguish them from others. Such identities cover small groups, a family, like mentioned earlier, with the same roots, an ethnicity, nationality or culture, and many more. What is common for all of the group and personal identities is the fact that they are flexible to some extended and floating with the changes that affect them. Following that thought, every person has their own cultural identity with a specific cultural heritage, which, despite living in the same country, won’t be exactly the same (Nęcka, M. 2014).
At the same, we have to acknowledge the changes that identities and whole cultures are exposed to by the expansion of globalisation worldwide.

“A new type of person whose orientation and view of the world profoundly transcends his or her indigenous culture is developing from the complex of social, political, economic, and educational interactions of our time. The various conceptions of an "international," "transcultural," "multicultural," or "intercultural" individual have each been used with varying degrees of explanatory or descriptive utility. Essentially, they all attempt to define someone whose horizons extend significantly beyond his or her own culture.”
(Adler, 2002, in Nęcka, 2014, p. 87)

Alder’s observation leads us to the next part of the chapter, where the cultural and bicultural identity concept is being explained. First, let’s look closer what ‘culture’ and ‘multicultural childhood’ stand for and how they are understood in the academic literature.

### 2.5 Multicultural childhood

Culture is complex and often difficult to define in one universal form. In 1952 Kroeber and Kluckhohn identified 162 various definitions. Among them, Samovar et al (2007) has described it, as mentioned already, as a set of human-made objectives and subjective elements that before helped to survive. Today those elements, known and passed on from generation to generation bind people together, giving them the same understanding and meaning of their daily life. This way of perceiving culture emphasis three important aspects: that it is human creation, so non-biological; it is subjective yet common for specific society (values, beliefs, attitudes etc.); importance of common language as the source and way of communicating between members of one society.

The function of each culture, according to Trindis (Samovar, 2007), lays in the intention of making life easier by helping in adopting and assimilating to a specific group of people, society. There are five elements common for all cultures: history, religion, values, social organizations and language. Culture is often below conscious level, since very rarely we stop to rethink our own culture, and the influence it has on our lives. Despite it filling out and touching on all spheres of life, as Samovar (2007, p. 28)
mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, culture can come unnoticed and taken for granted.

In the era of globalization, a free and rapid flow across cultures of ideas, goods and people has a tremendous impact on identity formation across the whole world. It is much more challenging to sustain one's culture being surrounded by so many other ones. All the elements of culture are no longer purely defined by one body. The effect of globalization didn’t spare any of it. The food, music, sports, clothing, holidays and the way they are celebrated, even social norms have been going through a sort of renegotiations. Many languages are disappearing while English becomes most universal one used both in private and commercial setting (Arnett Jensen, L., et al, 2011). There are always two sides of such global change, good and bad. Its’ influences on daily life are vast and touches on every single sphere of life. It affects work places. On one hand there is more of them because the international huge concerns are growing and investing in new places what gives more work places so people are also ready to travel and move just to get a work. This, on other hand let support and development the market where new wave of workers have settled, at the same time it is a source of tensions between the local, original habitants with the new workers from other countries. The lack of understanding foreign languages and customs can lead to lack of acceptance, seclusion, and in worse cases racist behavior and act of violence. Freedom of travelling, moving, learning languages and new cultures customs, and generally being more open to new and unknown are other, more positive aspects of globalization. Yet, at the same time there is a raise of nationalistic, ultra-right movement where fear from unknown is dictating new forms of political strategies that are aiming at sheltering and protecting, in their understanding what’s known, so safe. The world is and will always be divided between those who accept the new and unknown with open arms being curious, ready to learn and willing to use of the opportunity that world gives in that way. And there always will be those that feel threatened and unsafe when exposed with unknown and unfamiliar.

As I have mentioned, one of the consequences of globalisation is migration of population. The reason for migration can be very different, just to mention few, they can be caused by war – asylum seekers, famine and lack of sufficient food to survive, education and/or career opportunity, or love and starting a family. According to World
Migration Report by IOM from 2017\textsuperscript{8} 258 million people have migrated to another country. Wu Hongbo, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs said:

"The rise in the number of international migrants reflects the increasing importance of international migration, which has become an integral part of our economies and societies," and that "Well-managed migration brings important benefits to countries of origin and destination, as well as to migrants and their families," (cited by The Economic Times)

Whatever the reason is, people will want to create a new home, wherever they will settle. When people move their locations and start their lives in new countries, even if they can or do bring very little or nothing at all of their physical possessions, they take with them something priceless – their heritage, customs and language. It is common for all immigrants across the globe. How they cultivate it to not loose it, is yet another, individual aspect.

Many of them will choose to continue cultivate what they have been raised with, their culture, their mother tongue, food and moral values. When travelling the world, we also carry our own individual, personal identity. Yet, what makes us feel safe is the feeling of belonging to a bigger group, with known to us customs and other traits. That’s how the polish scholar, Monika Nęcka (2014) refers to the cultural identity. She argues that it is based on the individual feeling of belonging to a family, a class of students at school and other.

Cultural identity is expressed in a set of integral symbols, which function as communication tools between those who belong to the particular group. Adler moves further and calls the cultural identity as the one, which is a basic symbol of human existence. (1997, as cited in Nęcka, 2014, p. 87)

Another identity based on culture is the national identity, which is connected with a feeling of belonging to a politically forms body, like countries or nations. Then the ethnic and cultural identity appears when one has a feeling of belonging to a language

\textsuperscript{8} IOM – International Organization for Migration is the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration and works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners. https://www.iom.int/
group, natural heritage, art etc. According to Ahearn (et al., 2002) cultural heritage refers to what society has as a whole, and cultural inheritance is what every human being has. In other words, each person inherits part (not all) of the cultural heritage of the group.

“We all have unique identities that we develop as part of our culture, but they are not fixed or immutable. (...)Various experiences and new values, convictions and ideas that they produce, give a dynamic character to culture “ (Ahearn et al., 2002, p. 8)

The way we experience and are then living out the culture heritage is always a part of upbringing, the context our live is set in. It is simply not possible for a child to have any sense of, for example, Italian culture identity when it has never been exposed to any elements of that culture, haven’t heard the language, doesn’t have any family members from that country etc. Ahearn says that the culture is dynamic, and so are the cultural identities. They can change, they can evaluate into strong and solid one or almost diminish. How that happens, at the beginning is mainly in the hands of the family the child is born into. If the family cares for the child to know the culture, to be familiar with it, it will result in potential cultural identity similar to the one parents represent. If they don’t, it might be transformed into another one or simply not be valued as much. It is important to mention that there are differences in how ones culture is valued and perceived by people who have always lived in one place, one country, for generations passing on the heritage of one culture and those who have moved abroad. As my research shows, the consciousness of ones cultural identity and heritage often strengthens and becomes more conscious for those who have moved abroad, and/or married a person from a different country and culture. The process of passing on the culture is complex. Next part will explain it in more details.

2.5.1 Process of passing on the culture. Socialisation – acculturation

As nobody is born with an identity, the cultural aspect of every person is not biological either. The process of forming a cultural identity is complex and varies from one individual to another. As mentioned in the earlier part of this chapter, when talking about children, the sociological construction of identity is one of the strongest when forming a cultural identity. The most general and simple way of explaining the process,
is that it is acquired by interactions and exposition to the elements characteristic to the specific cultural or ethnic group. The cultural identification may begin already from day one of a life of an individual, if being born to a family, who already possessed a multicultural identity.

The process of inclusion of one into the society, with its norms, regulations and desired and acceptable behaviours is called socialisation. Since every culture is unique with it’s own sets of rules, standards and elements like food, music, traditions, language and social norms – socialisation is an act of projecting all above on a person, a new family member, a baby, from day one. Without calling it socialisation, the parents that I had a pleasure of interviewing face to face or through online questionnaire, admitted that this is the way of keeping their culture alive and introducing it to their children. It was strongest for the families living outside their country of origins, or for those individual parents who moved abroad and started a family in a foreign for them country and so culture. Cote (1996) says that “for many sociologists there is no identity without society, and society steers identity formation while individuals attempt to navigate the passage.” (1996, p. 133, as cited in Kroger, J. 2007, p.20)

Socialisation doesn’t have time limits or a guideline for how, what, where and why this complex, yet so common, almost unavoidable process takes place. Often times, socialisation is unconscious, a natural way of raising children. It happens along the way. It is a process that we all experience, with better or worse effect. These days with so much freedom (pressure?) on becoming who we want to (or/and should) be, the socialisation is just one of the elements of creating the being and becoming in each and one of us. There are also deferent approaches. One of them mentions Nsamenang, when he says that

“children learn culturally appropriate forms of behaviour and thought system primarily through hands-on socialisation, more under the mentorship of older siblings and peers than of parents or other adults.”


An absolute must in a child’s development and socialisation which is it’s milieu, the people that surround the child, help, care for and also teach. None of the socialisation can happen without observing and interacting with other people (Rogoff, in Nsamenang, 1998). The culture, skills, languages can take place only with encountering
others. Therefore, it is important not to neglect or to forget about the role the closest caretaker, family, parents and siblings in child’s development, it’s agency and the context adults create for the child to function in. Every parent interviewed by me for this research has been the prime creator of their child’s context and background of childhood. They were the once that decided on the country they will live in and where they will raise their children.

As much as every person is an independent human being, the circumstances we all start our lives at are not up to us, but rather they are determined by our parents’ choices. We cannot separate the value and influence of a parent in analysing children’s agency, identity development, language they speak etc. James et al (1998) debates whether the independence of children’s culture, and the reproduction of a culture, can be perceived as pure and self-created, without involving the world of the adults, or rather that it is a correlation between the social and age groups as mentioned just a bit earlier. It is concluded that since it is in the hands of children to carry on the culture for the next generation that are still the experts of their worlds, although always set in a context, like a closest family, where the process of socialisation, passing on the culture and equipping child in needed and useful skills and norms, is established. James says that it is “empirical reality that children’s childhoods are largely constituted within the family through adult-child relations, rather than child-child relations” (James et al, 1998, p.82). Socio-cultural approaches of identity are built on the role of society that plays a major role in identity formation process of a person, by “providing (or not providing) individual identity alternatives.” (Kroger, J. 2007, p. 19) The theory underlines that the significant people, and relationships with them are the part of the context with languages, culture and actions that gives a person possibilities for self-definition. Therefore it can be assumed that the identity is a result of complex cultural experiences, which are presented and accessible with more or less details.

How much of a culture heritage, habits and traditions a child is exposed to, in the first years of life will depend on the closest sociological group, his family. Through interactions with his/her family members, a child learns what behaviour, reactions and choices are good or bad, desired or in need for change. Kroger (2007, p. 20), in her book, refers to Mead’s view on individual identity, which “is the product of the surrounding social context.”
Socialisation is an ongoing process, and not just for children but for adults as well. Parents, who move abroad where they have their children, often become more aware of their culture and heritage. It is a natural consequence of changing the surroundings into a new one. We notice what we miss, often after we have moved, which confirms the participants of this research. My study and gained data reflects that aspect, the conscious search for familiar and noticeable parts of the culture. Parents, when asked how do they manage to cultivate the culture they come from, mention various of traditions they try to keep up, the music they play in their homes, food they cook and language they speak to their children. Any kind of such activity or even particular object can be called, following Finch (2007), tools for display. He talks about the process of displaying families, which

“involves the conveying of meanings through social interaction and the acknowledgement of this by relevant others. I have also suggested that there are ways in which such displays are supported and reinforced by background features” (Finch, 2007, p. 77)

The tools for display can be objects that for the matter of symbolising a relationship with a significant one have high value and is exposed as a photograph or other domestic artefact. Gifts that are carefully individually picked also can be example of process of display.

Another very strong element in the process of cultivating culture, family traditions and heritage and the way of displaying it is by food. With the era of globalisation, cuisines from all over the world carry on the culture, mix together and offer an experience of far cultures and traditions connected with food. (Jensen, 2011).

“Food is a marker of ethnic identity in a globalised, migrant community, cultural and social issues governing the consumption of food products serve as a marker of regional, national and gender identity.” (Zaman, 2010, p. 4)

As Zaman points out, many of the participants of my research have acknowledge food as one of the key elements of making sure children are familiar with the cultural heritage parents are eager to pass forward, their cultural identity. There have been many studies conducted on the meaningful art of eating and preparing food together as a collective
act of bonding and creating togetherness. Goddard (1996), in his ethnographic study in Italy writes that

“(e)motional attachment are perpetuated through the power of food to evoke memories, in this case of family and community. The family is the main locus where such experiences are realised and motherhood the basic channel for their transmission” (Goddard, 1996, p. 207, as cited in Kravva, 2010, p. 31).

As later it will be presented, just like the mentioned scholar have observed, mothers are the ones who play the most significant role in shaping children tastes by preparing the food that is most liked by family, familiar and sentimental cherished. Since many holidays around the world, celebrated by families have a certain menu that is served on the day of celebration, it is common and natural for families to continue the tradition, even if away from the country of origin. For example those prepared for Christmas ribbe or pinnekøtt in Norway, barszcz and carp fish in Poland or turkey for Thanksgiving in USA, it is especially important for those living away from their homeland, and even more cherished and longed after when not in their own country. Food brings back memories, the smell of a favourite dish has an ability of transporting one back home, home where it once was. It has also a way of confirming belonging to social and cultural groups and whole communities. It is especially important for children in my research, whose identities are being build and confirmed in the first, best known social context, which is family, with its traditions, habits and food.

“A whole range of identities is solidified and constructed through the mundane processes of preparing, serving and eating food. Eating a specific kind of food and naming the food we eat as „our“ cuisine are meaningful cultural activities, apart of individual, gender and family identities, such statements encode the will to belong or not to certain communities (...)The act of eating expresses and at the same time reaffirms the collective experience of individuals.” (Kravva, 2010, p. 25-31)

Since food is part of every culture and therefore identity forming process, what happens when it, the identity, is build upon two very different grounds, like two very different cultures, two different languages? How does the process of creating the coherent identity in such setting looks like? Is it possible to maintain both cultural backgrounds
equal and at balance? I will now present and discuss the implications of growing up in dual-cultural setting, the formation of bicultural identity.

2.5.2 Bicultural identity

As one of the effects of globalisation that can be observed is that people are even more than ever open to create multicultural families by starting relationships with a person from outside their native land (Q.-L.Huynh et al, 2011) Such international relationships led to noticing a formation of a new concept in identities among people with multicultural background – bicultural identities. A person who is bicultural has a sense of belonging to two cultures by carrying the cultural heritage from both. Here he or she was described as followed:

“bicultural individuals as those who are able to use behaviors and language at the appropriate times and contexts because they have experience and knowledge of both cultures. Researchers (Teresa LaFromboise and her colleagues) have described have argued that biculturalism is the most adaptive outcome for some minority groups, in part because the nature of their environment is bicultural.” (LaFromboise, T, 1993, p. 399)

The ground for this dual-heritage lays in the pair of parents who come from different ethnic and/or cultural groups (Dorjee, T, et al, 2013). Among such individuals, generally speaking, there may be immigrants, refugees, indigenous people, ethnic minorities or mix-ethnic individuals (Berry, 2003). Mary H. Maguire (2005) calls such phenomenon hybridity, as one of the leading theme in the post-modern discourse in cultural studies. “Hybrid identities may reflect plural language affiliations and cultural allegiances that in turn reflect individuals’ attempts to acknowledge and reconcile the past with their present new cultural environments, social spaces and different linguistic ecologies.“ (Maguirre, M., H., 2005, p.1427)

Ramirez described one of the earliest studies on multiculturalism in 1984, referring to a research with Latinos in United States. There Ramirez mentions a multicultural individual who is competent and committed to both cultures. (Q.-L.Huynh et al, 2011, p. 828) In the literature we find that biculturalism, also called the integration strategy, is one of four acculturation strategies, a model presented by Berry, J.W. (1997).
Biculturalism characterises in involvement in both dominant and ethnic cultures. The other three strategies are a) assimilation - involvement in dominant culture only, b) the separation strategy - ethnic culture only and c) marginalization strategy that doesn’t involve in neither of culture (Berry, J.W.,1997; Q.-L.Huynh et al, 2011). For the purpose of this chapter, I will focus mainly on the integration strategy that can evolve into bicultural identity. The reason for that is that integration, just like bicultural identity, allows to function in parallel culture at the same time.

Following Berry’s model of integration, a person whose background includes two different cultures develops an integral identity including both of the cultures. The bicultural identity is formed. The culture is no longer local, but global. Dorjee, T. (2013) draws picture of how such identity looks like:

“ They integrate both cultures in their everyday lives comfortably, show behavioral competency in both cultures, and depending on the cultural demands of the situation switch their verbal and nonverbal behaviors adaptively. Bicultural individuals with compatible identities can say I am both a Chinese and an American.” (2013, p.117)

Children who are being raised bilingual and bicultural become often fluent in shifting their focus of one culture to another. It can take place at home, when talking different languages to each of the parents, then meeting friends at school and using yet another language or one of those known from home. My young respondents in my research show exactly the reality of such actions of shifting culture-focus from one to another. Those interactions are floating between the cultures and languages. The bicultural identity allows people to interact with more than one culture, and on top of that, they are enriched with the vast heritage that not one, but two cultures carry with it.

In 2002 four researchers, Benet-Martinez, Leu, Lee and Morris (Benet-Martinez, 2011) have introduced a construct of Bicultural Identity Integration (BII), which its scale can show how individual results on a blendedness and harmony scale when it comes to two cultures represented in one’s life. When it comes to communication, researchers have observed several techniques that might be used by the bicultural individuals (Strauss, 2005). Among them, there are code-switching, buffering, bridging, and passing strategies. Code-switching, explains the ability of shifting from one language to another depending on the cultural context of the situation. Buffering can be seamed as a
psychological shield from threatening or difficult situations, even hostile one, like for example racist or ethnic jokes. As Strauss explains puts it, it is a “identity protection strategy” (2005, p.116). Bridging refers to a situation when a bicultural individual chooses a connection, information even, that can link him/her with one of the cultural groups he/she identifies with. Through this strategy a bicultural of, for example Polish/Norwegian background can build up a network with both Polish and Norwegian friends. Last, but not least, the passing strategy can be used when one wants to pass for, lets say an Italian, having also a background from another culture.

As the results from my research will later show, the life of a bilingual or multilingual family is very rich in mentioned technique like those presented by Strauss and Cross. Family, being a first and often most influential site for socialisation for a child, teaches and models the communication styles and techniques. The code-switching is very much in line with a flexibility children acquire when changing platforms of their agency. James and also Prout explain that it is a key to understand the structural connection of different areas within which children operate. (James et al, 1998, p. 138). Whether those are social interactions with family members, with peers, understanding their experience, tactics and various of strategies for actions, children adjust, socialise by experiencing and observing. The flexibility of acting on their agency is a complex process that doesn’t avoid any of the spheres of child’s life. Culture is one of them, yet at the beginning culture, before becoming an integral part of one identity, is based on relations and meanings given by a person, interactions with others who represent particular culture. In my research I have observed how children, for example, give meaning and cultural value to items depending on to whom they belong to. More can be found in the chapter of Analysis that follows.

2.5.3 Orthogonal Cultural Identification Theory

Orthogonal Cultural Identification Theory in opposition to other models of multicultural identities, which portrays multicultural identities as those where one of the cultures have negative consequences for the other one, never fully balances The Orthogonal theory says that
"cultural identification dimensions are at right angles; they are, in principle, uncorrelated. All other models limit the possible patterns of cultural identification that can exist: in most of them, a gain in one culture is offset by a loss in the other. The orthogonal model points out that any combination or pattern of cultural identification is possible. A person may have a single identity, may be bicultural, may have a high identification with one culture and a modest one with another, or may have a weak identification with any culture."
(Oetting, E.R. 1993, p. 48)

What the orthogonal theory on cultural identity underlines is that it is not black and white when it comes to the multicultural identities. One identity does not exclude another one out. Rather, the importance lays within the level of cultural identification, which, if it is high, does not necessarily has to vanish or decrees when in context of another culture one identify himself with. This theory opens door to a discussion on multilevel of cultural identities. It reflects the dynamic character of the cultural identity in pluralistic societies through representing wide range of cultural identities combinations. It is often assumed that the best effect on the psychological health and adaptation has assimilation (of two, for example, cultures)\(^9\). It is so due to the amount of stress related to juggling and negotiating more then one culture. At the same time, the picture that is painted by immigrants all across the world shows that while integrating a new, dominant culture, they are still keeping the elements of their own original one. Such attitude and perseverance in keeping the cultural identity “alive” while settling in another one can carry equally positive consequences on the wellbeing of a person as the mentioned assimilation process. In addition, the orthogonal theory of cultural identification strengthens the fact that not loosing, or giving up culture of origin, does not complicate the process of adaptation into the new, dominate culture.

De La Rosa and Adrados (1993) have observed the correlation between a strong, solid cultural identity of a family-home that children are being raised in, with the level of self esteem and cultural identity. The more work parents put into teaching children about different elements of the culture, help them have a good access to sources of particular culture of interest, help to integrate and understand, the better chance of the

\(^9\) [https://psychology.iresearchnet.com/counseling-psychology/counseling-theories/orthogonal-theory/]
child having a healthy, good self esteem and cultural identity. Children will then know what are the expectations and rewards of the culture. By gaining skills in how to maintain successful cultural interactions, children build up a good picture of themselves, the belief they are capable of something good, feeling that they have a control over culture-related aspect of their life’s (De Las Rosa, 1993, p. 50). The combination of mentioned skills together with a strong and positive example of children’s parents has a big potential of creating equally strong and confident person with a strong cultural identity.

2.5.4 Bilingualism and language socialisation

One of the strongest elements of culture, among others is language. With its communication, symbolic and social function, languages are being carried from one place to another following their users. Zurer (2008) shows that languages carry with themselves a major part of the culture heritage, not only mentioned communication per se. It is built on artefacts, customs, rituals, literature, cuisine and much more. Brown (2014) points out the incredible abilities of children to learn language(s) and reaching the level of high fluency or at least very advanced by the time they barely turn 3 or 4 years old. These research participants admitted that their children grasp languages with no difficulties, treating it a natural part of their life.

Another astonishing and fascinating thing are all the other elements language carry with itself, besides pure communication tool, which every language is without a doubt:

“Along with the language, they (children) learn the cultural practices, attitudes, ways of thinking and feeling and behaving that are embodied in the interactional environment in which they are immersed. Understanding this process of socialization into language and culture is critical to understanding the biological bases, learning, and cross-cultural variability of social interaction, as well as the role of culture more broadly in children’s social, cognitive, and language development.” (Brown, R. 2014, p.187)

It is natural for parents wanting to pass on not only language but also the richness of the culture they were brought up in themselves, especially if they have moved abroad and are raising their children in another country then their own. It was a very important issue for most of the families I have encountered while conducting research for this
thesis. From the anthropological point of view, the language is a solid and important element of socialisation. As Montogomery (2009) argues, the value language is a cultural, social setting carries attitudes, norms and family standards of communication between their members. It is also a learning arena for a child. Language carries the role models, position in the family, expectations, punishments and rewards.

Ochs and Schieffelin (Brown, R. 2014) suggest that the process of language socializations begins from the first moments of social interactions, so from day one of human life. That means that the smallest sounds, verbal interactions between parents and their new-born babies “can be interpreted as cultural phenomena, embedded in systems of ideas, knowledge, and the social order of the particular group into which the infant is being socialized.“ (Brown, R. 2014, p. 190) There are visible differences in this approach. A research from a field of anthropology conducted by three scholars, Snow C., De Blauw A. and Van Roosmalen G. (2008) did a research comparing mothers from England and Netherlands about talking to infants by their parents. The results of the study showed that language socializations is determined and defined by the culture it takes place in. English mothers tend to talk less to their babies then the Dutch mothers, even though both of the groups admitted that they like doing so and that it is fun to perceive their children as potential communication partners.

The actual term of language socialization was formed by Elinor Ochs and Bambi Schieffelin, around 1980 (Brown, R. 2014, p. 188). The two anthropologists have been conducting a filed work within a population of Papua New Guinea and Samoa. They have observed that the role of acquiring a language is not only pragmatic, but also “as a conveyer of cultural information, especially in everyday interactions.“ (Brown, R. 2014, p. 188). At the same time it is crucial to mention that language socialisation doesn’t end after the period of childhood years. Adults goes through it also, maybe even several times in their life time.

**Most common methods of raising children bilingual**

Just like the bicultural person is described as the one who freely moves between two cultures, a bilingual person is the one who expresses themselves freely and equally comfortably within two different languages.
There are 3 most common and known methods of raising children bilingual. These are One-Parent-One-Language (OPOL), Minority Language at Home (MLAH), Time and Place (T&P) and Mixed Language Policy (MLP). I will now shortly explain each of the methods before we continue.

**Method 1: OPOL – One Parent One Language**
OPOL is probably the best known and preferred method among the parents around the world. It means that each of the parent (in bilingual family) speak to their child in a different language then the other parents does. Usually that is their native language. However this method has been also observed among non-natives where one parent uses the minority language while the other uses the majority language (of the community where the family lives in) (Zurer, B. 2008). Another possibility is that parents from two different countries are living and raising their children in a country with yet another language then those they speak. In that situation, if parents decide to follow the OPOL model, children grow up with at least 3 languages.

**Method 2: MLAH – Minority Language At Home**
The MLAH method concentrates on the language that is absent from the community language, so the majority language the child is being raised in. That means parents communicate only in the language of their native country (or of one of them) even if only one of the parents is not native in that language but is fluent enough to communicate and support that method. Most of the time it is common for the families that have emigrated together from another country. Both parents are native in the minority language so it is also the most natural to speak their own, mother tongue with their children.

**Method 3: Time and Place**
The third mentioned method, Time and Place refers to the communication at an institution, like for example bilingual schools (Zurer, B. 2008). Where the program might be divided into languages time-sections (morning classes in Italian and afternoon classes in English).
Brown and Gaskins reflect on two kinds of language socializations. They have distinguished the one that is language learning-based and the one that is interaction-based. Scholars explain:

“The first of these is a more limited claim about how the internalization of specific language forms by becoming a speaker of a language leads to particular understandings; the second is a more general claim about the role of interaction in the socialization process and is the area that most closely parallels the socialization literature from other fields.” (Brown, P., Gaskins, 2014 p.203)

In line of how mentioned Brown and Gaskins perceive the process of socialisation through language is the teaching of Xiao-lei Wang, one of the most famous scholars on children’s literacy. He says that the biggest guarantee of children knowing the language, being able to read and write is the support of the parents. Reading to children from early ages, exposing to various of reading materials and sources enhances the chance that the child will be interested in reading himself. (Martowicz, A. 2018)

Socialisation is a major aspect of identity formation. The process of acquiring new elements of a culture has an immediate impact on child’s identity development. At the same time is crucial to mention that any kind of socialization, also the one concerning languages, doesn’t end with childhood years. In fact, it can last for most of the life, changing, reappearing, when the slightest change would require new adjustments.

“(…) language socialization is a dynamic and interactive process that extends throughout the lifespan as people come to participate in new communities, define and redefine themselves according to new roles, and either acquiesce in or challenge the definitions and role relationships formulated by others.” (Bayley, 2007)

Therefore, when talking about identity formation, we have to consider the multiple changes and adjustments and individual goes through their lifetime.
2.6 Summary of the theory chapter

Children’s development has been in a centre of many fields in the academic world. Presented here approaches, from psychology to socially constructed are to show the vast aspects and their interpretation of the sense of identity formation as a life changing process of the young humans. At the same time, as we have seen, the idea of perceiving child as both being and becoming is crucial to recognise, also for the need of this thesis. The aspect of bicultural and bilingual upbringing plays a special part in this project. The growing number of multicultural and multilingual families due to changing of our times, globalisation and it’s effect, also on an institution of a family, brings up a new standards and calls for redefinition of the origins of one’s family. Language as a strong element of every child’s socialisation and identity formation process, is present. The context children find themselves is, at least at the very beginning, fully orchestrated by the adults surrounding them, including mentioned language and the culture with all it’s traditions, beliefs, cousin and values. Yet, every child, by using their individual and unique sense of agency has a power of influencing it’s surroundings, relationships and have an impact on the various aspects of their life’s. However, the context and setting of a family determines the choices and possibilities a child has at the beginning of their lives. It is unrealistic and frankly false to think that a child is a master of their life. Cultures in different parts of the world present different understanding of a child, it’s definition and the expectations and vision of them they draw. Yet, children around the world do need others for protection and guidance in the first years of their life’s to survive and strive.

In the following chapter I would like to present the methodological part of this project. It includes description of tools I have used, the recruitment process of the participants that have taken part in this project and also the struggles and obstacles I have faced while conducting this research.
Chapter 3. Methodology

When designing the research and the kind of methodology tools I would use, I was concentrating on the kind of data I was hoping to gather – The primary inspiration was the Mosaic approach by Alison Clark (Clark, A., Moss, P. 2001) with the variety of different tools available for children to learn about their perception of their nursery. Even though my project doesn’t primarily include children participation, the majority of data was collected from their parents; I still like the possibility of using several different methods.

3.1 Research with children and their parents

Research with children does not necessarily mean anyone else then children should be included in such work. Very often adults, that are of high importance and/or influences in child’s lives, are considered of very valuable asset when it comes to collecting data.

“Many parents have an in-depth understanding of their children’s lives that represent their current concerns, passions and interests. Interviewing parents, in Mosaic approach, is a formal way of acknowledging the different ‘ways of seeing’ parents can offer.” (Clark, A. 2005, p.39)

As long as the research focuses as much as possible on children’s perspectives, the child as an expert and it’s agency can be reflected in such work as this one, it is accepted and valued in project with children. Clark and Moss have been working with both, children and adults when conducting the Spaces to Play study and have pointed out many advantages of such approach to research with children (Clark, A. 2005).

Since my project highly relies on parents’ approach to their children’s upbringing and their focus on culture aspect of their lives, it was crucial for me to make sure that the focus stays on children, and the journey of their identity development, that this work talks about. It is important to obtain wide picture and therefore including more than one age-generation helps to do so. Active listening, as in oppose to passive process, is a key to understand and “see” children.

My hope was to gain different angels and wide picture of the research area I was interested in to explore. I believe that using more than one method gives bigger chance of collecting sufficient and data. Unfortunately, that doesn’t necessarily gives full
assurance of objectivity of collected data. Actually none method gives that, since their interpretations always lie in the hand of researchers, who have different opinion, worldviews; life experiences that determine the way they think and analyse found data (Rasmussen, 2014). Pink (2012 in Pyyry, 2015) goes as far as saying that the objectivity in research is simply not possible and that all it can do is to reflex the original idea of what the participants wanted to come across with. And yet, that’s the only the way to do it, aiming for the truth and objectivity, but never really founding it. It is like a child taking a picture. Does the picture truly reveal what the child seen before taking the picture? It is hard to say, maybe sometimes it is close to the idea, but I think that often the surroundings, the questions about the pictures and others opinion can shape what’s “on” the picture. That and other I will try to present and discuss in my project, since one of the methods I have chosen, was photographs taken by children. Pyyry (2015), calls photographs “stiffening and anestheticizing reality” and points out that even in research, visual data is only one of many ways of perceiving a world. Besides a narrow glimpse into child’s world that a single picture gives us, we cannot now the whole story behind it, the “bigger picture” and needed context to understand it fully and correctly. Pyyry (2015) in her project about teenage girls’ hang outs views photographs as multisensory method, where she treats the taken pictures not only as a visual representation of the reality, but more of a beginning to thinking process. Meaning that a single photography doesn’t have to be only a final result of an action (action captured by that photography) but can lead to an action, a discussion, further thinking process over a matter that the photography represents. That all creates a space for interactive, relational form of a field work, where the date can is not a passive element of a research, but rather influences and has effect on the receiver.

The idea was to have adults, the parents’, input and their children. Children’s opinions and their right to express themselves are valued and recognised in research projects (Einarrsdottir, 2005) As the childhood sociology regards children, they are the social actors, who not only participate, but also actively contribute into creating their world and the way their everyday life looks like (Rasmussen, 2014) and also feel that they are acknowledged, valued and respected. Multiple ways to help child express them selves and feel the most comfortable when doing it have been developed. One of them is the Mosaic Approach by Alison Clark and Moss, constructed in England in 1999, aims to reach children’s voices through focus on child-friendly, child-inspired range of tools.
As a cornerstone of such methods are children as active, meaning makers, explorers of their world and at the same time experts of their lives (Clark, A., 2005). At the same time what is crucial is to be aware of the ethical frame the researchers can move around in their activities including children. The basic and maybe most important rules and not to do harm and avoiding issues of power (van Blerk, in Desai, V. 2006). In both cases, doing research with children should be especially sensitive and careful. Therefore, to obtain a wider spectrum of data for the topic of children’s bicultural identity, for my research I have chosen the following tools:

1. Semi-structured interview
2. Online questionnaire with open questions
3. Home visits with participatory observation
4. Photographs taken by children

The reason I chose those particular tools is that they will allow me to gather data from different angles. In the Method Table below I am presenting shortly the 4 mentioned methods. I will be talking directly to the parents of the children (semi-structures interviews and questioners) with some of them in their private homes in order to observe the cultural symbols and items that would represent cultures of the parents. Are there any visible cultural items, decoration in their hose décor that would imply one of the parent’s cultural backgrounds? At the same time, I am planning to approach children and I will use photography by allowing children to take pictures of objects and other forms of culture representative in their household understood by them. With children, to avoid, official and maybe stress causing atmosphere I will talk to them in the most possible informal way, possibly through play and asking for a home tour.
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<tr>
<th>MT</th>
<th>NP</th>
<th>To whom was it applied to</th>
<th>Explored theme</th>
<th>Advantages(+) of this tool</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Semi-structured interviews 15 Woman, mothers living in Trondheim, raising their children</td>
<td>Ups and downs of raising children bilingual and bicultural with spouse from another country</td>
<td>(+) Possibility of gaining wide range of data; adaptability to the interviewed person; body-language as source of information; (-) Time consuming; subjective, risk of bias;</td>
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<td>bicultural and bilingual with a husband from another culture then her own</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Online questionnaire 100 Man and woman, internationally</td>
<td>International experience of raising children bilingual and bicultural; data gather from many countries</td>
<td>(+) Anonymous, big sample, unlimited internationally, pressure free for the one filling it out, time to reflect upon a question, free to decide if to upload the answers or not; (-) risk of having form not completed, or even not uploaded at all, risk of getting answers from those that don’t meet the criteria,</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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<td>Photographs 5 Children from bilingual and bicultural families (age between 5 and 13)</td>
<td>What does it mean to be bicultural according to children</td>
<td>(+) Fun way for children to express themselves, possibility to gain access to the areas usually closed for adults, (-) risk of not getting any relevant pictures, lost camera, broken camera</td>
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<td>4.</td>
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<td>Home-visits 3 Families where parents come from two different cultures and are raising their children bilingual and bicultural</td>
<td>Are the two (or more) cultures represented by the parents heritage are visible in their home, how do they “do family”, what languages do they use when talking to each other</td>
<td>(+) Allows to observe characteristics of a group or an individual that would not be possible to notice elsewhere; (-) Making the observed participants stressed, judged, uncomfortable</td>
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Table 1: Methodological tools used in the following research.
3.2 Recruitment of the participants and the research site

I have to mention from the start, that the original plan of the research turned out to be quite different from the final outcome and result. I was planning to do the research both in Norway and in Poland, keeping the same rule for both countries, meaning that I would meet with families where the parents come from two different countries, where one of the is Polish, in Poland, or Norwegian, in Norway. The period of time I have chosen to do the research in Poland was in the summer of 2016, when my family and me were planning to stay for over 5 weeks. Despite, what I thought was, long enough time, it turned out to be simply impossible to meet with all the families I have planned to see and I have early contacted. Many of them changed their summer plans and so they were simply not home. Others were travelling to the ”other” part of their family, who don’t live in Poland. Some were sick. To top it all, I was also limited with my own time, since trying to spend summer vacations with my family and two small children.

After coming back to Norway, I had to re-evaluate the whole process of doing research in Poland, while living in Norway, with two small children, and finally admitting that unfortunately this time it won’t work. I had a huge feeling of failing and not moving forward with my research work while the summer has ended and I had to face and rethink my approach to my Master Thesis project. It became clear that best solution is to focus only on Norway, where I live.

At the same time I understood that my interest is mainly and generally in families raising children bilingual and bicultural, coming themselves from two different countries. And not, as I thought at the beginning, only those families, where one of the parents would be Norwegian. That decision has opened for me wider access to families that live in Norway, mainly Trondheim, in case of that research, but that are not necessarily Norwegian married to a foreigner. Although, I have to admit, that at the end, that was a majority of families that I have conducted the research with.
3.3 Methodological tools

The following section presents the four methods used in the conducted research.

3.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews, as a methodological tool was very important for my project. It is probably one of the most common one used in the social researches. The biggest advantage is the very wide range of data it can provide. Semi-structure form allows to keep the frame and cover the areas the researcher is looking for, but at the same time gives enough freedom to the person being interviewed to touch on the topics he or she finds important and relevant to mention (Desai, 2006).

The way I have recruited the families for the semi-structured interviews was a joined effort between my friends, who are the kinds of families that meet the requirements for my research and one of Facebook\(^{10}\) groups I belong to, International Active Moms in Trondheim (IAM Trondheim). I have decided to use that group for my project to obtain more diversity in opinions and ways people raising their children bicultural. This Facebook group has been created by and for mothers coming from outside of Norway, living in Trondheim, raising their children in an international setting. The group has 455 members, meaning 455 international mothers. I have posted a message on the Facebook profile page of this group, introducing myself and explaining my project. I have asked if anyone would be willing to meet with me to talk about their experience of raising children bilingual and bicultural. The message was only for families where two parents come from two different countries. I have not contact any “gatekeeper” before posting my question, since I am a member of the group. The few administrators of the group were not objecting either. The respond I have received to that message was very good. Many were very curious about the topic I was working on and many very gladly volunteered to meet me for an interview. Some of them, I have noticed, were more curious if they can get some tips and know-how on raising kids bilingual and bicultural. Such situation is interesting, because here the participants were contacting me if they could be part of my project and very happy to be part of it, rather then trying to opt out of it. It created a pressure-free setting for those ladies since my post wasn’t

\(^{10}\) Facebook is a social media platform on the Internet
directed to particular individuals, (who maybe could feel a bit strange and unease to say “no” to me), but rather to a group of woman, with some common traits (a foreigner in Norway, living in Trondheim, raising children). The advantage of posting an invitation for an interview with me, on a social media like Facebook, gave the potential recipients time and space to think about it, in their own, undisturbed matter, and get back to me, or simply ignore the post.

Both, the questionnaire and the questions for the semi-structured interview I have designed myself. The main language used in this research was English, although I also conducted one interview in Polish. It is noteworthy that majority of subjects speaks English as a second-language, just like I do. Only for two of them English was their mother tongue. I believe it also influences the interview. The different levels of fluency were noticeable and sometimes affected the flow of an interview.

I have met with and interviewed 15 mothers. All of the conversation I have held where carried in a friendly matter. Some of them more stiff as two strangers talking, needed some time for both sides o worm up. Other seemed like a meeting of two friends that haven’t seen each other for a long time. I have learnt a lot from all of them. One of the women I have met with misunderstood my post about the project and came to meet with me, even though, as it quickly came out, she is married to a person of the same nationality as she is. She was then not meeting my criteria, but we still talked and had a nice time. Most of the interviews took place in the morning hours in cafes in downtown Trondheim, Norway. Eventhough literature suggests to conduct such conversation in the most comfortable place for the person being interviewed, her or his home (eg. Willis, K. in Desai, V., 2006), but I didn’t feel like intruding those women’s’ private lives, especially since we haven’t even met face-to-face before, but only through a social media. My plan was to first meet them in a neutral, but still comfortable space and then, if possible, ask them if I can also visit them at home. The cafes I have chosen to meet with those mothers where well know by most of them, situated in the centre of the city. I have also asked if they have a preference where they would like to meet. In few cases I have followed the participant’s suggestion and met elsewhere. From the beginning of starting this project I knew I had to be flexible, in the areas that would not influence the outcome of the research. Therefore I was open to adjust to the place and time of my participants if only that helped them to feel more comfortable and relax when meeting with me.
Like I mentioned earlier, besides one, which was in Polish, all other were conducted in English. Four women came with their kids, the youngest was 3 months and the oldest was 5 years old. Every interview lasted around 2 hours. I wanted to make it the most comfortable and easy-going conversation as I could, despite the fact that most of the participants I have never met or spoke to before. In majority cases I think it was just like I have hoped for. Few times I could sense stress and a tension as if the interview was almost forced on the mother, but at the same she wanted to be helpful and came to meet me anyway. In general, it was a wonderful experience where I have met fantastic women and their incredible stories. The fact that I am also a mother, raising two daughters with my husband, bilingual and bicultural was a great icebreaker during the interviews. In several cases I heard that it was as if meeting an old time friend, which I took for a great compliment. It meant a lot to me, because it showed that I managed to create something good for these woman, and not only be the researcher who is gaining the most from the meeting and then just leaving. Many of them offered to meet again, or at least to email or call, if I had more questions or simply wanted to meet for a friendly coffee. I was happy that they were leaving also somehow satisfied and pleased, that they could talk to somebody who understands and is willing to listen to them. Most of the interviews I have been recording not to be limited with taking notes while listening to the participants and by that distracting her and myself. In few cases the mother didn’t agree to record her, explaining that she wouldn’t feel comfortable or would feel stressed that she might say something wrong. In those cases I have taken notes.

There were also 2 situations when I was asked to pause my recording so that the interviewee could add something of topic or something she wouldn’t like to be mentioned in my research. In all those situations I have respectively done how I was asked. There was one interview during which my phone battery died and there was no outlet by the place where we were sitting. That was one of the mothers that came with a 5 year old daughter, and not to make a commotion and even bigger distraction I decided not to move to another table where I could charge my phone and continue to record our conversation, but stayed where we were and started taking notes. This interview wasn’t the easiest. The mother was very chatty and open to tell me her story, but the daughter often interrupted us. The mother every time calmly stopped and with lower voice replied to her girl. I didn’t mind the girl, although I did notice the change
in dynamics of the interview and how the mother was getting a bit stressed and apologetic towards me. I was the one that agreed to such setting. When arranging all the meetings I was open to the hours when the mothers could meet me.

3.3.2 Online questionnaire with open questions

From the beginning of working on my project I knew I would like to present some voices and opinions from outside Norway and, at the beginning also outside of Poland. As I have mentioned in the previous chapter, many of my friends, scattered all over the world, raising their children in bilingual and bicultural setting, were one of my inspirations for that project. Therefore, to be able to reach them and include their voices, and have a wider perspective on the multicultural way of “doing a family” I have created a questionnaire with 40 open questions, which were inspired and formulated after conducting most of the interviews. Talking first face-to-face to my participants helped me to decide which areas would be interesting to get wider pictures of, not only within Norway, but in a worldwide scale. I have posted the questionnaire online for anonymous recipients. Such method has been increasingly used in social science research (Canty, N. 2011). With today’s common access to some kind of digital device it is more and more popular to use Internet and computer-designed polls, surveys, questionnaires etc. It allows gathering date on a large scale, also directly from individuals. As much as it is beneficial, there is a number of ethical challenges that must be taken in a consideration before starting such project. For example it is more difficult to assess if any harm has been done to the participants; their reactions, distress or if they where insulted or harasses stay unknown (Bier et al, 1996; Mann and Steward, 2000 in Fielding 2008).

I have published a link with this questionnaire on my private Facebook profile asking friends, fitting the criteria, to fill it out for me, anonymously, and to share it with their friends. I was pleased to see that within one week I had over 100 responses, from all over the world, from England to Australia, altogether from 33 different countries from across the world. People where posting the link on their profile pages recommending it to their friends.
Examples of questions included in the questionnaire:

Q1: To what extend do you as the parents consciously import those traditions into your family life (holidays, traditions, food, participation in cultural events, music, other)? Why do you do it?

Q2: What do you think, which culture, yours or your spouse’s, is better known to your children? Why do you think so?

Q3: Is raising your children with more then one language and culture an advantage or disadvantage? Elaborate on your answer.

Q4: Is it important for you that your children know the culture of your home-country? If yes, why?

The advantage of using this particular method was the anonymity of people who filled it out. It gives big freedom and somehow relaxed approach towards it. Also, the fact that the questionnaire was designed to be filled out on any computer, it could be easily worked on in a private, undisturbed setting, where no one looks over a shoulder or even gives time pressure just by being in the room as the person filling it out. Another aspect was a total freedom if the individual form would be at the end submitted at all or not. That might an advantage for the subjects, but it is a pitfall for the researcher. It is a risk that some percentage of the forms won’t be filled out at all, or won’t be fully filled out. The public, open post on such platform of social media as Facebook allows people to get familiar with it, without signing up for the work it requires. That’s another mixed advantage, since researcher would prefer that everybody who meet the criteria and open such questionnaire online would fill it out at once. Another trait of online questionnaires is a chance to gather larger sample of participants. Before I consciously deactivated the post, around 100 people filled it out. I am aware though that some of the forms are not fully filled out, some don’t even meet my criteria’s for it. Still, the opportunity for much bigger sample is highly valued advantage of this method. As far as my network, or even the international community in Trondheim, for the face-to-face interviews, limited me, the online questionnaire didn’t have such limitations. The countries that appeared in the summary of it includes England, Norway, Poland, Cyprus, Israel, Singapore, New Zealand and USA just to name a few. The graph below shows the numbers from particular countries the respondents were from.
As shown on the graph, the biggest group of the online questionnaire respondents come from Norway (28), Poland (11) and USA (10). What is interesting and worth mentioning is the fact that many people, answering the question “where do you come from” instead of naming one country, would mention two, with a comment that in one country they were born, but in the other one (here the name of the country) they were raised. I will elaborate more on that in the chapter of Analysis later on. Right now I will move to the next method, home-visits with participatory observation.
3.3.3 Home visits with participant observation

This method was supposed to be my most important part of my research. The idea of visiting families in their private homes and observing a piece of their daily life, their routines, traditions and behaviours was exciting to look forward to. The reason I have put that tool among my methodology techniques to use during my project was because it allows to enter more informal way of researching, especially if involving children. I wanted to include children’s opinion, but avoiding putting them on a stand, like in an interview, where they could feel stressed and maybe would look for answers that I wanted to hear, rather then speak from the heart, honestly and free. Lorraine Van Blerk (in Desai, V., 2006) says it can actually seem like “school” where children are replying to an adult. Therefore I chose to do home-visits.

The reality though has made me rethink the use of it. Unfortunately, at the very early stage of conducting the research I have found out that people are not that open and comfortable with an idea of me coming to their houses, despite the country and culture they were coming from. At first I thought that changing the wording, the actual question, would help. I noticed that the strongest reaction got word “to observe” so I decided to rather ask if I can talk to them, but in their private house to see if both of the cultures represented by the parents are present in the interior, and if so, if they are equally exposed and easy to spot. That didn’t help. People would make excuses to get out of it and simply say “no” to me. I would hear wide range of reasons why not. For example, the house was dirty (although I was flexible with time and offered many days when I could come) it was far away to get there (even though I said I have a car and time so it wasn’t problem for me), their husband didn’t agree, one of the child was sick, or they were sick themselves and they cancelled.

Few Norwegian mothers were straightforward with me, and said that they wouldn’t feel comfortable having me over knowing that I am there to do my research. The biggest surprise was when even my friends, whom I knew from before I started doing my Master Thesis Project, refused to participate by having me over for a home visit. Their response was always underlining that they want to help and that they would be very happy to fill out any questionnaire or do an interview with me, but unfortunately they don’t want to be part of the research where I observe them at any moment. At the end, respecting their wish and boundaries I actually have met with few families in their
private house but didn’t conduct a typical home visit method, where normally I would ask for a house tour with comments on different objects, interior, pictures etc. I would be present while the family is preparing a meal and the sits down to eat it together. I try to understand their position and where did such decision come from. We talked and I explained my intention and exact way it would look like, that we could just simply talk. Unfortunately that wouldn’t help and at the end of the day I ended up with only 4 families that agreed to show me around and let me conduct my home visit in their private space.

3.3.4 Photographs taken by children

Last but not least research method, which I have used, were photographs taken by children. It was important for me to include children in my methodology process since it is them that I am most curious about when asking how is their bicultural identity being formed. It would not be a full picture if not including kids’ opinions and point of view. Like Manfred Liebel said “Research should contribute to giving children a voice and a face, by accentuating their perceptions and views.” (Ennew, 2009, page 1.3).

Photography has been added to a list of regular tools used by researchers. Also projects with children have been benefiting from allowing children to express themselves through pictures taken by them (Rasmussen, 2014). Alison Clark clearly states that photography became one of many techniques that allow children to be heard, to express themselves. “Photographs taken by young children can provide a platform of communication between adults and young children.” (Clark, A. 2005, p.494) That was exactly my hope when I decided to use cameras with children in my project, to shift from spoken language to the visual one. I was looking for a tool that will allow children to feel free and in control rather then be intimidated by me, the researcher asking them questions, or observing. I wanted them to feel comfortable as much as possible when helping me to understand their point of view.

The follow up meeting, after developing the pictures, was in a form of a conversation over and about the pictures that children took earlier, individually. That also means that the pictures where somehow a way of preparing myself and the children, for the second part of our cooperation - the conversation. Here I had to be aware of process of interviewing children, but actually as much as when interviewing adults. In an article
“New Technologies, New Methods?” Vebjørg Tingstad (2007) refers to Anne Solberg and her suggestion of “a certain ignorance of age, encouraging researchers to redirect their attention to the situational context within which children act” (Solberg, 1991 in Tingstad, 2007 p. 130). It is important to remember that children are their own experts of their lives, of their memories, perceptions and understanding of the world around them. And that is how I wanted to approach using this method, photographs taken by children. I have purchased one-time disposable, each with 27 pictures and distributed them to children age from 5 and older. All 5 children (between 5 and 13 years old), that have received a camera from me, where children of the mothers I have first interviewed. With each child I have met in person, in their mother’s presence, and I have given them an instruction to take pictures of things that represent or explain the cultures the child is being raised in. My goal was to see through those children’s eyes how is and what doesn’t it mean to them to be set in two cultures, to be bicultural.

All the children reacted with great joy and excitement. In the era of digital cameras and phones that even children use now to take pictures on daily basis, this old-school way of taking pictures was something new and fun for them. Each child was given 2 weeks to take pictures, in some cases it took longer, in some shorter. All the kids said that they were happy with the pictures they took and expressed their anticipation to meet with me again, after I develop the film, to talk about those pictures. The importance was to meet with children again to get their comments and interpretation of the pictures. I was very much anticipating meeting those children again and discussing their pictures together. It is an interesting, special kind of situation when a researcher comes to a child as to an expert, with questions to explain the data. Also because in that project the child could decide on its own what will bring to public and will stay private (Moss, 2001). The element of power relation is definitely changing here slightly, as Van Blerk says, that this method empowers participants in having a control over the activities as part of the research, they are participating in (van Blerk, L., in Desai, V. 2006).

A tool like photographs has many positive aspects when doing research with children. First of all it is different, fun way to obtain data. It is not a seating-down kind of tool, where children could feel stressed and obligated to do as the adult (here the researcher) says so. Since believing that children have their own none-adult life, and they are their own experts, I believe that pictures are a way to take a glimpse into that world, without disturbing it. It is up to a child what will the research find on the photographs. The child
has a free will to decide what he or she will include and eventually bring to the researcher.

The risk of using photographs in research with children is that the camera will be used for other purposes then for the research and as an outcome researcher might end up with not relevant pictures to his project. That is also connected with precious resources like time and money. It takes time to take almost 30 pictures, if taking them according a specific theme and criteria’s. It takes a certain amount of money to first purchase such cameras and develop them. Another aspect that can negatively influence the results of using cameras with children is the technicality of its mechanism and also the quality of them. The disposal cameras have film included and are designed for a fast and easy use. Yet, to be able to take pictures, each time one have to scroll little roll to be able to take another picture. Otherwise pictures will keep coming on the same shot, which won’t make individual pictures possible to see. Another difficulty regards the sensitivity of such cameras to the light. Most of them are so simple that require quite a lot of light, preferably the natural light, to make sure the picture is visible and clear.

Unfortunately, the two first cameras I have developed, 56 pictures all-together, where not useable at all. In fact, all I have received at the photo-shop where I left the cameras to be develop, were 3 pictures. 3 dark pictures, but yet light enough to see what is on them. It was very frustrating to find out that I lost all the data from those two cameras. At the same time, lack of result is also a result. This situation showed that the risks and danger I have mentioned earlier are real and they do happen. What I have learnt from it is that such research, and maybe especially those done with children, and with technology, should be conducted with extra time and probably lager sample of children participating in this particular method. Then, the researchers have both more time to repeat the process and/or more children’s pictures to reply on.

The amazing thing that happened after I have contacted the parents and their children, whose pictures didn’t turn out, was that they immediately offered help by repeating taking the pictures with their own private cameras or phones. At the end I was able to meet with the children and discuss their pictures after all. Each of the meetings took up to an hour. During one of them I was partly on my own the boy (13 years old) while his mother went out to pick up his younger sister from a kindergarten. Later we were sitting in the same room. The boy was relax and eager to tell me about his pictures. I have
asked him to name each of his pictures. Since his mother was sitting in the same room (I have conducted an interview with her few weeks earlier) after we have finished discussing the pictures we continued to talk on the topic of multicultural upbringing together, with the boy and his mom. They seemed to be enjoying it, mentioning many examples how do they keep up with different traditions and how languages function in their house. Another time I met with a 5 years old boy. That was the same situation; none of the pictures turned out and again, the boy retook all his pictures for me, with his family’s digital camera. I was very grateful in both cases, for helping me out so much with my research. Later I heard, both from those two mentioned boys and their parents, that the kids were so much enjoying taking the pictures for me that they didn’t mind at all to do it again.

My only concern is, how much were the parents involved in setting up the pictures or suggesting things that should be on the picture. Especially thinking about the 5 years old. That concern, at the same time, talks about the down pit of this method. Once camera left with the participants we cannot be totally sure how and by whom exactly is it being used when we do not see it.

We, the researchers, have to trust that the instruction is being followed. In this case, only children take pictures, from their perspective and with their understanding of the topic. Still, I am aware that after I have left the family with the disposal camera, there might have been some talks with the parents about the task again, in their own words, in their own private setting, without the researcher sitting by. And it is OK. I assume families talk with their children about their experience and exchange thoughts and comments. I have spoken to the parents earlier, actually conducted interviews with the mothers before, so they knew exactly what my goal was.

3.3.5 Ethical reflections concerning the project

Keeping a high standard of the ethical aspect of a research is crucial. To obtain those measures, during conducting the project, I keep the anonymity of my informants and have written consent from the adults and oral from children. Every participant have been informed in detailed what the research and study concern, that it is anonymous and that every one of them is free to resign from participation in this research without any consequences. One of the ethical concerns I had to take in consideration was the
objects or people I might have found on the pictures taken by children in my research. In a case when a picture presents especially a face or written name and last name of a person, I have made sure that they would be covered. This way the person cannot be recognized and identified. When describing all four methodological tools in this chapter, I have underlined the risks when carrying on a research using each of them.

3.4 Summary of the methodology chapter

In the chapter of Methodology four methodological tools have been described: semi-structured interviews, online questionnaire, home-visits with participatory observations and pictures taken by children. All of the tools mentioned above have been an important aspect of the research. Each one of them has provided with a different side of the data that will be analysed in the next chapter. While conducting the research I have all together encountered 123 participants, that included semi-structured interviews with 15 mothers with international background, 100 parents from 33 countries around the world that have answered the online anonymous questionnaire, 3 home-visits and 5 children took pictures with disposal cameras they have earlier received from me. The obstacles that appeared during the research included for example limited will and consent for me to conduct the home-visits with participatory observation. The approached families were quite reluctant to be exposed (as they have understood it and felt about it) by my presence during their family, daily routines. I have decided to be flexible and adjust to my participants, giving them more freedom and comfort by resigning from that part of research. Another outcome that was rather disappointing was the malfunction of some of the disposal cameras. Whereas they are a great tools for children giving them freedom of choice what and when to photograph, the quality of final developed pictures was highly unsatisfactory. The several struggles I have experiences showed me and thought me how the work of a researcher can be sometimes unpredictable and difficult. It was a good and enriching lesson.
Chapter 4. Analysis

In this chapter I would like to present my findings, gathered through my project and 4 different methods I have used. All of them were described in detailed in Methodology Chapter. Here I will first refer to the results from interviews. There are few themes, which I have observed and noticed to be reappearing in most of the interviews I have conducted. The main themes include **travelling and moving abroad**, together or by one of the spouses and **languages** as a big part of culture. The second one touches on languages brought from country of origin of the parent who had moved, the new language that is being learnt as foreign language, and also language as an important part of an identity. Very often underlined as one of the focuses of the daily life of the family was raising children in a foreign country, different challenges; **culture** and daily life and routines that family live. It doesn’t matter where the family, the parents come from. There is home and work, school and weekends, preparing food, and reading bedtime stories, travelling to visit a family and having guests coming over. On the other hand, every single family has this one of a kind, unique for them, way of doing family, their family.

### 4.1 Moving abroad

This research explores process of shaping identity of children being raised in bilingual families. Yet, children’s identities, for the first part of their lives, are influenced by their parents’ choices. For example the place where children are born, where they live, what school they attend etc. are decided by parents or guardians. Yet these decisions all matter and shape children’s experiences. I have interviewed over 10 mothers to see what kind of decisions and life make people who create bilingual and bicultural families.

In all the cases, at least one of the parents moved from its country of origin to eventually be together with her husband or his wife. That means that in all of the cases at lest one of the spouses had to adjust and adapt to a new environment, culture and languages, unless knew it well before. They needed to learn it for themselves, but also became more aware of their own, and often missing it very much.
There were mainly three outstanding reasons why my interviewees, or their spouses, moved to Norway. It was either love, work or studies. Each of those life events, falling in love, getting married, starting a new job or studies are big and important life-changers that significantly influences man and woman. Moving to another country in addition, where there is a new culture, new foreign language, different customs etc is yet another complex event that needs time and effort to deal with.

One of the online questionnaire participants answered to the following two questions 1) Where were you born and raised: “I was born in Australia, raised in Papua New Guinea and New Zealand.” and to the other one 2) “If you have moved from your home country, when was it and what was the main reason for it?”:

“Home is a complicated question for me. But I would say it is New Zealand, I left in 1998 and since then have I visited around every 3 years. I left for work reason.”

The answers given to, one might think, not so complicated question, turns out to be problematic. This person doesn’t say in what langue or cultural setting she grew up. Today, she says, lives in Ecuador. Moving abroad is not only stressful, like mentioned by another participant earlier, but can also be confusing for identity formation in a long run.

Tabor and Milfont (2011) have created a Migration Change Model that includes four stages of the migration process:

“precontemplation, contemplation, action and acculturation as well as a path for return or onward migration. The salient factors for the migrants in each of these stages included: intrapersonal factors and familial connections (precontemplation); macro and micro factors (contemplation); stress and coping (action), and psychological adjustment and sociocultural adaptation (acculturation).” (Milfont, 2011, p. 820)

One third of the online questionnaire respondents currently lives in a country that is not his/hers or his/hers spouse's either. Over one third of the families live in a 3rd country, (not in any of the two countries of the origin of the spouses). There are many reasons behind why did they move in first place, yet again, the top three are being repeated.
Among other the reasons are "to live in a third, neutral (for spouses) country", "to help family in need" or "for personal space". A Polish mother raising a 2 year old with her American husband, in Israel, a third, neutral country for this family, says:

"(Among other reasons, living abroad, in a third country) strongly binds the marriage, when being away from our parents. You have to rely more on each other, and not on your family, so you have to deal with conflicts faster."

When two people, coming from different countries, cultures and are used to communicating in separate languages, the alternative of picking a third country, without the whole heritage, but also baggage and pressure from one side of a family can be very attractive. The mother mentioned above admits that such freedom is extra benefiting her family. The neutral, third nation, carries with itself the sense of independence and bigger freedom, allowance for such families in creating their own cultural identity of their family. In such situation both culture of the parents can be more balanced and. The reality how balanced it is very much depends on the value of owns culture and the importance of passing it forward to the next generation. That means that even raising a family in a third country might not avoid impression of one culture dominating over the other one.

Another interesting observation is that every single person, that filled out the questioner, at some point in their lives, have been living abroad. Even if now lives back in their home-country, they did travel to another country, for work, studies, love or adventure. One Norwegian woman, 34 years old, married to a Japanese, living in Norway says she has lived in Japan for few years as a missionary, another few years working as a volunteer for tsunami and earthquake recovery. Another one, Polish woman, age 41, married to a Congolese moved to Canada "followed my husband’s dream to move to Canada”. A Mexican man, age 39, married to a Norwegian says "Last move - 11 years ago, following my wife aspirations, after she followed mine in Mexico and USA”. A 42 year old Swedish woman says simply "moved because of love =) ”, an Irish man, married to Polish, asked for reason he moved abroad answers: "L’Amour :-)")” (love). Many other mentioned work as focus of their relocation, for example "Husband’s contract in Europe ended", "came to work", "work and marriage", "so my husband could work in his own country”, just to mention few.
Every interview that I have conducted helped me to understand how and why did those women get to where they are now. Each individual story uncovered a chain of events and choices that eventually led to all of them living in Trondheim, with a husband from a foreign to theirs country and raising together children.

Travelling shapes up a personality, opens up to new and unknown, widens horizon. The fact that all of the participants have lived abroad, or now live in other then their country of origin means that they have been exposed to different culture and language. Such experience, besides helping to get to know the other cultures, also has an effect on how we perceive our own culture. Many things are taken for granted or simply ignored. Once put in a foreign to us environment, but still wearing the “my-culture-glasses” we tend to discover elements of our own background that before haven’t been so clear, or was actually obvious, but is not anymore. All cultures are different; there isn’t any better than other. People moving their whole lives to another country have to go through a process of integrating, of some level, depending on a person, learning the language and local customs and culture. All of that is a complex, life-changing event, which affects every single person who has moved abroad, to some extends. Studies show that moving abroad is one of the most stressful events in people’s lifetime. Big changes are source of a big stress and moving to a new country, with a new culture definitely fills out those criteria. Every person deals with it in a different matter. It is a life-changing event.

4.2 Languages

Along with moving to another country, or at least learning about cultural differences, language, the mother tongue and foreign languages are another strong aspect in person’s life, it is undeniably part of an identity. I have noticed that most of the participants in this project could speak 3 or more languages. In the questionnaire only 2 out of 100 answers wrote that they knew only one language (English) and 40% state that they know 4 or more languages.
Figure 2: Number of languages parents of the bilingual and bicultural families speak. Data collected from the online questionnaire.

Considering the fact that all those people are married to a foreigner and raising their children in at least two languages makes me think that those children have wonderful role models when it comes to learning languages, since clearly, for their parents, languages are important and not taken for granted. Figure 2 shows that 40% of the online questionnaire respondents speak 4, or more, languages. This is an outstanding result that I have not expected to find. It is clearly more languages than an average person speaks. Another data that I have gained says that most of those parents have lived abroad at some point in the lives. Putting together those two facts, number of spoken languages and living abroad is a proof that the exposure to different cultures and then being raised in a multicultural setting with more than one language on daily basis creates a different mind set. Since those parents are raising children with a person form yet another country then their own, children within such families are set upon completely different start in life than an average person with parents from the same country, speaking the same language.

An American, one of the women I have met with for an interview, a mother of two, a teenager and a toddler, explains to me her journey in regaining her identity, after moving to Norway and feeling a bit lost and out of place. Since she has lived in many
places with many relatives before moving to Norway, getting to know people, reading their body language, learning to adjust to them to be comfortable around them was something that had to learn very fast, and that helped when she moved to Norway.

"(It helped) to read people, especially when I didn’t know the language and when you feel you loose your identity, that was horrible. So there was a period I was soooo lonely. (...) I remember trying to find any friends who where not my husband’s friends."

After several jobs, after studying, finishing Norwegian high school’s last year to be able to apply for studies, got a job at a high school. Until then everyone referred to her as her husband’s wife. But then for the first time, celebrating 17th of May somebody turned to her and asked:

"Is that Woman’s man? Yes! Yes, for the first time he was my man, I wasn’t his wife. And than I felt for the first time that I got my identity. Which ironically was 17th of May. So I celebrate it every year! Yay! So I remember that, when I finally had my own identity back, because I learnt the language enough to communicate."

It shows how much the language we communicate in is strongly connected to who we are, what is our identity, how are we perceived by others and how comfortable we feel where we are. When living in country of origin people have a tendency of taking their language for granted. The luxury they have to speak it freely, to be understood. It is obvious and most natural to speak English when that’s one’s mother-tong and lives in English speaking country. It is natural to speak Polish for a Polish person living in Poland. It is the most normal thing to speak Japanese for a Japanese person living in Japan. What is not natural and obvious is speaking the mother-tong in a foreign country. It is no longer obvious and common. Suddenly the awareness of one’s mother-tong becomes stronger and more valued. The languages socialisation, as we can see, doesn’t only take place during the infancy time. That’s the period of life where it definitely begins, but it doesn’t mean it ends, or that it won’t happen again. It can, whenever one finds him self in a situation set in a foreign language and willing to learn to know it and to be familiar with it.
The will, that’s another interesting aspect of languages socialisation. Across the whole world there can be found Diasporas\textsuperscript{11}. Some of their people, despite the fact that are set in a country with a foreign to their language, they never learn it. They don’t feel need for it, they don’t feel the need of learning the new language because all the need to communicate and get by with their life is within their safe and familiar bubble of Diaspora.

\textbf{Picture1:} Picture taken by a 13-year-old respondent (R.), half American, half Norwegian

Among conducting interviews with mothers, I have also met with few children, asking them to show me trough pictures, what does it mean to them to be multilingual and multicultural. One of them, R., a 13 years old boy, a son to an American mother and a Norwegian father was happy to show me a glimpse into his life. The first picture he took shows three words written on the board: “Hei, Hi, Hola”. All of them are greetings words in Norwegian, English and Spanish. The boy is bilingual in Norwegian and English through his parents. Recently he also started Spanish classes at school. As he explains to, since his mother’s family partly comes from Puerto Rico (still lives there) he got curious and wanted to learn the language. He has a very good contact with his

\textsuperscript{11} The biggest Diasporas in the world are Indian (15.6 million citizens living outside their country of origin), Mexico (12.3 million) and Russia (10.6) Data comes from 2015. Source: https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/which-country-has-the-largest-diaspora/
grandma. She came for a few visits, sands packages and is in regular contact with boy’s family.

Another boy T., 6 years old half British, half Norwegian, doesn’t think much about his bilingual upbringing. He is very natural and smoothly switches from one language to another.

Interviewer: Is it fun to know two languages?
T: Yeah

I: What do you think your friends think about it?
T: They really wonder what I. should. When I say something in English they always ask me ”what did you just say?”

I: And then you have to repeat it in Norwegian?
T: Yeah, and that’s easy 😊

(From collected data)

What this short conversation between me, the researcher and the 6 year old T. can tell us, is that for this boy two languages that he knows are regular and obvious part of his daily life. When he says “yeah, and that’s easy.” when asked if he translates English into Norwegian for his no-English speaking friends, reveals that the level of fluency of both languages is similar enough to consider both of them easy and no problematic to communicate in. Referring back to the techniques used by bilingual individuals, we can see that such fluent negotiations before languages can be categorized as code switching so changing the language depending on the social situation one find themselves in.

Another woman, from Philippines, married to a Bosnian man with whom she is raising two small children shares her concern that in her opinion Philippine language is slowly dying since most people back in her country of origin speak English. She explains that it feels like Philippines’ language is dying. People don’t value the language like they should, according to her, and so most people speak English, instead of the local language. Even parents speak English to their children. The reason behind it is a social and economical status. Knowing English gives bigger chance of finding a god job and getting accepted to higher social class. Yet, as much as it is becoming more and more normal and socially accepted, if not even desired back in the Philippines, this Philippine was not happy about it and since living away from Philippines felt that this is important
to make sure her children know her mother’s home-origin-language. Such strong attitude and love for her language proofs that our identity, especially when rooted out of the natural, original environment, our home country, needs such elements like language to survive, or simply not totally change. It is simply impossible to stay untouched and unaffected by such a huge change like moving to another country. Yet, just like earlier mentioned orthogonal theory of keeping both cultures alive says, it is possible to remain connected to your roots. Cultivating the mother tongue is one of the ways to do so.

During one of my interviews I have met with a Norwegian mother, married to her English husband, who raise their two sons in with the One Parent One Language (OPOL) rules. She has shared with me that one of the situation when the parents switch languages when talking to their children is when they have to be strict with children. They would switch from Norwegian into English. For some reason this language became the one to communicate rules express emotions and deal with them.

This setting shows what power languages can have. In this Norwegian British family the two languages family is operating on daily basis, have different roles. Even though it is the OPOL system they are using, depending on the emotional situation children are dealing with their parents would switch to one or the other language (both of them, despite the language they speak on regular basis) to solve the problem. This means, in that case, English and Norwegian are not equal. Somehow, through the years of parenting there has become a division in the emotional strength of each of the languages.

A Mexican married to Norwegian, raising their 8 years old daughter says that it not possible to fully express yourself, your feelings in other then your mother tong language. Therefore songs, sense of humour, jokes she says to her daughter is always in Spanish. She always talks in Spanish to her daughter, even though she replies back to her mother in Norwegian. Still, she is not giving up. She doesn’t want to pressure her daughter if she doesn’t feel comfortable about speaking Spanish. The mother is now fluent in Norwegian, studies and works in Norwegian.

In the questionnaire, over 30%, out of 100 respondents said they haven’t heard about OPOL rule, even though in most cases that’s is the technique they are using.
In addition many families, beside their two mother-tongs, use English between the spouses, plus children often have yet another language at school or kindergarten, depending on the place family’s residence. Polish mother, married to a French man, raising two children in Singapore, says:

“In our home each of us with my husband speak to the kids different language: for example I’m Polish and always I speak Polish to my kids; my husband always speak French and between us (parents) we speak English. Plus my kids know that they have to speak between each other Polish. So far it works very well: my 4 year old daughter speak perfectly Polish, French, English plus Chinese (at school she has two main languages English and Chinese).”

What draws my attention, besides the language model this particular family took on when communicating at home, is the fact that children of a Polish mother and a French father ought to speak Polish with each other. The way mother mentions that rule “(...) they know they have to speak between each other Polish.” shows that it is the mother who maybe has the biggest impact of children’s language upbringing and the rules that follow.

At home of an American woman and her Norwegian husband, the rules of when to use what language with each other and their two children (13 and 2) seem to be very flexible.
and depending on the person who starts the conversation. The three of them, (both of
the parents and their teenage son) are fluent in both English and Norwegian. The
daughter, nearly 2 years old, doesn’t talk much yet, but both of the parents make sure
she is exposed to both of the languages. The father speaks Norwegian and the mother
speaks English, although, while I was visiting them I witness how it works on daily
basis. All three of them, the parents and their son, would answer in the language it was
spoken. So for example if the father and his son are speaking Norwegian and the father
turns to his wife to ask question in Norwegian, she answers in Norwegian, speaking to
both of them. On the other hand, they also mentioned that it happened that the father
would speak English to his son, but he would answer back in Norwegian. By now all
three are bilingual, plus the mother knows some Spanish since she is also partly Puerto
Rican. That is also the reason why their son started recently Spanish classes. The
language this family would speak seemed to be rather determined by who started the
conversation and in what language. I haven’t noticed a firm rule that everybody would
follow.

The answers from the online questionnaire show the intentions of the parents. Many of
them, if not using the OPOL, they choose to follow the other known rule called the
“minority language rule”. That means that family speaks the minority language at
home, or between each other, when the dominant language is the community language,
of the country they live in. To keep the minority language active and alive, it is
consistently used by both of the parents (even if for one of them it is not a mother-tong
but is fluent enough to communicate).

Some of the answers representing this approach include for example an Irish mother
who is married to a Swede. The family is living in Cyprus. The mother said: “We speak
only Swedish at home as we live outside of Sweden”. The little comment, end of that
sentence shows how simple and maybe obvious (?) it is for this mother that since they
“live outside of Sweden” then that’s the language they should speak at home. Another
couple, a Norwegian married to Australian, living in Norway shares: “Both parents
speak English at home and our child speaks Norwegian at day care.” Another example,
an Australian woman married to a man from Ecuador, living in Ecuador states that
“We aimed for OPOL, but that has varied depending on where we lived. E.g. we studied in Canada for 2 and half years so we only spoke to our 2-year-old in Spanish at home so she wouldn’t forget it, in a mainly English environment. Also my mother has lived with us for 5 years and she only speaks English to the girls.”

Also adds “our church is bilingual as is the girls’ school, but we encourage them to speak English at church to keep up their fluency as Spanish is dominant in our context.” Presented here citations presenting the reality of the Australian- Norwegian family life, are examples of the code-switching between the languages that are so known and common for the bilingual families. Just like the Mother says here “We aimed for OPOL, but that has varied depending on where we lived.” The flexibility that family has in its communication depending on its’ surroundings and dominant language of the society they currently find themselves in, proofs that bilingual families adjust well to new linguistic realities, and thanks to that, heir children learn to do the same.

A Polish-Nigerian couple, living in Poland speaks English at home; American-Croatian couple, living in Croatia chose to speak English at home, since family (Croatian) and Croatian (language) is everywhere else. Those examples show how those particular families consciously choose to guard their other, minority family languages, by weighting and comparing the accessibility to both of the languages and the disproportion between them.

Others are expressing that it’s not always easy or possible to stick to those rules. Many of the respondents confirmed that they often switch into a majority language, the community language if other people are involved, not to exclude them.

Polish-French couple in Singapore “Where we are in public places for example on play date with other kids which don’t understand polish or French – first we always speak to our kids in our language and after we translate to other kids. It works, and we still keep our rules.” Irish-Swedish family in Cyprus also say that they “speak English when (they) have international friends over.”

All of the examples mentioned here above show the process of language socialisation that take place in different settings creating context of the family life. The reasons languages are being change and adjusted are conditioned by the surroundings, people
they interact with or place where they happen to be - church, international friends that visit, or to nurture the minority language by speaking it at home.

Many of them switch into the other spouse language when around his or hers family. It means that such multilingual setting of living make those families more sensitive to others. The fact that they change the language depending on the situation and people they interact with shows good social skills and people-friendly attitude. Also, it can be one of the communication strategies, described in earlier chapter - like bridging. I believe it influences children’s upbringing in such environment. They observe their parents and learn how to behave in public, how to treat others, how to include and not exclude. Those examples and described situations emphasises the power of language and their teaching possibilities - not necessarily only the linguistics aspect of them. The following quote of a Russian- Norwegian (with Indian origin) couple raising their children in Norway says “We choose the language based on the surroundings. With my Russian speakers we switch to addressing our daughter in Russian, with Indian – Punjabi. We speak Norwegian at home.” What that means is that, again, people around the family can indirectly decide on the spoke language. In this particulate case, not to exclude anyone, and rather make them feel included in the conversation and giving the other person a chance to join in if they want to. One more example in similar context – a Norwegian-American couple comments the reason for dropping their OPOL method when with other family members “We had to stick to one language when being around elderly family members who do not understand the other language, out of respect.” The way this can also be interpreted is that maybe there is a pressure from the other family members, not familiar with the other language, to speak the language they would understand, so that they can be included.

Yet, there are some challenges that make such family style more stressful and challenging. Few of the respondents referred to a current political situation in Great Britain, Brexit as a source of insecurity. Brexit comes from combination of two words: Britain and exit – it represents the process of Britain leaving European Union (EU), started in 2016. It has given a lot of insecurities and fear for future, especially

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12 Brexit, the process began in 2016 after a referendum conducted in UK asking population of they want to stay or leave EU. Majority of respondents voted for leaving EU.

13 The European Union - often known as the EU - is an economic and political partnership involving 28 European countries. It began after World War II to foster economic co-operation, with the idea that countries, which trade together were more likely to avoid going to war with each other.
foreigner, immigrants that came to England for several of reason. The consequences that might fall upon non-natives are making families considering moving away from England or take on some precocious steps, not to stick their heads out to much, not to provoke or become somebody’s issue, due to a different then native English language, so foreign accent etc.

A Norwegian woman married to a British man living in UK says that “after Brexit I don’t like speaking Norwegian when we are out, I know it’s calmed down, but I was out with my daughters (1 and a 3 years old) when someone was being nasty as I spoke Norwegian to my daughter.”

Another Mother (British), who uses with her husband (Nepali) and children their minority language, Nepali says: “Since Brexit I feel less comfortable speaking Nepali in public so will speak English instead.” Safety and comfort, being shaken up when speaking certain languages in public, seams to be wider, then the Brexit reality in England. An American woman, living in Serbian with her family, simply admits: “ if I am in a public and feel uncomfortable making it clear that I am a foreigner I will sometimes speak to my son in the local language, Serbian.” Another aspect is drawing an unwelcomed attention by speaking foreign languages in a public place. A Dutch mother married to a Tajikistani, living in Ukraine concludes “Sometimes I speak Russian on the playground or in the supermarket to not have everyone look at us.”

At the same time 20 percent of the questionnaire respondents said that they use almost exclusively English language to communicate with their spouse, which for both of them is a foreign language. That means that the family is exposed to at least 3 languages daily, considering parents using the OPOL technique with their children and speaking English to each other.

The vast collected and presented here data, from parents from all over the world shows that no matter where a family lives, what origin cultures it carries, what languages it speaks, it is creating its own and unique model of doing-the-family. Models of communication are different; rules are made, adjusted, recreated and stretched. How strict and set the rules are, or flexible and flowing can reflect the attitude towards the language socialisation of the younger generation in the family. The values that come from the original cultural, family’s heritage and the weight it carries will determine how
much parents will work on passing it on their children, if it will be a priority or just another flexible element of their new multilingual identity.

4.3 Culture. Cultivating home-country traditions living abroad.

Most of the respondents of the online questionnaire replied that it is important for them that their children know the culture of their home country. 17 answered that it is extremely important. For example: “Extremely important. We believe culture, history and heritage of both our backgrounds (Polish and Irish) is essential.” And another one:

“Absolutely YES. In fact they are dual nationality as me. Mexico and Norway allow that (very few cases) but beyond the passports. I’m raising them to be proud of their heritage from Mexico, history, traditions, customs, habits, landscape, but also the problems. They also understand that they come from Mexico and that half of their family and past is there.” (Mexican-Norwegian family living in Norway).

The elements of culture that are most valued by bilingual and bicultural families, to pass on to their children are languages and holiday traditions and customs that are unique and special for specific cultures. The participants have named history of the country of origin, food and the special meals around holidays.

Another 13 respondents answered that it is kind of important, to some extend. The examples of the answers:

“The language is more important”, “When we lived in Hawaii I kept some Norwegian traditions, but not much. Life over there is so different and you kind get a new way of life so you forget about a lot of traditions. You start your own as a new family.” “Secondary. Most important are my Christian believes” “Yes, but it is not a priority”, “yes, but not in all aspects”.

The answers above show how diverse approach parents hold. There is not one way of passing on the traditions, cultures or even the language. When two people should choose what to involve when raising their children, they might face a numerous challenges that will put the plan into reality and maybe will have to be adjusted and accepted.

Taiwanese married to a Norwegian, raising a baby says:

“Yes (culture is important), but me and my husband try not to emphasise any culture. We want to introduce them to many ways and let them decide. Neutral. It’s their decision in future.”

When asked which culture dominants in the home-interior, if I would be able to tell that their home is inhabited by people form two different culture she sais that

“Norwegian culture is the most present in our home, because we are here. And it is totally fine culture. Husband is very international. Because of his work he would travel a lot around the world. That’s why we want to be open. I think kids would say they are Norwegian, and I’m fine with that. As long as they know where their mother comes from. We think its more important who is the family and where are they from, instead of which country they are from.”
This mother’s comment points out an important aspect of living in an international, travelled family. The value of individual identity is shifted from actual country to family members. She mentions that her husband travels a lot due to his work and therefore it also shaped their attitude “we want to be open.” On the other hand, it is clear that the heritage, where the mother comes from, is important to her that her children know that fact. It is in line with findings from this research underlining that it is important for the parents to pass on their heritage and culture.

What was striking and incredibly visible in most of the answers about what aspects and elements of culture would a parent like to pass on to his or her children from their culture, where not the language, history, food etc., even though as shown here, those are also very important. The most common answer was describing different personality traits like kindness, care for older people, love for nature, respect for others, faith and Christian believes, having good manners and tolerance towards other nations. Those are only some of many answers of that typed. One can assume that those elements, that describe person’s way of being, treating other people and equally important and prioritised as the languages, cultural heritage, customs and food. It is true that some personal traits and psychological aspects can be related with a specific culture, like openness to other people, privacy or value of impedance or rather conformism and collective identity. Yet, here, it is important to look at those answers as the elements of the context within which the process of children's cultural identity formation takes place.

A perspective from children’s point of you is also important. I have asked some of them how their culture present in their daily life and surrounding. 6 years old T. has a quite good idea about the two cultures he lives with. He is fluent in both of the languages. When we met, we spoke in English, T with a clear British accent. Since living in Norway, it looks to me that to T. when asked to take pictures for me, mainly took pictures connected to England, the culture of his Father. But still, from the pictures he has taken I can say he is well familiar with both cultures. I can tell that he talks with his parents and family about different elements of them. He is aware of some of the differences. The family uses the OPOL technique (One Parent One Language) and T. attends regular Norwegian school, where he has one other native English friend. Here are some examples of the pictures taken by T.:
Interviewer: *So, on the first picture we have a cup. Can you tell me something about it?*

T: *Yes. The Queen and there is the.. The horse and the unicorn, so when there is a cup.. There used to, like, on the cups you get when her gonna be the... the Queen. And then... the lion is on.. and its gonna be like a king.*

I: *And that's your cup?*

T: *No, its my daddy's cup.*

I: *And your daddy is from..?*

T: *England!*

I: *So this is a Queen of England here?*

T: *Yeah*

I: *Great. Do you drink from that cup sometimes?*

T: *(laughs and says with a smile) It’s daddy’s that drinks from it.*

By talking about this cup I have noticed T. is aware of his two cultures. That can mean that at least the parents take an effort to talk to T. about different elements of the two cultures. Since the cup belongs to his father, I assume it must have been in the house
for a very long time. When emphasising that it’s his father’s cup, makes me think that it is also important to his father, and that T. sees that.

Picture 2.

(...)
M: What language do you speak with your grandparents?
T: English. And I... In Greece I was singing a song in Norwegian and then my daddy was singing it in English.
M: Wow, there you go! So you can basically translate each other, huh? That’s fantastic!
T: yes (answers proudly while giggling)
M: Do you have good memories from England? Do you like England?
T: Yes, I have seen many things in England.

T. was very happy to tell that story. The fact that him and his father could perform the same song, but in two languages, made him proud. He is aware of the special gift he has, being bilingual. He enjoys it and likes using both of the languages. He has shown me on the map where England and Norway are situated, what different money they have.

Picture 3. Examples of Norwegian money (left) and English (right), picture taken by T. Picture 4. Picture of a map of Norway, taken by T. Picture 5. Picture of a map of United Kingdom, taken by T.
The mother of 6-year-old T. presented here, who is married to an English man, I have interviewed when visiting her at home. The mother of two boys, speaks fluent English with British accent. She has lived in England for 5 years and as she says, her husband “is only a little bit more British then her”. I don’t do a regular home visit with participatory observation because of uncomfortable feeling about of both of the parents. We decide on just interview and a help from her oldest son to take pictures from me. At first glance I would not have noticed a multicultural, English-Norwegian, character of their habitants. Their apartment situated in the cosy part of Trondheim, with squeaking narrow stairs, has been remodelled into modern and functional home for family of 4. Stylish and rather calm interior with balanced beige and browns could easily be found in one of the interior design magazines.

The Woman was open to talk to me about their multicultural life, meaning that ever since she has met her husband their life was no longer mono-lingual or mono-cultural. She has pointed out the families on both sides, which are different in many aspects, the language barriers and some cultural differences in child-up bringing styles. Few times she has mentioned to me about the languages they speak at home and what food they cook, suggesting that she has thought about this conversation before hand and prepared even the areas that she thought was worth mentioning. She was very honest about her opinions on British culture, or at least on those elements of it, that we have touched on. She sounded happy and satisfy to be Norwegian, and to live in Norway. She has pointed out some of the differences in style of bringing up children, in England and Norway. She has talked about bigger freedom when it comes for setting the rules for children. She has comment on the stiff table setting, with everyone neatly dressed, where everyone, including children, with no exceptions sit still. Whereas in Norway, the society in general understands that children cannot do that, sit still by table through the whole meal, without interrupting, spilling food and not being calm. The impression I got from listening to this Mother was that the visits, especially at the beginning when she was still a new mom, were quite stressful.

Another Mother I have met with comes from Mexico. She is married to a Norwegian and together they have a 7 years old daughter. When I came for a home-visit I have met with the mother and her daughter, who also agreed to take pictures for me with the disposal camera, which I have delivered on the same day. The visit was a nice talk about both the Mexican culture and the adjustment Woman has done after moving to Norway.
9 years ago. I took few pictures to remember the objects I found especially interesting for my project.

![Picture from the Norwegian-Mexican home in Trondheim, Norway. The four paintings in the thick frames are painted by the home’s owner uncle from Mexico.](image)

They are showing framed pictures of a Mexican painter (pic. 6) who happen to be my participant’s uncle. Another thing was famous for Mexico skeleton doll (pic. 7), dressed in an elegant gown and big hat decorated with feathers. This piece was placed in the centre of the dinning area in the house. It was Woman’s one of favourites souvenirs from her country. We talked about the symbolic role it carried as in Mexico, she told me, death is often presented in a humorous way to break the scary, serious matter of it. Another important element was a Mexican flag (pic. 8) in a pot with flowers. I have not noticed Norwegian flag, or any other for that matter. It was important for the mother to have it so central, also because of her daughter, so that she would be familiar with it. Two Mexican spices (pic. 9), besides its culinary value, where also one of sentimental items from the home-country of my friend. She has admitted that she doesn’t really use them when cooking. As if always waiting for the right, worthy of them meal. By now they might be already out of date, but what’s important is that they are in the house, within a rich of a hand, ready to be used. More like a mental souvenir.
Another home visit, along with an interview and handing the camera over to a 13 years old boy, took place at a Norwegian-American family. The very much eclectic style of their house didn’t at first reveal that this particular family is represented by two cultures. Yet, the amount of Halloween decoration still lying around\textsuperscript{14} was, as I was told, because of the American mom for whom the Halloween was a favourite of all holidays to celebrate, and the most reminded her of home of origin, USA. At the same time I noticed a big frame on the wall with amberoid signs and flowers, which turned out to be once belonging to Woman’s late grandmother. On one of the walls in the living room, where we were having a conversation, was fully covered by bookshelves, completely full. The topics and the kind of literature were very varied since very different fields of studies and interests the spouses represent.

The husband is a Norwegian scientist and so many of his books were in English, as the mother’s who loves to read, and make sure her oldest son, 13 year old, has easy access to them, and so packages from bookdepository.com\textsuperscript{15} come regularly to this house. This is also one of the ways to stay in touch with Mother’s culture and language. On the coffee table by the sofa where I sat I have noticed many children’s DVDs., including

\textsuperscript{14} Halloween is at the end of October. When I have visited the family it was already November.
\textsuperscript{15} bookdepository.com is an online bookstore
Baby Einstein, a popular program for babies, in English, teaching them through songs, pictures and real life animals clips about nature etc..

The daughter, nearly 2 years old, doesn’t talk much yet, but both of the parents make sure she is exposed to both of the languages. The father speaks Norwegian and the mother speaks English, although, while I was visiting them I witness how it works on daily basis. All three of them, the parents and their son, would answer in the language it was spoken. So for example if the father and his son are speaking Norwegian and the father turns to his wife to ask question in Norwegian, she answers in Norwegian, speaking to both of them. They also mentioned that it happened that the father would speak English to his son, but he would answer back in Norwegian. By now all three are bilingual, plus the mother knows some Spanish since she is also partly Puerto Rican. That is also the reason why their son started recently Spanish classes. The language this family would speak seemed to be rather determined by who started the conversation and in what language. I haven’t noticed a firm rule that everybody would follow.

The 13 years old R. was from the start very positive and eager to meet me and to talk to me. The fact that intended to include him, his opinion in my research sparked a conversation which was flowing in a good rhythm. The boy was very much aware of the culture brought to the table by his parents. He was proud of them and didn’t hesitate to talk about his American, even Puerto Rican or Norwegian heritage. My impression was that he really enjoy the task I have asked for, taking the pictures to show me how different culture in his life are represented in daily life. Here are some of the pictures R. has provided.
R. showing me a Bible and says that it is representing his Norwegian side

“My mom is Christian, but my (late) Dad’s side are more religious so they introduced me to church every Christmas, and I got Bible from them.” R. mentions also one of the churches in Trondheim\textsuperscript{16} and that it has “a funny priest”.

“If somebody asks me, I go. My parents don’t go. My father is not religious and my mom doesn’t like churches.”

Here we can see the influence from yet older generation, boy’s grandparents. He is clear that anything church related, for him, is connected with relationships outside his home. And he puts it himself “my mom doesn’t like churches.” And adding that is is his late father’s family who are more religious. It did not stop him from experiencing going to church, which can be explained by his parents’ openness to the idea that their son might

\textsuperscript{16} This particular here is a Lutheran church, which is the main denomination in Norway.
represent different values, believes then them themselves. This boy uses his agency and expresses an interest in the area where his parent’s are maybe more ambivalent. In presented here case, the role of base-making, foundation for the child took over the grandparents and earlier the biological father (who has passed away) of the boy. The age of 13 is a period of life when identity formation is blooming. It is now when individuals become more and more independent, both in their actions but also in their thinking, problems solving and searching for answers of questions that cover more complicated and serious areas of life.

The last picture (12) presents house where R. lives with his family. What I found is interesting is the fact that for Him it was one of the “American” representations in His life. He said: “That’s where I live, so it’s American.” which indicated boy’s identity is more of American then Norwegian. I expected to hear it is Norwegian, since the house is in Norway and part of his family is Norwegian, his stepfather, he himself is born in Norway, to an American mother and late Norwegian father. This comment made me realise and understand how the identities of children are set of their own rules, where children’s agency has also a space to impact the outcome of that process. The context has been set up for this boy - the house is placed in Trondheim, Norway, with him born in Norway, with half Norwegian family. Yet, despite all that, for him the house represents his American side of identity.

In the next chapter I will move on to the Discussion process of the collected data
Chapter 5: Discussion

In this chapter I would like to bring closer the answers asked research questions in the first place. This thesis has been a discussion over a process of a new identity formation - specifically an identity of a child being raised in a bilingual and a bicultural home. As we have seen in the previous chapters, it is a complex and multilayer process that last for a period of time, with no crucial or specific time of finalization. There is not one model that would reflect a universal formation process and common for all. The thesis presents the family as the crucial context for an identity to be form, also the bilingual and bicultural. Without the family and the values, traditions, role models that family carry on and passes on to it’s members, the new identity would be lacking basic ingredients, which later could develop into one’s identity. Since family is such a strong element of everyone’s identity formation, it is important to underline that families across the world don’t follow one model either. Each culture has a say in that social institution. Therefore it is even less obvious how bilingual and bicultural families’ function and raise their children. Collected data in this research reflects that statement.

In the following chapter I will continue to guide through my collected data together comments on the results and conclusion they bring, but I will also draw a bigger, common picture of my results to better elevate my findings.

Presented examples of the three home visits I have conducted for the purpose of this research and described here show that bicultural and bilingual families are not homogeneous and there their homes are also different. At the same time, in today’s era of globalisation, even the area of home-decoration makes individual spaces not that individual and unique anymore. The good example here is a furniture and a home decoration store IKEA\textsuperscript{17}, also present in all of the houses I have visited during the visits. This Swedish brand is known and liked across the whole country, with it’s 422 stores in 50 countries. Their considerably low prices and universal style that can fit and blend in together with any kind of culture made the store a worldwide phenomenon. This has an impact of people’s homes. Just like cultures can blend more and more, the home interior goes most definitely through such transitions also. Lack of one (or two if talking

\textsuperscript{17} IKEA – a Swedish furniture store, https://highlights.ikea.com/2018/facts-and-figures/home/
about bicultural families for example) culture clearly and strongly exposed and represented in the private chambers of family home, makes it more universal.

Therefore, another aspect and a challenge that bicultural families face more than monocultural families is the extra effort they have to put into even their home to keep that special, a home of origin feeling. The interviews families from the home visits all had such items around the house, which doesn’t mean they were obvious for me to spot (except for the flags)

Besides the few elements that would stand out from the interior of the homes I have visited, the biggest value and clear picture came from another method I have used for the research - pictures taken by children. They have allowed me to look deeper into children’s understanding of their special life-circumstances they were put in – bilingual and bicultural homes, including the meaning behind some of the home items. One can wonder if a child like T. who is only 6 years old is enough aware of culture, what does it mean and what exactly did I asked for him to show me through those pictures. Despite understandable doubts about how the child was to take those pictures without parental guidance, I chose to believe that T., just like R. have used their agency and acted on it. The disposal cameras I have left in the hands of those young humans became a tool to come across with a message and an important information about their world they live in and their own interpretation.

On the other hand, the context of acting on their agency has been earlier set up for them. Like I have talked about it my previous chapters, the family is a sociological construction, which becomes a base for understanding the world for their members, especially children. The power relation it creates has to be taken into consideration when talking about children’s agency. None of them is a white blank paper, *tabula rasa*. People want to believe that they are masters of their own life, of their agency. Yet, the truth, also presented by many scholars, even just those mentioned in this thesis, is that the context, the reality of earlier made decisions by our ancestors, parents and closest family determines the choices children will be making later in their life for themselves. The familiar smells and tastes of food, the favourite tunes on the radio or associations when hearing this particular language, dialect, accent have power to transport an individual back to their home of origin.
5.1 Raising children by parents from two different countries

I believe that many parents across the world, from all kind of cultural backgrounds, would agree with a statement that parenting is one of the most rewarding and challenging role one can be in. The challenges, responsibilities and stress that appear when raising children have found their place in uncountable books, thesis, movies, programs and trainings, researches and simply, the live-proofs of parents’ testimonies all over the world. Parenthood is a very complex aspect of life, which is never one-dimensional only. Challenges and difficulties face the best and most loving, calm and understanding parents. There is not one model to follow, not one solution that would fit everyone, and every single parent and a child is different. We all have different needs, definitions of good and fun time as a family and values one should follow. And that is true to all parents and families. As a mother myself I know, I strongly belief that this particular notion is universal for all parents, no matter what geographical part of the world they come from or where do they raise they children, that no matter how difficult it is, the value and love for that child is greater then any obstacle, fear from unknown, physical exhaustion, self doubt or the social pressure of being on top of the things 24/7. Yet, on top of all of that, the bilingual and bicultural families face another scope of challenges (and benefits!) on daily basis.

5.1.1. Benefits of raising children bilingual and bicultural

People brought up from childhood in optimal language conditions, in a bilingual or multilingual environment, achieve a balanced bi- or multilingualism that provides them with a comfortable and conscious participation in the lives of several societies.

Besides sociological benefits, social skills, wide cultural understanding of “different” and unknown, there are solid biological aspects proving how the brain of bilinguals develops and functions differently from the rest of population. One of the aspects is connected with a cognitive development. Jared Diamond (2010) says that „children raised bilingually develop a specific type of cognitive benefit during infancy, and that bilingualism offers some protection against symptoms of Alzheimer's dementia" in old

18 Dementia due to Alzheimer disease according to DSM-IV (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-Fourth Edition) is a memory disorder and impairment in at least one additional cognitive domain, both of which interfere with social function or activities of daily living
people“ (Diamond, 2010, p. 323). That means that besides obvious communication wider abilities and knowledge of not one, but at least two languages on semi-same level, it has much bigger and serious medical consequences.

When designing the online questionnaire and searching for the right groups of respondents for my interview sample group, I have checked many Facebook groups that were strictly dedicated to raising children in this special way. The amount of them is huge, which can be simply interpreted that a) there is a lot of families around the world who are conscious about that kind of raising their children and it matters for them, b) that, again, internet is unlimited source of information, support and help in any area we wonder about. The mentioned groups gave me the sense that those parents have a special community and each other’s understandings in their daily struggles but also accomplishments when it comes to their children’s languages development, juggling two or more languages and cultures, because often those two aspects are tightly connected. Also, many of those groups, are there to support one another in some of the struggles they face and share. They all are sure and happy about the beneficial aspect of raising their children bilingual and bicultural. An American high school principal, quoted by Washington Post columnist, Jay Mathews\textsuperscript{19} says that “Being bilingual or trilingual enables them (the students) to compete economically and be a contributing member of the larger world community.”

One of the Mothers from my research, when asked if she wishes for her children to experience a multicultural life and raising their children in a setting similar to the one their parents experience (moving to another country, learning a new language, starting a family with a person from different then their own culture etc.) she says:

“\textit{Yes, I would wish for the little one the same experience, but I do think that Israel is unique in that matter. It is very family-friendly here and there is a very strong bond between people around you, even those you just meet on the street. In addition, living in another culture gives you a bigger perspective and sets you in a distance towards your own culture, which I think is healthy in general. Another thing is that you get love other people more easily, if you know their

\textsuperscript{19} https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/half-the-world-is-bilingual-whats-our-problem/2019/04/24/1c2b0cc2-6625-11e9-a1b6-
various cultures and behaviours, you understand that they are not worse, but just different.” (from author’s researcher data material)

This quote belongs to a Polish woman, married to an American, living together in Israel and raising together two small children. On the other hand another mother, also Polish has different experience and opinion on such life-style. Next section follows on the other point of you.

5.1.2. Challenges of raising child bilingual

Married to a Norwegian, raising two small children in Norway says she wouldn’t wish for her children such experience. Mainly due to, in her opinion, very hermetic society in Norway, which is not open enough for other’s from other countries, those that speak different language. She adds that if their children move to USA one day, she wouldn’t mind, assuming that it would be much easier for them over there then in Norway, where she is raising them. That attitude and a reflection of an immigrant mother shows that living abroad and raising children in a foreign country can be challenging and stressful.

In line with the citation above comes other parents’ comment. When asked if it is easy to keep up with a traditions and cultural events from they country of origin, while living in another one, some said it was difficult and quite challenging. Mainly the reason would lay in the accessibility to some of the need products (ingredients of some of the traditional dishes), but also the pressure of the other side of the family to celebrate holidays according to the country where it lives at the moment. Other parent mentioned how hard it is when it’s only her who represents her culture, without any additional support. At the same time, another mother, this time born in USA, but raised in Norway, married to Italian and living in Italy with her family, when asked if it “is (it) easy to cultivate a tradition from your culture in the country you live in” answers bluntly: “It requires some effort but is worth it!”

What is always crucial to notice and remember in such statements like those two presented here by two Polish mothers, is that each of them, born in Poland, comes from a different home. Both of them have been raised in a certain parenting style, here it is extra interesting since they come from the same country, yet the culture of the country they find themselves in, together with their souse’s culture (who represents a third culture, in a case of one of those two mothers here) brings not the same kind of
reactions. Various cultures, and almost unlimited combination of them, bring different and new results, both in life styles, parenthood styles, but also children’s agency and their sense of cultural identity. It is important not to generalise.

Another issue that parents face when raising their children in a country different from the one they were raised in are, like mentioned here above, parenting styles. One of the interviewed American mothers admits that her style is more strict than the one she observed in Norway, where she lives with her family. What she means is different rules when it comes to what is allowed for children and what isn’t. For example, she says: "In Norway, kids run free in restaurants, not my kids. They know they have to seat still, if they want to be out. You raise kids with expectations. If you expect them to run away they will run away." She says that kids in Norway raise themselves. Meaning that very often, she has noticed, some issue if appear with children, misbehaviour for example, is taken to their parents rather than directly solving it with the child. For this Mother it is strange that children are not taken more serious, even though the impression might be that they are since are allowed more freedom. She says "If my kids do something wrong, say it to my kids, not me."
Chapter 6. Conclusion

This work and efforts of the parents are clearly visible in my research where often the parents continuously put a strong focus on the family heritage, the languages, food and other elements that could better equip their children into the cultural identity of the country where their ancestors originally come from. Undeniably, the vast and complex influence of parents’ choices for their children, leaves no doubt in their tremendous and important part of the process of cultural identity of their children. Even when knowing that the solid identity, mature and evaluated, does not appear earlier than in the years of youth, it is family and parents that lay the first foundation for the process of identity formation. It is both a huge responsibility as much as a wonderful chance and privilege to pass on the best, almost hand-picked elements of the culture to the next generation. Since language is a strong part of individual identity, it does effect the formation of identity and changes it goes through. In line with earlier mentioned Balay (2004), language socialisation can last a lifetime. Also Kroger (2007) points out that as long as the context changes, the identity undergoes changes. Stability is a sense of one’s identity. That stability, for a child, can be found at home with the loved ones, no matter what culture(s) or language(s) it represents.

6.1 Concluding remarks

When conducting this research project, I was aiming for finding answers to the research questions I have asked. Two out of four asked questions refer to the way parents pass on to their children their cultural background and heritage, and also how the multicultural setting of the family influences the ways of doing family. From gathered material I found that for the majority of the families it is the languages and the origin background of the parents that carry a lot of the cultural meaning. As the data here presented, children are aware of the multilingual reality of their lives and often show how proud they are of that fact.

To sum up the findings on the four key research questions that were posted when creating this project, I will now present gathered information for all four of them in the following, last section of this thesis.
How do parents pass on to their children their cultural background and heritage?
Many parents have underlined the intentions that stand behind choosing to communicate with their children in their, the parents’, native language – passing on the important element of their culture. It seems like once a family becomes multicultural due to different countries of origins of the parents, the way of life reflects those two cultures. Many have mentioned that often it is not easy to keep up with cultural elements that the parents would like their children to know.

What are the most common obstacles and challenges in raising children bilingual and bicultural? Usually the reason for such difficulties would be pressure from family members to rather blend in with a local culture, social expectations to prioritise the country and the culture where the family lives at the moment (especially when one of the parents come from that country), limited accessibility to the grocery products needed to prepare traditional meals, social stigma and ethnical or racial harassment due to speaking a different language publicly, looking differently etc. When more than one culture and language become part of daily life, it can be a time of juggling elements of both of them.

Another discussed aspect through this research was: In what ways do growing up in bicultural contexts influence children’s cultural identity? As the extended gathered data showed, this special and still in some sense unique upbringing creates a solid background for cultural identity to bloom and develop. The most important element is the context in which children are experiencing their first cultural encounters. For most of them, that would be the closest family. If there exists more than one language in that close and familiar setting, and more than one culture is present, the cultural identity formation will include both of them. Socialisation process for children being raised bilingual and bicultural can come unnoticed until reaching the school age, even though it can be much more complex and not as obvious and static as a child from mono-lingual and mono-cultural family would have experienced it. Just like the young participant T. mentioned earlier, it is fun to know more than one language.

The way biculturalism influences the families’ ways of ‘doing family’ depends very much on the conscious choices of the parents, and their active contribution when it comes to choosing the elements of one or the other culture that they, as the parents, represent and want to pass on to their children. Deciding on the country where to settle
down for example, is one of the topics that seems to be much more common for people from different cultures who want to start a family, than for couples that come from and live in the same country. What is strictly connected with bicultural families is the long-distance family relationships, with for example grandparents. Traveling becomes one of the elements of “doing family”. It takes much greater effort to carry on those relationships, those that are valued. Therefore, teaching children their parents’ mother tongue, through one of the methods described in the methodology chapter, helps children contribute to the relationship with distanced family, to communicate freely and have a stronger sense of belonging to two cultures, rather than only one. As the data has shown, a part of the “doing family” practices are the negotiations when it comes to holidays that the family celebrates. It is not only dates, but also food, activities and traditions that the family have to redefine for themselves, and sometimes even create a totally new version of it. The difference between mono-cultural families and multicultural ones is that it is no longer obvious and simple.

6.2 Recommendations

The research and the findings presented here benefits the field of social studies with children. When talking about children’s agency, the context in which it is exercised is crucial for understanding why and how the young social actor engages in one action rather than the other. I believe that schools and institutions working with children and families should look closer at the process of cultural identities among young children and youth. The negotiations between the languages and cultures that a bilingual and bicultural person is able to achieve are very wide and often complicated for a person without such experience, such as hybridizing, integration, bridging, code-switching etc. There are many benefits from raising children bilingual and bicultural, for example the ability of switching from one language or culture to another, better cognitive skills, more effective problem solutions finding, general higher openness to new and different, or change per se (West et al, 2017).

At the same time, the are challenges that bicultural and bilingual children might face. These can have consequences in a wide spectrum of difficulties in the future, like depression, a feeling of not being understood and accepted, not fitting in, to mention just a few. It is therefore very important to help such families and individuals to cherish
and value all the cultures and languages one might know thanks to his or her parents and upbringing.

For future research in this area of social studies I would recommend to include more children of school age as participants. They might provide more detailed perspectives from their own point of view, which would be a good combination of data if collected also from the parents. Another group that should be better represented here, are the fathers. In this research only 12 of them have been participating. I believe it would be beneficial to learn more about men’s perspective on the topics presented here.

The bilingual and bicultural families are a global phenomenon. The international setting of families is, in today’s times, a trend that will not stop or decrease but rather grow and might become a new norm for families and people’s life in general. Globalization has affected all of the spheres of people’s lives, including families by making multicultural childhoods more acceptable by societies around the world. Children’s identity goes through a formation process that is affected in a major part by the context they are being raised in. Regardless of what the cultural or lingual background children grow up in, the most important aspect is that for them it feels natural and safe.
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Appendix 1: Guidelines for the semi-structured interview

1. Gender:
2. Age:
3. Where were you born and raised?
4. When did you first move to Norway and what was the reason for it?
5. How often do you travel to your home-country? And what is the main reason for traveling there?
6. How many languages do you speak? What are they?
7. If you speak more than one language, which one do you consider your heart-language?
8. Do you have a language rule at home? When did the children first start to learn the other language?
9. What language do the children use when talking to each other?
10. What language do the children use when speaking to you?
11. What language do you use talking to your spouse?
12. What tools do you use to help develop and teach the language to your children?
13. Are there other people talking to your children in this language? If yes, who are they and how often does it take place?
14. How well do the children know the other language?
15. Do the children sometimes mix the languages? Do you have any examples?
16. How is the culture of your home-country represented in your children’s lives?
17. Is it important for you that your children know the culture of home-country? If yes, why?
18. What does it mean to be and to have the nationality of your home-country to you?
19. What particular traditions from your home-country, holidays are important to you? Describe them and explain why?
20. How these differ from Norwegian?
21. To what extent do you, as the parents, consciously import those traditions into your family life (holidays, traditions, food, participation in cultural events, music, other)? Why do you do it?
22. What do you think, which culture, yours or your spouse’s, is better known to your children? Why do you think so?
23. Do you find it difficult to cultivate the traditions of your home-country when
living in Norway?

24. Is raising your children with more than one language and culture an advantage or disadvantage? Elaborate on your answer.

25. How is it to be a foreigner in Norway? And what are the biggest challenges to live in Norway?

26. What are the best things about living in Norway?

27. How is it to be a parent from your home-country in Norway?

28. Other comments that were not covered by the questions, but you would like to share?
Appendix 2: Consent form

CONSENT FORM

Title of Project: Shaping children’s identity in bilingual and bicultural families: Parents’ perspective.

Name of Researcher: Monika Gjøra

1. I confirm that I have been informed about the research and it’s purpose. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason.

3. I understand that data collected during this research, may be looked at by individuals from NTNU for the purpose of Master thesis examination and/or further research in that area.

4. I agree to take part in the study led by researcher Monika Gjøra.

Name of Participant __________________________ Date __________________________ Signature __________________________