

**Family language policy and practice as parental mediation of  
habitus, capital and field: an ethnographic case-study of migrant  
families in England**

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To my niece, Hristina

## **Declaration**

This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text.

The dissertation is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. I further state that no substantial part of my dissertation has already been submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text.

The dissertation does not exceed the prescribed word limit of 80, 000 words stipulated by the Degree Committee of the Faculty of Education.

## Abstract

This research aims to examine how migrant families living in England establish their family language policy and practice. It is set within a context of increased levels of transnational migration and globalisation (OECD, 2015). The number of migrant families in which parents have different language backgrounds is increasing on a European level (Lanzieri, 2012) and in London one in three families is thought to be multilingual (OECD, 2010). This has implications for research into the role of languages for education of children from migrant families. According to the Department for Education (DfE, 2017) in England, the percentage of pupils who are believed to be exposed to a language other than English at home has been steadily increasing since 2006, and in 2017, 20.6 per cent of primary school pupils and 16.2 per cent of secondary school pupils had English as an additional language. While some research has investigated how children from migrant families succeed at school by measuring their educational outcomes, there are a lack of studies which explore what is happening within migrant families themselves: how and why do some migrant families in the same context practise and maintain their heritage languages, while others do not? (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, 2016).

To examine the ways in which migrant families in England decide on their family language policy and practice, this study adopts a coherent model which integrates two theoretical frameworks, namely Pierre Bourdieu's (1977b) theory of social practice with its concepts of habitus, field and capital, and Family Language Policy (FLP). The aim of bringing together the two theoretical frameworks is to examine how family language policy and practice is mediated by the families' subjective experience and the conditions in the objective social context of which they are a part.

This study employs ethnographic methods of inquiry including interviews, participant observations and family self-audio recordings to allow for an in-depth exploration of the ways in which five migrant families in England set up their family language policy and practice. The mothers in the families are all Macedonian and the fathers are either English, Italian, Chinese, Scottish or Serbian. Ethnographic interviews were conducted with the parents in five migrant families, their children, grandparents and relatives, the parents' and the children' close social network of friends, the children's mainstream school teachers and members of the Macedonian

community in London. The analysis of each family case focuses on the family language policy and practice and the parents' language ideologies and aspirations that underpin them. The study also analyses the ways in which the national language education policy context in England and the local educational practice of health visitors and teachers structure the family language policy and practice.

The findings suggest that the family language policy and practice in migrant families is established based on the ways in which the parents mediate their past experiences including their family upbringing, education and employment as migrants in England (*habitus*) and the cultural, linguistic, social and economic resources they are able or unable to draw on (*capital*) within the context of national and local language education policies and practices in England (*field*). The findings also suggest that while the family has been traditionally conceptualised as an independent social space capable of resisting external pressures for intergenerational transmission of heritage languages (Fishman, 1991), families are open to socio-political processes (Canagarajah, 2008) and are becoming less empowered to practise and maintain their heritage languages. The implications of the study point to the need for collaboration between families, schools and language education policy to reconceptualise the role of heritage languages in education.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

APPG: All Party Parliamentary Group

ATEPO: Association for Teachers of English to Pupils from Overseas

CRE: Commission for Racial Equality

DCSF: Department for Children, Schools and Families (UK Government Department from 2007 to 2010)

DfE: Department for Education (UK Government Department from 2010 to 2017)

DfEE: (UK Government Department from 1995 to 2001)

DfES: Department for Education and Skills (UK Government Department from 2001 to 2007)

DES: Department for Education and Science (UK Government Department from 1964 to 1992)

EAL: English as an Additional Language

EMAG: Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant

EYFS: Early Years Foundation Stage

FLP: Family Language Policy

HMSO: Her Majesty's Stationery Office

HL(s): Heritage Language(s)

HL FLP: Heritage Language Family Language Policy and Practice

LEAs: Local Educational Authorities

NALDIC: National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum

NCC: National Curriculum Council

OFSTED: Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills

QCA: Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

## Transcription conventions

(...) - several lines were omitted

**Words in bold** - stressed word(s)

*Italics* - words were originally pronounced in English

(Words in brackets) - contextual information

... - unfinished sentence/utterance



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# **PART I**

## **INTRODUCTION, CONTEXT, THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

With globalisation and movement of people across transnational borders in the twenty-first century societies become characterised with linguistic superdiversity (Vertovec, 2007; Blommaert, 2011) and the number of migrant families in which parents have different linguistic backgrounds has been increasing on a European level (Lanzieri, 2012). This raises the question about the use of minority, heritage languages (henceforth (HLs) and dominant, national languages in such families and its relationship with national language education policy contexts and school practices (Curdt-Christiansen, 2016). Whilst recent research in England has mainly focused on issues surrounding the language development and educational achievement of children from migrant families in formal settings such as mainstream schools and classrooms (Strand and Demie, 2005, 2006; Meunier et al., 2013; Arnot et al., 2014; Evans et al., 2016) there are a lack of studies that explore what is happening within migrant families themselves, how and why do some migrant families in the same context practise their HLs with their children, while others do not? (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, 2016). This study aims to address this gap by investigating the family language policy and practice (henceforth FLP) in migrant families living in England.

The migrant family has been traditionally conceptualised as the most important domain for the transmission and maintenance of HLs (Spolsky, 2012) and its ability to resist external social pressures (Fishman, 1991). However, recent research has called into question the ability of migrant families to maintain their HLs as a result of pressure from macro-level factors such as dominant monolingual discourses (Canagarajah, 2008). Indeed, the literature often documents that there exists a socially constructed linguistic hierarchy between HLs and national languages in education and in the wider society with emphasis on the national language of the host country as the only legitimate language for migrant families and their children's educational achievement and social success (Blackledge, 2001, 2006; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Martin-Jones, 2007; Baker, 2011; Weber & Horner, 2012; Karrebæk, 2013). Although in England there has been official celebration and valuation of linguistic diversity with reports that one in three families in London is multilingual (OECD, 2010) and that 20.6 per cent of primary school pupils and 16.2 per cent of secondary school pupils have English as an additional language (DfE, 2017), the national language education policy context and school

practice remain largely underpinned by monolingualism (Blackledge, 2005; 2006; Costley, 2014). This in turn has implications for the conceptualisation of the role of HLs and English for promotion and maintenance of multilingualism as a worthwhile aim in migrant families, in education and in the wider society in England regarding the advantages of multilingualism for the individual as well as for society (Baker, 2011). Therefore, it seems necessary to examine how these macro-level factors such as dominant discourses within national language education policy contexts are mediated by parents in migrant families and the ways in which it shapes their FLP. This study aims to examine how the language education policy context in England influences migrant families' FLP which is intended to draw implications for language education policy and practice in England.

In addition, the FLP of migrant families is reportedly related to micro-level factors such as migrant parents' lived experience with migration, language learning, their perceptions of the social value of their HLs and the national language of the host country, the family's socio-economic status and children's agency (Li Wei, 1994; De Houwer, 1999; King and Fogle, 2006; Canagarajah, 2008; Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, 2016; Gafaranga, 2010; Pérez-Báez, 2013; Revis, 2016). Examining the ways in which parents in migrant families mediate these micro-level factors seems a necessary step to gain better understanding into the ways they shape migrant families' FLP and this study aims to examine this.

There are several gaps in the FLP literature that this study aims to address. Firstly, traditional FLP research has mainly focused on bilingual, middle class families in Western contexts (King & Fogle, 2006). However, due to processes of globalisation and transnational migration more studies that include broader range of family types such as migrant families (Canagarajah, 2008) are needed to reflect issues of linguistic super-diversity and migrant families' ability to exercise their agency and practise their HLs (King, 2016). In addition, past FLP research has focused more on the language outcomes for the children of migrant families rather than the actual experiences of family members (King, 2016; Zhu Hua & Li Wei, 2016). With regard to these trends in past FLP research, new research which focuses on issues surrounding migration, linguistic diversity and parents' lived experience seems a welcome change with the possibility to shed new insights into the field of FLP. In relation to the issues raised above, the current study includes parents with different language backgrounds with the aim to investigate how potentially multilingual migrant families negotiate their everyday experiences in order to decide on a particular FLP.



Secondly, while recent research has investigated migrant families' FLP from different perspectives including language policy, language socialisation, literacy studies and child language acquisition (De Houwer, 1999; Lanza, 2004, 2007; Fogle, 2012; Ren & Hu, 2013; Patrick, Budach & Muckpaloo, 2013; Smith-Christmas, 2014), few studies have examined migrant families' FLP from a sociological perspective. As Schwartz (2010) argues, the field of FLP needs to develop further by bringing together for example, linguistics, sociology and education. A sociological study which combines education and sociology in the field of FLP seems promising to extend the boundaries of existing FLP research and to reveal novel insights into the ways in which the power relationship between HLs and national languages in educational systems and societies is mediated by migrant families and the ways in which it structures their FLP. Therefore, this is a sociological study which focuses on issues of language. It aims to examine migrant families' FLP from a sociological perspective which will have theoretical implications for the field of FLP with focus on agency and structure in order to explain migrant families' FLP.

Thirdly, research on migrants in England has mainly focused on the language learning experience of 'old' immigrant groups who have settled in England earlier, including Indian, Bangladeshi or Chinese (see for example, Blackledge, 2001; Raschka, Li and Lee, 2002; Rampton, 2005; Kenner, Gregory, Ruby & Al-Azami, 2008). Yet, although the majority of relatively 'new' migrations to England are from Eastern Europe (Sumption & Somerville, 2010), families with an Eastern European migrant background have rarely received attention in empirical research. Moreover, countries which are yet to become European member states (most of them in South East Europe) have rarely been included in empirical research. This is the case for Macedonia, an EU member state candidate (see EU Commission, 2016). Macedonian immigrants have not been included in empirical research in England despite accounting for 1.9 per cent of the immigrant population in the UK between 2004 and 2006 together with other Former Yugoslavian member states (Vertovec, 2007). It is hoped that the inclusion of migrant parents with a Macedonian background in this study can help broaden the linguistic diversity profile of migrant families and provide new insights into migrant families' FLP.

This dissertation addresses the issues raised above by exploring the FLP of migrant families living in England and the ways in which their FLP is shaped depending on the parents'

mediation of objective dominant discourses in education and the wider society, and the parents' subjective experience and their resources. To that end, this sociological study focuses on issues on language with the aim to reveal how the interplay of macro- and micro-level factors shapes migrant families' FLP.

The study includes migrant families in which the parents have different linguistic backgrounds (including Macedonian-English, Macedonian-Italian, Macedonian-Chinese, Macedonian-Serbian and Macedonian-Scottish) with the aim to reveal the extent of the linguistic super-diversity in the modern English society. It adopts an interpretive approach to examine the parents' lived experience and their resources within the dominant discourse of the social context of which they are a part to reveal the different ways in which dominant discourses and parents' experience and resources are mediated by the parents themselves. It is hoped that a micro, interpretive approach can offer in-depth understanding of the way macro- and micro-level factors play out in the migrant family which ultimately shapes their FLP.

The term 'heritage languages' in this study is used to refer to languages other than the dominant, English language in England. This term was considered to be more appropriate than other terms such as 'home languages' or 'community languages'. Firstly, 'heritage language' was considered more appropriate to 'home languages' because the majority of the focal families in this study rarely used other languages than English in their homes. As the term 'home languages' implies that these are spoken mainly in the home, it seemed inadequate to adopt the term 'home languages'. Secondly, the term 'community languages' also seemed inadequate because there was no single community that the families belonged to as a result of the parents' different linguistic backgrounds. Therefore, the term 'heritage languages' was used in this study with the aim to refer to the linguistic and cultural heritage of the families in general. While some criticisms of the term 'heritage languages' suggest that it may highlight the past rather than the present (see for example Baker and Jones, 1998), the term 'heritage languages' in this study is used in a positive connotation, to refer to the rich linguistic and cultural resources of the families.

This dissertation is divided into two parts. Part I examines the theoretical and methodological underpinning of this study. After the introduction in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 reviews the national language education policy context in England of which the migrant families in this study are a part. It reviews the literature on migration in England and the UK since the 1950s to the present

and the main approaches to language provision for children from migrant families. It raises issues about how the approaches in the national language education policy context in England might affect migrant families' FLP. Chapter 3 reviews the relevant literature in the field of Family Language Policy (FLP) and the theoretical framework of Pierre Bourdieu's theory of social practice with his three key conceptual tools: habitus, capital and field. After the review of the relevant literature, Chapter 3 presents the conceptual framework for the study and the research questions. Chapter 4 examines the methodology and research design of this study.

Part II examines the findings in this study. Chapter 5 introduces the five focal migrant families in this research by presenting their family language policy and practice and the parental aspirations that underpin their FLP. Chapter 6 examines the parents' past experience and the ways in which it shaped their expectations of the value of their HLs and English (habitus) which ultimately structured their FLP. Chapter 7 analyses the ways in which the migrant families' availability or lack of multiple material and non-material resources (capital) shaped the parents' valuation of their HLs and English which affected their FLP. Next, Chapter 8 examines the ways in which the parents' understanding of other people's expectations in terms of language use in different places (field) influenced their FLP. Chapter 9 provides a discussion of the issues raised in the finding chapters across the five cases. Finally, Chapter 10 provides the conclusion of this dissertation with substantive methodological and theoretical contributions as well as implications for future policy and practice.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Migration and language education policy context in England**

#### 2.1 Introduction

This Chapter examines the background context to this study including a historical overview of policy responses to migration from the 1950s to the present and language education policy regarding language provision for children from migrant families in England with the aim to situate the migrant families in the specific socio-historical and socio-political context against which their FLP will be discussed in the subsequent finding Chapters of this study. In particular, situating the migrant families in this study in the social and political context in England is pivotal as the subsequent finding chapters aim to investigate the ways in which the parents' experience as migrants (Chapter 6) and parents' understanding of expectations in terms of language use in different places (Chapter 8) impacts their FLP.

Section 2.2 examines the migrant context in England with a historical review of policy responses to immigration flows to England from the 1950s to the present raising issues about what effects such policy responses to migration flows may have on migrant families' FLP. It also provides background information about emigration from Macedonia due to the majority of migrant parents with a Macedonian background in this study. Next, section 2.3 reviews the national language education policy in England including three main approaches to the education of migrant children: assimilation, withdrawal and mainstreaming. In the light of such approaches to education of migrant children the section raises issues about how such approaches may influence migrant families' FLP. Finally, section 2.4 concludes the Chapter with a discussion of the implications of the migration and language education policy contexts for migrant families' FLP.

#### 2.2 Historical overview of immigration and policy responses in England

As this study is concerned with migrant families' FLP it is useful to review policy responses to migration flows in England and the ways such policies may have an effect on migrant families' decision to adopt a particular FLP. England has had a long history of receiving migrants with migration levels increasing over the past years and migration policy responses

focusing mainly on migrants' integration into the mainstream (Somerville, Sriskandarajah & Latorre, 2009). Integration of migrants into the mainstream is very often promoted by their quick acquisition of English language skills based on the idea that 'a shared language is fundamental to integrated societies' (Cassey, 2016, p. 169). For example, a recent report on the social integration of immigrants by the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG, 2017) argues that speaking English should be made compulsory for all immigrants before or soon after they enter England stating that speaking English is 'the key to full participation in British society.' (ibid, p. 65). This in turn may have an important effect on migrant families' FLP urging them to focus on English rather than their HLs.

Indeed, a historical overview of policy responses to migration from the 1950s to the present based on a study by Somerville et al. (2009) illustrates that migration policies which are focused on integration of migrants may act as an incentive for migrant families to have an English FLP rather than an HL FLP. Immigration to England started in the late 1940s with postcolonial migration from West Indies and South Asia. The British Nationality Act of 1948 gave the right to Commonwealth citizens to settle down in Britain. However, a new migration policy emerged following immigration flows of workers from Commonwealth countries. The immigration policy during the 1950s and 1960s shifted to a model which was based on limitation and integration and 'zero net immigration' laws were enacted in 1962, 1968 and 1971 (Somerville et al., 2009). Limitation was based on strong control procedures and distinction between people born in the UK and people from former British colonies. Integration took the form of anti-discrimination laws and race relations acts which were passed in 1965, 1968 and 1967. In the period from 1979 to 1997, known as the conservative era, the immigration policy continued to be based on stronger emphasis on limitation and restriction. In this period migrations came mostly from asylum seekers as a result of the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the break up of the Soviet Union as well as the conflicts in the Former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s. There was redefining of the terms of citizenship of the British Nationality Act of 1981- for instance, it ended the automatic right of citizenship to all those born on British soil. There was new, more restrictive, legislation around asylum seekers and refugees with asylum and immigration acts in 1993, 1996 and 1999. Immigration policy since 1997 when the Labour party came to power shifted course to 'selective openness' to immigration with a commitment on economic migration on the one hand and tough security and control on the other hand. In 2002 a new legislative was introduced for a more open policy to economic migration and anti-discrimination measures with emphasis on integration,

community cohesion and equality. Recent immigration flows to England from within the EU and from overseas have increased leading to a great diversity of migrants. The immigrant population in Britain has increased from about 3.8 million in 1993 to over 8.7 million in 2015 (The Migration Observatory, 2017). As a result, the immigration policy in England has focused on a Points-Based System for immigration which is led by the Conservative government and is more focused on the control of immigration (Somerville et al., 2009; Kaushik, 2015). Presently, immigration in England is seen as a political ‘problem’ rather than as an opportunity (Blinder, 2015). The recent developments on the political scene and England’s recent decision to leave the EU have been associated with concerns of increased levels of migration and rise of negative discourse in public media and politics towards migration and migrants (The Migration Observatory, 2016; Walker, 2016; Moore and Ramsay, 2017). It is possible to suggest that the above policy responses to migration in England may have some effect on migrant families’ FLP by encouraging them to prioritise English rather than their HLs as a result of the view that English proficiency is ‘the passport to being economically and socially active in Britain’ (Bright Blue, 2016).

The majority of the mothers in the migrant families in this study have a Macedonian background and it is therefore important to provide background information about Macedonian immigrants in England and Macedonia’s emigration history. Macedonian immigrants came to England after the break up of Yugoslavia and more recently with the admission of Macedonia’s neighbouring countries in the EU. Macedonia, a landlocked country in the Balkan peninsula in Southeast Europe with population of two million citizens living in the country and half a million Macedonians living abroad (National Statistics Biro, 2017), has a long history of emigration mainly due to economic reasons (Rossos, 2008). Macedonia used to be a member state of the Former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Macedonian emigrants called ‘печалбари’ (‘pechalbari’) started emigrating worldwide after the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the 1960s and 1970s allowed emigrations to Western countries (Nasevski, Angelova & Gerovska, 1995). After the breakup of Yugoslavia and the wars in the 1990s many Macedonians emigrated to the UK, most of them in England. The 2011 UK Census recorded just under 3,000 Macedonians in England, but according to estimations of the present day Macedonian community and Embassy in England the number of Macedonians living in the UK is between 13,000 and 15,000. The Macedonian language (македонски јазик) is in the Eastern European group of South Slavic languages, its alphabet uses a Cyrillic script and it is between Bulgarian and Serbian on a continuum of closeness to

other Slavic languages. The Macedonian immigrants are scattered throughout England but most of them live in large cities such as London. There is a Macedonian Orthodox Church in London, which organises lessons for learning Macedonian in Macedonian community language schools in London, Littlehampton and in Oxford. Organisations like the Association of Macedonians in the UK organise social events for Macedonians living in England.

### 2.3 The language education policy in England

This section examines the national language education policy context in England by reviewing the historical approaches to language provision for children from migrant families since the 1950s to the present. The aim of the historical review of the language education policy responses for language provision for migrant children in education in England is to situate the families in the specific educational context. The educational policy context will serve as the background in Chapter 8 for analysis of the ways in which national language education policy is mediated on a local level by school teachers and health visitors which in turn have the potential to influence the FLP of migrant families.

Historically, in England children from migrant families have been conceptualised and represented in educational policy in different ways. Indeed, social policy and social concerns have shaped provision and language practice in mainstream schools for children from migrant families in different ways. In the sections below I discuss patterns of policy response to education of children from migrant families and the implications of such policy for classroom practice and provision for children from migrant families in state-funded schools in England from the 1950s to the present. I provide a historical account of provision in relation to education of children from migrant families drawing on policy documents, government reports, official educational policy statements and academic research. The discussion revolves around the premise that an important characteristic of education is the dynamics and tensions that exist between policy and practice (Costley, 2014) and that ideas, values and objectives set in national language policies are mediated in local educational contexts differently. Costley's (2014) division of language provision for migrant children into three broad trajectories of 1) assimilation 2) withdrawal and 3) mainstreaming is considered to be relevant for the present study. I discuss each phase in detail in the sections below.

#### *2.3.1 Children from migrant families and assimilation*

Initial approaches to language provision for children from migrant families in England were characterised with the idea of their assimilation into a monolingual mainstream culture by focusing on the development of children's English language skills. Although officially language education policy has moved away from assimilationist approaches, essentially it still continues to shape approaches to language provision for migrant children today albeit in implicit ways (Costley, 2014). Such implicit expectations of monolingualism expressed by a focus on English-only in language education policy may have serious influence on migrant families' FLP by encouraging them to have an English FLP rather than an HL FLP.

The beginnings of assimilationist approaches to language provision for children from migrant families began in 1950s. The 1950s in England was a period in which the migrant population started to increase significantly with migrants coming from commonwealth countries and former British colonies. Prior to that, English classrooms and society were considered to be generally monolingual and monocultural (Edwards, 1894). In these initial stages of migration in England, the response of the education system at both policy and practice level was slow in identifying the needs of children from migrant families mainly because the expectation was that migrant families were in England for a limited time only and that they were not going to stay permanently (Stubbs, 1985; Levine 1996). At these early stages of increased numbers of migrant families in England the education system considered that changes in educational practice and pedagogy were unnecessary mainly because the general expectation was that migrant children would 'pick up' English by socialising with their peers in the playground (Edwards, 1984). Hence migrant children at this time were expected to fit into the mainstream school with practice and policy changing very little.

However, it soon became apparent that immigration levels were increasing and migrant families were becoming permanent British residents and citizens and the expectation that the situation with education of children from migrant families was of a temporary nature was not realistic any longer. This recognition however, did not bring about any immediate changes in attitudes and policies. The general expectation was that if migrant families and their children were to succeed they needed to assimilate into the English culture and way of life, 'to become like us' (Levine, 1996, p. 12). The popular belief in educational policy and practice at this time was that short term interventions would be a possible way to fix the situation and get things back to normal (Levine, 1996). The basis for such belief was the assumption that for migrant



children to succeed in education and society in general they needed to resemble their white, monolingual peers with the aim of ‘assimilating them to the culture of their contemporaries’ (DES, 1985, p. 3). At this time migrant children were seen as being the same as their English speaking peers with the belief they would be best accommodated in the classroom if they were treated as ‘just another child’ (Derrick, 1977, p. 3). At this period of ‘assimilation’ the responses and provision for migrant children were varied. The type of provision depended on the numbers of migrant children, the expertise of teachers, resources and facilities. It was up to individual Local Educational Authorities (LEAs) to identify issues and respond (Hawkes, 1966; Society of Friends, 1966; DES, 1971). However, this somewhat ‘ad hoc approach’ (Costley, 2014) was becoming more problematic and teachers began to call for a more planned approach to work successfully with migrant children. Also in the political discourse of 1960s there were increased concerns about the levels of linguistic diversity with fear that schools were becoming largely immigrant and that it would have negative effects on the attainment of English-speaking pupils (Edwards, 1984; Stubbs, 1985; Leung and Franson, 2001).

From the mid 1960s approaches in educational policy were marked with the recognition that the education system needed to take measures to recognise the needs of migrant children in schools and society in general. Significant documents that marked the start of government action and involvement in advice of policy in teaching migrant children include Circular 7/65 (DES, 1965) and the publication of the government’s paper on ‘English for the children of immigrants’ (Schools Council, 1966). A significant strategy concerning advice on provision for migrant children coming from Circular 7/65 (DES, 1965) was the limitation of a school’s intake of migrant children to approximately 30 per cent of the overall pupil population which was a practical response to ease demands on schools. This was met with different responses in individual LEAs and schools: while it worked in some schools it drew heavily on vital resources in other schools; yet, more importantly it required many pupils to travel inappropriate distances to get to school and this was problematic in many ways not least in terms of race relations and equality (Edwards, 1984; Leung and Franson, 2001). The emphasis in education policy at this time was on acquisition of English. Although open in specifying pedagogy and curriculum content the document ‘English for the children of immigrants (Schools Council, 1967) combined with Circular 7/65 and the Plowden report (1967) suggested that specialist and separate language provision for migrant children was needed to ensure their success. This response was as a result of concerns about the impact of large numbers of migrant children and addressing concerns of a more focused and targeted provision. The document entitled ‘English

for the children of immigrants' (Schools Council, 1966) advocated the idea of bringing together migrant children to be taught English 'in one school for English classes' (Edwards, 1984, p. 51). While from a present-day perspective such policy moves are seen as naïve, it is important to mention that at this time some positive initiatives at local level were beginning to take place in terms of training and pedagogy which came largely as a result of the work of schools, professional bodies and universities rather than the central government (Costley, 2014). Tomlinson (2008) shows how Her Majesty's Inspectorate in the 1960s was beginning to outline the needs for teaching migrant children and the work of the school councils and universities in Leeds and Birmingham for the development of teaching materials. In the 1960s the association for teachers of English to pupils from overseas (ATEPO) was formed which began to lobby for the need for teacher training and to raise awareness of the learning needs of migrant children (Tomlinson, 2008). Howatt and Widdowson (2004) also argue that the 1960s was a period in which there was development of English language teaching and accreditation of language teaching programmes and qualifications.

Overall in this period there was emphasis on the idea that something had to be done to support children from migrant families. The general idea in education policy was that separate or special provision was the answer to linguistic diversity and withdrawal of migrant children from mainstream classes seemed to be a natural response. I discuss this in more detail in the following section.

### *2.3.2 Children from migrant families and withdrawal*

Another different provision for children from migrant families has been their withdrawal from their regular lessons in schools in order to be taught English. Although after the educational policy of assimilation in the 1960s the period that followed in the 1970s was marked by a general recognition of diversity, there was a failure to develop a curriculum which implemented linguistic diversity in the classroom with recognition of migrant children's HLs as valuable learning resources. Arguably such failure to develop a curriculum for a multilingual population which continues to the present may have a detrimental effect on migrant families' ability to set up an HL FLP due to their inability to see the educational and social value of their HLs.

Indeed, as I discussed in the section above, there had been moves on behalf of the government to recognise and provide for the learning needs of migrant children; however, such policy

responses lacked clear strategies about what needed to be done in pedagogy and practice to address such needs. For example, in 1975 the Government published the Bullock report (DES, 1975) which was seen as ‘far sighted’ (Conteh et al., 2008, p. 223) because it recognised the specific learning needs of migrant children and it recognised the value of practicing HLs not just in the home domain and for the benefit of the individual but also ‘to society as a whole’ (DES, 1975, p. 294). In the Bullock report HLs were described as an asset listing the school as one of the responsible agencies in maintaining and developing migrant families’ HLs. Yet, the weakness of the Bullock report was that while it supported the value of HLs outside the family and the potential for including them in mainstream schools, such a positive conceptualisation lacked clear strategies. It seemed to suggest that linguistic diversity served a role to increase awareness of the existence of other languages: ‘a sensitivity and openness to language in all its forms.’ (DES, 1975, p. 294).

Instead, the government focused on providing ‘special education’ for migrant children and it recommended removing migrant children from mainstream classes in order to reduce their numbers in classes and schools and provide for their learning needs of English in separate classes (Derrick, 1977). As Costley (2014) suggests, this approach of ‘organisation’ as opposed to ‘content’ is something that characterises the approach of government policy in relation to the teaching of children from migrant families both historically and today. Three general forms of provision existed:

- 1) Total withdrawal: migrant children were taught in separate school facilities away from other pupils of the mainstream class pupils would attend these classes for a set amount of time or until it was considered that they had attained a sufficient amount of English to be able to participate in the mainstream classroom.
- 2) Partial withdrawal: children continued going to mainstream schools with extra language support being provided at lunchtime or after school.
- 3) Non-withdrawal: migrant children continued to go to regular mainstream schools with the idea that they would pick up English naturally and no extra provisions were made because it was considered that natural acquisition was the most effective means of learning (adapted from Townsend, 1971 as cited in Leung and Franson, 2001, p. 154).

Set within a policy context concerned with the teaching of English to migrant children as quickly as possible, at this time the most effective means of doing it was considered to be

withdrawal classes. It was thought that withdrawal would speed up the process for migrant children to acquire English which would allow them to participate fully in school and society more generally. Also withdrawal was expected to solve the 'problems' posed by the increase of migrant children in classrooms as the classrooms would go back to normal (Costley, 2014). Daily language provision and practice in the mid to late 1960s and early 1970s was dependent on the local context and as a result of that practice and provision varied from one school to another (Derrick, 1977; Edwards, 1984; Levine, 1996; Leung and Franson, 2001).

During the late 1970s and early 1980s there were wider social issues outside educational contexts. Demonstrations and violent clashes were taking place across England which stemmed from claims of racism and inequality in workplaces and in society (Conteh, 2012). The Government had to respond to criticisms, tensions and concerns in education in relation to ethnicity, language and education (Costley, 2014). At this time the Government published the Swann report entitled 'Education for all' (DES, 1985). It was seen as the most significant document in moving away from withdrawal as a practical response to teaching migrant children and shaping future policy in relation to organisation and curriculum in mainstream, state funded schools across England. The Swann report found that withdrawal of migrant children from mainstream classrooms was an example of institutional racism and recommended that migrant children should be included in mainstream schools. This was later supported by the publication of The Report of a Formal Investigation in Calderdale Local Educational Authority (Commission for Racial Equality (henceforth CRE), 1986). The CRE report declared that the language centres were indeed an example of institutional racism with unequal educational provision and that migrant children had the right to learn in mainstream classrooms. At this period the emphasis in educational policy started to be on 'integration' of migrant children in the education system and in society in general. Such an important shift in approach and move from segregation to inclusion of migrant children was actively promoted by influential practitioners such as Josie Levine who argued that it was necessary to dismiss assumptions that the HLs negatively interfere with successful learning of English (Levine, 1990). A major outcome of the Swann and CRE reports was to relocate all migrant children to the mainstream classroom. Both reports highlighted the inadequate approach of withdrawal related to issues such as equal opportunities and anti-racism in educational institutions (Leung and Franson, 2001). As a result, in the mid 1980s there were far less migrant children receiving separate English lessons which marked the end of a specific historical phase in the educational provision for children from migrant families (Costley, 2014).

### *2.3.3 Children from migrant families and mainstreaming*

In this section I discuss ‘mainstreaming’, the current approach of the national language education policy in England which foregrounds English as the only language for educational achievement of all children, irrespective of their language background (Costley, 2014). The overall argument I wish to present in this section is that the policy of mainstreaming is mediated on a local level by schools differently depending of their resources but also by teachers and health visitors depending on their background, knowledge and personal experience. This in turn may shape migrant families’ FLP differently depending on the advice and support that teachers and health visitors give to parents. Also, the ‘mainstreaming’ approach in language education policy may influence migrant families’ FLP by defining what is expected of parents and children in terms of language use in schools and in communities. These issues are highlighted here because in Chapter 8 this study provides empirical evidence of how teachers’ and health visitors’ advice and support shape migrant families’ FLP and how parents’ and children’s understanding of expectations in terms of language use in schools and in communities shape migrant families’ FLP.

The sections below discuss four critical themes regarding the policy of mainstreaming: 1) beginnings of mainstreaming; 2) teachers’ and health visitors’ professional practice and parents’ responsibilities within mainstreaming; 3) the role of Standard English and HLs in mainstreaming; and 4) underachievement of children from migrant families and mainstreaming.

#### *Beginnings and underpinnings of mainstreaming*

The policy of mainstreaming was a result of the recommendations in the Swann report (DES, 1985). The report had an important impact on the language provision for children from migrant families with its emphasis on providing language education for all pupils across all subjects. In effect, this had implications for pedagogy in that linguistic development was important for all children not just for children from migrant families. The report advocated that there was a need for ‘a comprehensive programme of language education for all children’ (DES, 1985, p. 426). Hence the policy of mainstreaming highlighted the commonality of learning needs for all children and its aim was to challenge and change views of racism and inequality by providing

for all pupils in a consistent way. As Costley (2014) suggests, this was a very significant shift in approaching the learning needs of children from migrant families and it continues to shape provision today.

The idea of mainstreaming all pupils evident in the Swann and CRE reports was further supported by two subsequent policy documents. The Education Act of 1988 (HMSO 1988) marked the end of autonomy of Local Educational Authorities (LEAs) in developing curricula independently. The publication 'English for all ages 5-16' (DES 1989) was the first National Curriculum to be used in all state funded schools in England. These developments signaled the centralisation of development of curricula and examination criteria with the central government taking the main role of 'responsibility' and 'ownership' of these essential aspects of instruction (Costley, 2014, p. 284).

A central premise of the mainstreaming policy at this time which continues to the present, is that all pupils experience the same process and curriculum irrespective of their language background, ethnicity, gender, ability, social background or religion (DfEE and QCA 1999). While linguistic diversity was previously seen as a threat to the stability of educational settings and standards, under the policy of mainstreaming, linguistic diversity was seen as a means to enrich classrooms and as a positive feature that would promote sociocultural understanding within schools and more widely in society. Although the Swann report (DES 1985) clearly stated that there was a close relationship between HLs and identity, it strongly dismissed the idea of including HLs in mainstream schools with a justification that 'it serves to establish and confirm social divisions' and that it leaves migrant children's education 'impoverished and monolingual' (ibid, p. 407). Standard English was and it still is, the official language for schooling of all children. Indeed, the National Curriculum in England is an entitlement to all pupils and language background is not considered to be a barrier to this entitlement (Costley, 2014). Brumfit (1995) suggests that the government did not intend to move towards a language policy with the legislation of the National Curriculum but that 'there is undoubtedly an implicit language policy in it' (ibid, p. 16). The curriculum, learning objectives and assessment criteria are the same for all pupils. Indeed, pupils with English as a mother tongue and pupils with English as an additional language are de facto seen as identical (Costley, 2014). The explicit teaching of migrant children has therefore no recognised status as a subject in curriculum documents (Leung, 2001).

*The professional practice of teachers and health visitors, and parents' responsibilities within the policy of mainstreaming*

This section discusses how expectations from teachers, health visitors and parents within the policy of mainstreaming may shape migrant families' FLP. This is because the FLP of migrant families in England is arguably related to the professional practice of teachers and health visitors who interpret language (education) policies differently and have different linguistic background and knowledge about children's multilingual language development. Health visitors and teachers are in contact with parents from migrant families and often provide advice including their children's overall language development and the development of their English language skills. Also, parents may have tacit understanding of teachers' and health visitors' expectations in terms of language use in schools and in communities. Hence, advice from teachers and health visitors and parents' tacit understanding of expectations in terms of language use may influence migrant families' FLP<sup>1</sup>.

The policy of mainstreaming positions all teachers as language teachers which has implications for teacher training and professional development. As discussed earlier, policy has often been slow in responding to the teaching of migrant children and in the early years of teaching migrant children little explicit attention was given to pedagogy and practice at the level of policy, guidance and teacher training (Leung, 2001; Leung and Franson, 2001; Costley and Leung, 2009). For instance, the Swann report acknowledged that mainstream teachers showed 'a remarkable lack of knowledge' (ibid, p. 409) about the language learning activities of children from migrant families. Yet, at the same time the policy legislators in the Swann report encouraged teachers to promote awareness of linguistic diversity in schools (DES, 1985, p. 426) without outlining any clear plans for appropriate teacher specialisation nor any substantial in - service teacher training to provide mainstream school teachers with adequate training how to support the learning of children from migrant families.

Indeed, according to the government the focus of teachers' professional practice should be teaching English thus giving English the highest priority for integration of children from migrant families. An example of this is when the Government commissioned revision of the English curriculum (NCC, 1992) and it was published in 1993 (NCC, 1993). The revision

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<sup>1</sup> This is discussed in detail in Chapter 8.

stated that greater emphasis should be given to the teaching of Standard English, developing phonics skills and definition of key skills in the acquisition of vocabulary, spelling, grammar and punctuation (NCC, 1993). For many schools and practitioners, the National Curriculum ran counter to the professional practice they had built up over the years of teaching children from migrant families and the space that had been present for LEAs to develop and organise their own responses was closed down under the policy of mainstreaming (Leung and Franson, 2001).

The relationship between the government's support for teaching Standard English and teacher training continued over time and reached its peak in the implementation of the 1997 National Literacy Strategy (NLS) - nowadays known as the National Strategy. In the NLS Framework (DfES, 1997) literacy in Standard English is considered to be the main way for educational achievement of all learners in education and society and as a result it is prescriptive in terms of policy to ensure effective teaching (Stannard and Huxford, 2007). Throughout the NLS Framework (DfES, 1997) it is continually stressed that teachers have an essential role in developing the English language skills of all children.

At the present time, the Teacher Standards (DfE, 2013) requires teachers to have understanding of the needs of all pupils including those with English as an additional language. While this is progress in terms of the teaching of English as an Additional Language (EAL) being a training requirement it does not guarantee 'appropriate training provision' (Cajkler & Hall, 2012, p. 166). Indeed, research evidence suggests that teacher training in relation to EAL teaching is locally determined with some teachers experiencing excellence and others less so (Wallen & Kelly Holmes, 2006; Murakami, 2008). Possible explanations for this are, as Costley (2014) suggests, firstly, teaching migrant children does not exist as a subject, and as a result, there is no 'official' curriculum content for teachers to be trained in, and secondly, the primary concern in educational policy throughout the period of mainstreaming is the teaching of Standard English and not teaching English as an Additional language (EAL). From this perspective it appears that while teacher training and practice models have offered teachers awareness of linguistic diversity, they have not offered teachers with models for differentiating the language trajectories of migrant children. This in turn indicates that teachers' perceptions and practices regarding the teaching of children from migrant families vary, as well as the advice they give to migrant families about the role of English and HLs for educational achievement. This in turn may have different effects on migrant families' FLP depending on how teachers



understand and support multilingualism as a worthwhile aim for migrant families and their children.

Another factor which may have an effect on migrant families' FLP is that apart from teachers, the policy of mainstreaming considers parents from migrant families and health visitors to be responsible for the development of children's English language skills as a means for their educational achievement and proper language development. For example, the NLS framework (DfES, 1997) contains a rather short section on the language development of bilingual children in which it states that there are different groups of bilingual learners and that it takes time for them to learn English but that they are expected to reach the set level. The framework provides a special section on parents' responsibilities regarding support for English literacy advising them to play a 'full part in' to supporting their children's English literacy skills at home. The assistance of parents is considered to be crucial: 'home - school collaborations are likely to be of particular benefit' (DfES, 1997, p.34) urging parents 'to spend 20 minutes or so each day either reading to children or hearing them read' (DfES, 1997, p. 9). In a similar vein, health visitors are expected to advise parents to develop their children's English language skills at home: 'getting advice to parents via the health visitor network and doctors' surgeries' (ibid). It appears that the policy of mainstreaming is underpinned by the fundamental belief that teachers, health visitors and parents have a major role in developing children's English language skills and not the children's HLs which in turn may influence the FLP of migrant families. The role of English and HLs in the policy of mainstreaming is discussed in more detail in the following section.

### *The role of Standard English and HLs within the policy of mainstreaming: Tensions and contradictions*

It is important to highlight how the FLP of migrant families living in England may be related to the tensions and contradictions that exist within the policy of mainstreaming regarding the role of Standard English and HLs for learning and educational achievement. Although the rhetoric for provision in the mid and late 1980s was expressed through openness and it embraced cultural and linguistic diversity in the classroom and society, it was done through policy which ultimately disregarded the difference and education of migrant children as pupils who have a distinct set of learning needs was removed from the National Curriculum. With this, the ethno-linguistic identities of children from migrant families were mainstreamed and learning English as a mother tongue and as an additional language have been 'conflated'

(Costley, 2014, p. 284). Therefore, it seems that in the current policy of mainstreaming multilingual language development is not taken into consideration and all children are treated as if they are a homogeneous group which has the same access to English at home. This may have a serious constraining effect on migrant families' ability to have an HL FLP because it appears that advantage is given to children who speak English since they already know the language of instruction in schools. Failure to take into consideration multilingual language development of children from migrant families is also a rejection of what is known from second language learning theories and research about the language learning process (Baker, 2011). Instead, in the policy of mainstreaming, English is conceptualised as the language promoting national identity and pride (Ball, Kenny and Gardiner, 1990; Medway, 1990). For example, in its section on linguistic diversity in England the Swann report states that English has the capacity to integrate different social groups under the same British nation: 'the English language is a central unifying factor in 'being British' (ibid, p. 385). Challenges to the use and knowledge of English are interpreted as a risk to the nation (Medway, 1990). English is used as the language for social cohesion and linguistic diversity is a threat to the nation (Cameron and Bourne 1988).

In such a context of mainstreaming policy and a 'monolingualising national ethos' (Heller, 2007) migrant children's HLs are in some cases constructed as 'a deficit' which may have serious negative consequences for migrant families' FLP. For example, in the National Curriculum Framework of 2011 in England (DfE, 2011) policy-actors are unable to differentiate between the needs of pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language (DfE, 2011, p. 4). In a similar vein, in its statement for inclusion of all pupils in education the current National Curriculum (DfE, 2014), which is statutory for pupils aged 5-16 in public education in England, states that children who do not have English as a first language may have learning difficulties and their recommendation is that teachers should focus on 'overcoming potential barriers' for such children and 'plan teaching opportunities to help pupils develop their English (ibid, p. 9).

Under such circumstances it is possible to suggest that the education system in England is based on a monolingual and monocultural basis with failure to develop a curriculum for a multilingual and multiethnic society. It seems that while the openly assimilationist approach to English language provision for migrant children in the early 1950s and 1960s which has been condemned by policy legislators with claims that educational policy has moved away from

assimilationist to ‘integrationist thinking’ (DES, 1985 p. 387), the implicit approach in educational policy in relation to children from migrant families appears to be essentially assimilationist by supporting the supremacy of English for the promotion of national identity, integration and achievement.

### *Underachievement of children from migrant families and the policy of mainstreaming*

Another factor which may encourage migrant families to have an English FLP instead of an HL FLP is the conceptualisation of migrant children as underachievers as a result of their lack of English language skills. Indeed, the policy of mainstreaming has been ‘justified’ based on a widespread national concern about the educational underachievement of children from migrant families. Although the National Curriculum (DfE, 2014) in essence promotes a ‘one size fits all’ perspective (Costley, 2014), many migrant children have been identified as underachieving (Blair et al., 1998; DfES, 2004b; McEachron and Bhatti, 2005). Researchers have argued that the idea of underachievement is complex with no direct causal relationship between migrant children and underachievement because in some schools and geographical areas migrant children outperform their non-migrant peers and the incomplete data on migrant children creates many gaps of what is known about underachievement (Gillborn and Mirza, 2000; Strand and Demie, 2005, 2006; Rutter, 2013). Policy has sought to address underachievement in many ways while maintaining a mainstreaming approach. Cajkler and Hall (2009) explain that a range of government initiatives have been piloted in schools to address underachievement of migrant children such as the 2004-2006 initiative entitled: Raising the Achievement of Bilingual Learners in Primary Schools programme. Also, the Government has allocated funds for Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) with the aim to narrow achievement gaps and giving LEAs choice in the way they were used (DfES, 2004a).

However, provision and practice for migrant children under the EMAG policy has not been consistent across schools and classrooms due to variable availability of specialist teachers. As a result, provision and practices have been ‘highly context-specific’ (Leung, 2001, p. 28). For example, in some reports that address underachievement there is more emphasis on including HLs as resources for learning and in others there is more emphasis on English for educational success. For instance, a report published by DfES (2002) entitled: ‘Removing the barriers: Raising the attainment of minority ethnic pupils’ acknowledges the importance of valuing and celebrating linguistic diversity by including pupils’ HLs for learning in schools as a way to

increase the achievement of linguistic minority pupils. The report offers many inspiring examples, stemming from positive classroom practice in some schools of how to use pupils' HLs for 'settling in as well as for longer-term learning' (DfES, 2002, p. 12). However, other report narratives from the same period reveal a subtractive view of multilingualism; HLs can be constructed as rich resources only until migrant children are confident enough in English to continue their education without them (Conteh et al., 2013). This is reflected in a report published by DfES (2003) entitled: 'Aiming high: Raising the achievement of minority ethnic pupils' (DfES, 2003) and a DfES (2004b) report entitled 'Aiming high: understanding the educational needs of minority ethnic pupils in mainly white schools'.

This trend of addressing the issue of 'underachievement' with different provisions and approaches on a local level continued throughout the policy of mainstreaming until the present. Currently underachievement is addressed with a 'rigid, standardized assessment régime' for all school children (Conteh et al., 2013, p. 91). Safford and Drury (2013) argue that from the 1990s to the present the language policy in England adopts a monolingual national assessment system for all learners, it 'imposed highly prescriptive content and pedagogy. Bilingual learners have come to be 'included' in a strongly centralised, monolingual national curriculum and assessment system' (ibid, p. 73). For example, the national Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which sets learning goals for children from birth to age five, describes the language development based on a monolingual English speaker and stresses the importance that all children at the age of five should have reached a good standard of English to start school. Furthermore, in 2010 the Government announced that a new statutory screening check for all pupils in Year 1 will be introduced. These measures have already been implemented in educational practice and currently all children aged 5 or 6 in mainstream schools are given a phonics test (DfE, 2016). It appears that there is a single model of language learning and assessment for all children (Safford, 2003). Arguably, this policy is not suitable for migrant families and their children who may want to use a language other than English in the home before children start school. Consequently, such policy may discourage migrant families to practice their HLs.

Yet, it is important to note that national language policies are not simply taken up without opposition and questioning on a more local level. For example, The National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum (NALDIC) is a powerful voice lobbying in the Government for recognition of the language needs and learning trajectories of migrant children

and the development of professional networks to organise teacher training and development courses for teaching migrant children. Therefore, it is pivotal to examine how mainstreaming is ‘translated into’ local responses by those who are in contact with migrant families such as teachers and health visitors and the ways their perceptions, practice and advice may shape migrant families’ FLP.

## 2.4 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the migration and the language education policy contexts in England. The two contexts were reviewed with the aim to draw on them in subsequent finding chapters to examine the relationship between the influence of the migrant and the educational policy contexts, and migrant families’ FLP. Regarding the migrant context in England, in section 2.2 I discussed that historically, in England the policy responses have focused on integration and assimilation of migrant families into the mainstream. Therefore, it seems necessary to examine the experiences of parents within the migrant context in England and how such experience shapes their FLP. This is discussed in Chapter 6. In relation to the language education policy context, in section 2.3 I discussed three different historical approaches to language provision for children from migrant families: assimilation, withdrawal and mainstreaming. While language education policy seems to have moved away from a politics of assimilation, the current mainstreaming approach to education of children of migrant families seems to be underpinned by monolingual criteria without differentiation of the language learning trajectories and assessment needs for children from migrant families. National language education policy is ‘translated into’ local language practices by teachers and health visitors differently. It seems that teachers’ and health visitors’ perceptions, practice and advice have the potential to shape the FLP of migrant families and it is therefore essential to examine the ways in which they shape the FLP of migrant families.<sup>2</sup>

The next Chapter reviews the relevant literature and theoretical concepts, and it defines the research questions for this study.

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<sup>2</sup> This is discussed in in Chapter 8.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Literature review**

#### 3.1 Introduction

The aim of this dissertation is to examine why migrant families living in England adopt a particular family language policy and practice in relation to the way the parents mediate their experiences, resources and the dominant discourse in the migrant and educational context in England. The purpose of this Chapter is to identify and critically discuss key issues and concepts in the field of Family Language Policy (henceforth FLP) and the theory of social practice of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu with the aim to develop a conceptual framework in which I use both of them to explain the family language policy and practice of migrant families.

In section 3.2 I provide a general overview of the theoretical underpinning and development of the field of FLP. What follows is a discussion of FLP studies with critical themes related to macro- and micro-level forces and their influence on FLP. In section 3.3 of this Chapter I introduce Bourdieu's theory of social practice with relevant discussion on his conceptual tools: habitus, field and capital. Finally, in section 3.4 I define the research questions for the study.

#### 3.2 Family Language Policy (FLP)

##### *3.2.1 Theoretical underpinning and gaps*

As the name suggests, Family Language Policy (henceforth FLP) is concerned with parents' ideologies, decision-making and strategies in relation to how language is learned, managed and negotiated within families (King, Fogle and Logan-Terry, 2008; King and Fogle, 2013). It can be explicit and overt planning of language use among family members (King et al., 2008; Spolsky, 2009; Curdt-Christiansen, 2013a) but it can also be implicit and unplanned (Okita, 2002; Schwartz and Moin, 2012). In any case, FLP is 'shaped by what the family believes will strengthen the family's social standing and best serve and support family members' goals in life' (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, p. 352).

FLP is an interdisciplinary field of inquiry which uses theoretical frameworks such as language policy, language socialisation, literacy studies and child language acquisition (De Houwer, 1999; Lanza, 2004, 2007; Fogle, 2012; Ren & Hu, 2013; Patrick, Budach & Muckpaloo, 2013; Smith-Christmas, 2014). Drawing on a language policy model, FLP research seeks to understand families' language ideologies (what they think about languages), their language practices (what they do with languages) and their language management (what efforts they may make to maintain languages) (Spolsky, 2004, 2009, 2012).

As King (2016) explains, there are four phases in the development of FLP as a field. Its beginnings date back to more than a century ago and its first phase started with the work of Ronjat (1913) and Leopold (1949). Their work comprised of detailed description of the authors' own children's language learning which popularised the so called One-Person-One-Language (OPOL, Ronjat, 1913) tenet and it suggested links between bilingualism and cognitive advantages such as cognitive flexibility and metalinguistic awareness. In the second phase FLP researchers combined FLP with child bilingual development to address psycholinguistic questions such as linguistic transfer and differences in the developmental trajectories of bilingual and monolingual children (De Houwer, 1990). For example, Lanza's study (1997) combined sociolinguistics and discourse analysis to analyse parent-child interactions to find that children aged two can code-switch. In the third phase of FLP research more attention was paid to how parents' language ideologies and child-parent interactions affect children's language outcomes (De Houwer, 1999; Tuominen, 1999; Okita, 2002). For instance, Okita (2002) described how Japanese-English families living in England tried to raise bilingual children and showed how such work was demanding for the Japanese mothers and largely unrecognised by the family and by society. The work in the third phase contributed to an understanding of the ways in which parental language ideologies shape family language policies and child language development.

In the current, fourth phase, FLP researchers aim to answer new questions which are more oriented towards how FLP is negotiated in family members' everyday experience and identity constructions (Lanza & Li Wei, 2016; King & Lanza, 2017). This is due to the fact that FLP research in the past years focused more on child language outcomes rather than experiences of family members. In other words, as King (2016) succinctly puts it, past FLP research focused more on the question: 'What beliefs, practices, and conditions lead to what child outcomes?' (ibid, p. 3). Moreover, while early FLP research focused mainly on bilingual, middle class

families, in the current, fourth phase, there is an increasing interest into how FLP is set up within multilingual families in migration contexts (Canagarajah, 2008; Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). FLP studies have under-researched multilingualism in migrant families even though the number of multilingual families has been increasing and many migrant families may practise and manage up to three languages (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; Lanza & Li Wei, 2016). Therefore, due to processes of globalisation and transnational migration more studies that include broader range of family types such as migrant families in which parents have different language backgrounds are needed to reveal the ways in which they set up their FLP. In the FLP literature there is a limited number of studies that focus on the FLP of migrant families and therefore the literature review in this dissertation includes FLP studies which investigate the FLP of ethnic minority families (Lane, 2010; Seloni & Sarfati, 2013; Curdt-Christiansen, 2015); adoptive families (Fogle, 2012) and families trying to achieve additive bilingualism (King & Fogle, 2006). Finally, as Schwartz (2010) argues, the field of FLP needs to develop further to account for its interdisciplinary nature by bringing together new theories and disciplines, for example, linguistics, sociology and education.

The current study aims to address the gaps in the FLP literature which were discussed above with the adoption of sociological concepts to examine migrant families' FLP in relation to the experiences of parents in migrant families with different language backgrounds and the way they manage their HLs and English and set up a particular FLP.

### *3.2.2 Language practices, language management and language ideologies*

The family is the critical domain for the practice and transmission of an HL (Spolsky, 2012) and the essential question that FLP researchers try to answer is: how and why do some families practise and transmit their HLs to their children while other families do not? (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; 2013a). To answer this important question FLP researchers in the past years have focused on two broad topics.

Some past FLP research has highlighted issues of language practice and language management in the family. Taking contextual factors into consideration, such FLP research investigated the role of parental input and discourse strategies and what forms of literacy practices are likely to promote an HL in the family (Lanza, 2004; Gafaranga, 2010; Curdt-Christiansen, 2012, 2013b; Stavans, 2012; Smith-Christmas, 2014; He, 2016). Lanza (2004) for example, focused on



identifying specific discourse strategies that parents use to socialise their children in specific language practices. She identified five types of discourse strategy, including: minimal grasp, expressed guess, repetition, move on, and code-switch. In her study of Rwandan migrant families in Belgium, Garafanga (2010) found that Kinyarwanda-French bilingual children constantly used 'medium request' to negotiate family language policies and influenced the parents' language use. Curdt-Christiansen (2013b) examined what language inputs parents in three English-Chinese bilingual families in Singapore provided for their children during homework sessions. She showed how parents' language input and discourse strategies may lead to children's compliance or rejection of parents' established FLPs. In a similar vein, Smith-Christmas (2014) studied the interactional patterns in a Gaelic-English family on the Isle of Skye, Scotland, and found that the linguistic practices of certain family members socialised children into shift to English. He's (2016) study of everyday conversation practises in a Chinese family in the US between a mother and her son revealed how parents and children co-constructed meaning and complemented their language skills and cultural knowledge. This body of FLP research reveals invaluable insights into parental conscious or unconscious language planning decisions that support or discourage the practice and maintenance of an HL in the family.

Nonetheless, language practices in the family are inextricably related to language ideology, that is how parents perceive languages as well as the socially constructed value of languages in the wider social context of which the family is a part. Indeed, language ideology is reported to be the driving force in shaping family language policy and practice (King, 2000; Curdt-Christiansen, 2013a). To highlight this issue, other FLP researchers problematise the relationship between parents' language ideology and practice, and the language ideologies and practices of the wider social context. Indeed, while Fishman (1991) argued that the family is 'the most common and inescapable basis of mother tongue transmission, bonding and stabilisation' (ibid, p. 94), Canagarajah (2008) theorised the family as 'porous, open to influences and interests from other broader social forces and institutions' (ibid, p. 171). In a similar vein, Curdt-Christiansen (2016) argues that the family is not a neutral space and that FLP is associated with social processes such as social prestige, educational empowerment and socio-economic gains. Such tensions between social structures and individual agency can cause ideological conflicts in the family (Kirsch, 2012). Therefore, this body of FLP research puts greater emphasis on the relationship between parents' language ideology and practice, and broader economic, political and educational ideologies in society shape FLP (Canagarajah,

2008; King et al., 2008; Lane, 2010; Spolsky, 2012; King & Fogle, 2013; Stavans, 2012; Seloni & Sarfati, 2013; Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; 2012; 2014).

It appears that language ideology plays a pivotal part in family language policy and practice. I discuss this relationship in more detail in the sections below.

### *3.2.3 Language ideology and FLP*

This dissertation is concerned with investigating how and why migrant families living in England adopt a particular FLP. Therefore, a relevant question for the current study is what factors contribute to the decisions that migrant parents make about their family language policy and practice. As I discussed in the above section, parents' decisions are inextricably related to language ideology. On a more societal level, language ideologies are social constructs that reflect the social, historical, economic and political functions, and power, of a particular language (King, 2000; Gal and Woolard, 2001; Blommaert, 2006; Kroskrity, 2010). On a more micro level, language ideologies are 'language users' evaluative perceptions and conceptions of language and language practices, based on their beliefs and assumptions about the social utility, power and value of a language in a given society' (Curdt-Christiansen, 2015, p. 2).

Parents' language ideology and family language policy and practice are intertwined and sometimes they are congruent and at other times they are conflicting and incongruent (King, 2000; Kopeliovich, 2010; Curdt-Christiansen, 2016). In order to explain why a particular migrant family has a specific language policy and practice it is therefore necessary to examine what factors shape parents' language ideologies and consequently their family language policy and practice. Parents often have their own theories, knowledge, experience and aspirations that guide them in making a decision about which language(s) to practise with their children. More importantly, migrant families are immersed in a particular socio-educational context in which languages have differential educational and wider socio-economic value, and therefore they inevitably have the power to influence parents' language decisions. It follows that there are two broad factors that are relevant to the present study which need to be explored in order to explain the family language policy and practice of migrant families.

### 3.3 Macro- and micro-level factors and FLP

The first theme in FLP research which is relevant to the current study refers to the way in which broader, macro-level factors such as national language policies and language education policies are reproduced, contested and negotiated by parents in migrant families and the ways they shape family language policy and practice (Lane, 2010; Curdt-Christiansen, 2013b, 2014a, b; 2016; Seloni & Sarfati, 2013). The second theme in FLP research which is relevant to the current study is the way in which migrant families' FLP is influenced by more micro-level factors such as parents' experiences with migration, language learning, the perceived social value of languages, support from extended family and close social network of friends, the family's socio-economic status and children's agency (Li Wei, 1994; De Houwer, 1999; King and Fogle, 2006; Canagarajah, 2008; Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, 2016; Gafaranga, 2010; Pérez-Báez, 2013; Revis, 2016).

It is important to note that the two broad factors are not clear-cut but are inter-related. This study aims to examine the ways in which broader macro-level factors and more micro-level factors come into play and the ways parents in migrant families mediate such factors which in turn shapes their family language policy and practice. I discuss each theme in more detail in the following sections.

### *3.3.1 Macro-level factors and FLP*

As it was discussed in the above section, any migrant family is situated in a particular social context and the linguistic and non-linguistic factors that exist in a particular social context are related to migrant families' FLP. According to Spolsky (2004) there are four major inter-related macro-level, non-linguistic and linguistic factors that have the potential to influence FLP: 1) socio-political, 2) socio-economic, 3) socio-cultural and 4) socio-linguistic. The socio-political factor has a very powerful influence on FLP as political decisions in language education policy can provide or constrain access to participation and equality; the socio-economic factor is associated with instrumental values that languages can achieve; the socio-cultural factor is related to the symbolic value of languages and the socio-linguistic factor is associated with beliefs about the social acceptability or unacceptability of languages (Curdt-Christiansen, 2014).

#### *3.3.1.1 Socio-political factors and FLP*

Political decisions about the social status and social functions of languages appear to have an essential influence on migrant families' investment in particular languages. King (2016) states:

‘in an era when ever-greater pressure is placed on many (low-income) families to make sure their children are ‘pre-school ready’ (...), one important challenge for the field of family language policy is to document and analyse how this federal, state, and local language policy (e.g. funding and training programmes for parents) are implemented and negotiated on the ground and with what impact.’ (ibid, pp. 6-7).

A limited number of empirical studies have discussed the influence of political factors on family language policy and practice in relation to 1) national language policies and 2) language-in-education policies.

National language policies and their influence of family language policy and practice are examined in two FLP studies. Lane (2010) studied the way in which assimilationist governmental policies in Norway shaped the language practices of Bugøyenes, an ethnic community in Norway speaking a Kven language causing a language shift. Using a nexus analysis of conversations and sociolinguistic interviews, Lane found that the Kven-speaking families were initially ‘coerced’ to practise the dominant, Norwegian language as a result of governmental assimilationist policies which explicitly promoted and enforced the practice of Norwegian. For example, parents were advised to speak Norwegian to their children and Kven was forbidden in public contributing to its devaluation and parents’ sense of inferiority leading to their expectations for their children to avoid a similar negative experience. Lane also argued that assimilationist policies in Norway which constructed Norwegian as the only language for national identity and social success were successful in imposing Norwegian in Kven-speaking families due to parents’ subsequent internalisation of Norwegian as a more useful language for success, privileges and modernity. This study demonstrated the efficacy of governmental assimilationist policies in shaping the language choice of families by ‘coercion’ but also by parents’ unconscious internalisation of assimilationist policies.

In addition, Seloni and Sarfati (2013) used life history narratives with elderly Jewish family members to investigate how the use of Judeo-Spanish among Jews living in Turkey became diminished. They illustrated the process by which the national language policy of ‘Turkish-only’, the nationalistic movement and the opening of Alliance Française schools in 19<sup>th</sup> century

Turkey devalued the use of Judeo-Spanish in the public sphere. This in turn created a socially constructed linguistic hierarchy with Judeo-Spanish at the bottom of it. As a consequence, Jewish families attributed lower social status to Judeo-Spanish underpinned by a perception that speaking it might hinder linguistic and academic success which in turn constrained their ability to practice Judeo-Spanish. Seloni and Sarfati's study (2013) illustrates the vulnerable position of linguistic minority families as a result of unequal power relations between majority and minority languages in society and minority families' inability to resist governments' power to impose nationalistic monolingual ideologies.

The above studies of Seloni and Sarfati (2013) and Lane (2010) provide interesting insights into the way governmental policy underpinned by nationalistic ideologies has the power to shape FLP. They both illustrate that political decisions at governmental level and the resulting monolingual policies are indeed designed to reach the domain of the family and they are enacted on a local level by institutions and agents who are able to exert pressure on families and influence their language practice. For example, in both studies above government officials explicitly exerted their influence on the language practice of linguistic minority families by visiting their homes to ensure that the respective government policies were being enacted on the ground. However, these studies have limitations as well. Both adopt a historical perspective examining how governmental assimilationist policies shaped minority families' FLP in the past.<sup>3</sup> Modern ways in which governmental policies influence FLP should be examined as well given the increasing level of migration and increasing number of migrant multilingual families (Lanza & Li Wei, 2016).

Another way in which socio-political factors are reported to influence FLP is by language-in-education policy. This was examined in three studies conducted by Curdt-Christiansen (2014 a, b; 2016). In her study of 20 Chinese-English bilingual families in Singapore, Curdt-Christiansen (2014b) found that parents' language practices and perceptions of Chinese were closely related to the bilingual language education policy in Singapore which constructs English as the medium of instruction for all subjects and Chinese as only a language subject. The parents demonstrated belief in the cultural and economic benefits of developing their children's Chinese language. However, when faced with the socio-political and educational

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<sup>3</sup> Lane (2010) investigated the language shift in a Kven-speaking community in Northern Norway as a result of the official policies of Norwegianisation between 1950s and 1960s. Seloni and Sarfati (2013) examined the language practices of Jewish families in Turkey in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

realities in Singapore which highlighted the role of English for social and educational achievement, the parents adopted lower expectations for their children's Chinese language proficiency. Indeed, Curdt-Christiansen (2014a) argues that parents have little choice in a context where English is the medium of instruction in all schools across all subjects at all levels:

‘When all school subjects are taught in English and financial benefits are awarded to those who master English, what can be expected of parents? After all, parents do not wish their children to fall behind in their academic performance and be unemployed or have low-income carers.’ (ibid, p. 23)

In her subsequent study, Curdt-Christiansen (2016) studied the FLP of Chinese, Malay and Indian families in Singapore and revealed that they had conflicting ideologies and contradictory practices with regard to English and their HLs as a result of the implicit influence of the bilingual language education policy in Singapore. The elevation of English as the language of instruction in schools in Singapore worked against minority families' ability to practise their HLs. She found that FLP was shaped by educational and social tensions reflected in the official bilingual language policy in Singapore which recognises HLs and English as official languages, but only English was used as the medium of instruction in education. The parents' explicit or implicit preference for investment in English as the dominant language in education in Singapore revealed that their FLP was guided by the instrumental value of English for educational opportunity and social mobility, and the lower value of their HLs was a result of their understanding that they had only cultural functions such as maintaining cultural identity. Therefore, Curdt-Christiansen (2016) argues that the language ideologies of parents are ‘power-inflected’ and the language practices are ‘value-laden’.

The above studies conducted by Curdt-Christiansen (2014a, b; 2016) highlight the importance of investigating the implicit ways in which language education policy in contemporary societies has the power to shape linguistic minority families' FLP. Importantly, her studies illustrate that even in socio-educational contexts where there is official recognition of bi/multilingualism as a worthwhile educational aim there are implicit language hierarchies that prioritise one dominant language in education. However, all of the studies examined in this section refer to linguistic minority families and surprisingly, there are a lack of FLP studies that include migrant families and how they mediate language education policies in Western contexts.

The studies discussed in this section provide some interesting insights into how different national ideologies towards languages develop on the levels of explicit and implicit expectations in approaches to language in different national systems. While in some national contexts there may be explicit monolingual ideologies (Lane, 2010; Seloni and Sarfati, 2013), other national systems may have more implicit ideologies to languages and to multilingualism (Curdt-Christiansen, 2014a, b; 2016). This provides the current study with a useful frame for discussion on the specificities of the English context and the more implicit expectations in relation to language. Chapter 8 provides in-depth discussion of the way in which implicit expectations in terms of language in England may influence migrant families' FLP.

I argue that examination of the ways in which socio-political factors shape migrant families' FLP in Western contexts is crucial for three reasons. First, the immigrant population in Britain has increased from 3.8 million in 1993 to 7.9 million in 2013 (The Migration Observatory, 2017). Second, the number of migrant multilingual families is increasing (Lanza & Li Wei, 2016) and with that linguistic diversity is becoming a common feature of contemporary societies and educational systems in which there is need to examine how they can become more inclusive by taking into consideration the HLs of migrant families. Finally, in Western societies the literature often documents that there exists a socially constructed language hierarchy between dominant, national languages and minority HLs with emphasis on the national language for social and educational success (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Blackledge, 2006; Martin-Jones, 2007; Weber & Horner, 2012; Karrebæk, 2013). As a result of a socially constructed hierarchy between minority and national languages in Western societies in which English is the dominant language, migrant families may have varying degrees of 'investments' (Norton, 2013) in practicing their HLs and the national language of the host country. The literature often reports that in some cases migrant families reject the use of their HLs and switch to the national language of the host country in order to help their children develop their language skills in the dominant language. For example, McNamara (2011) notes:

'...the bilingual competence of immigrant children ... is interpreted as being deficient in relation to competence in the national language. This sense of deficit is then internalized by immigrant families themselves, and the resulting self-stigmatisation can lead to a rejection of use of the mother tongue in the family, and particularly with children, in favour of the national language' (ibid, p. 311).

Therefore, it seems necessary and timely to investigate the ways in which socio-political factors shape migrant families' FLP in relation to the unequal status between majority and minority languages and the associated unequal opportunity and unequal access in Western societies.

### *3.3.1.2 Socio-economic factors and FLP*

The economic power and instrumental value associated with a certain language is believed to be related to migrant families' FLP. Migrant families may decide to practice their HL if it is related to economic power. For example, Ren and Xu (2013) who studied the language practices of Chinese-English bilingual families in Singapore suggested that, among other factors, the members of Chinese-English families adopted a positive attitude to practising their HLs as a result of their anticipations for the spread of China's economic power and the Chinese language in the future. In a similar vein, Zhu Hua and Li Wei (2016), who did sociolinguistic ethnography with three Chinese families living in Britain, found that the families' positive perception of investing in learning Mandarin was related to parents' expectations about the economic value of Mandarin for job opportunities for their children in the future.

In addition, the economic power of languages may lead migrant families to adopt a positive view of multilingualism and multilingual practice as an advantage. This is evident in the study of Curdt-Christiansen (2009). She studied 10 migrant families with a Chinese background in Québec, Canada and their explicit and implicit planning of FLP in relation to Chinese, English and French. She found that the Chinese migrant families in her study adopted positive perceptions towards raising their children multilingually in relation to the socio-economic opportunities associated with all three languages. The opportunity for gaining access with French in Québec, the rise of China as a global economic power and the status of English as an international language for economic achievement had a particularly strong influence on parents' decision to develop their children's multilingualism through their FLP.

However, further FLP research on migrant families' FLP needs to document how the unequal socio-economic status between the dominant language in society and the HLs of migrant families may constrain their ability to practise their HLs. Unexpectedly, there are a lack of FLP studies on the way the economic value of languages shapes migrant families' FLP. Nonetheless, existing FLP research on linguistic minority families provides some insights into the way the expected economic value of languages shapes FLP. Curdt-Christiansen's study



(2016) carried out in Singapore with Chinese, Malay and Indian families suggests that linguistic minority families may shift away from their HLs towards the dominant language in education and society as a result of its privileged position for ‘economic opportunities and easier socio-economic advancement’ (ibid, p. 1). Hence, having in mind the hierarchical position of national and minority languages in education and society in many Western societies, it is essential to examine further the ways in which the economic power associated with languages shapes the FLP of migrant families. Furthermore, adoption of an ethnographic approach seems necessary for in-depth examination of the ways parents in migrant families reproduce, contest and negotiate the economic power of languages.

### *3.3.1.3 Socio-cultural factors and FLP*

Socio-cultural factors refer to the symbolic value of languages, including prestige, access to equality, cultural identity (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). Some FLP studies suggest that there might be a close link between socio-cultural forces and FLP.

On the one hand, the cultural value of HLs as a means for maintenance of their HL cultural identity may lead to parents’ positive perceptions about the value of their HLs. Curdt-Christiansen (2009) in her study of Chinese migrant families living in Canada showed that parents adopted a positive view of developing their children’s Chinese language as a result of their positive identification with their Chinese background and using Chinese as a sign of cultural identity. In addition, Chinese was perceived as a mediational means through which the parents expected their children to access the rich heritage of their Chinese culture.

On the other hand, families may be forced to weigh up the advantages of maintaining their cultural identity with their HLs or to capitalise on the symbolic value of dominant languages. In her study of Chinese families in Singapore, Curdt-Christiansen (2014b) illustrated that the parents in the Chinese families had little choice but to put Chinese and English in a dichotomised position and to weigh up the advantages of each language. The unequal symbolic value of English and Chinese was decisive for the families’ decision to invest more in English. The symbolic value of English as a language for success and prestige led the parents to prioritise English and to lower their expectations for their children’s Chinese proficiency due to its lower symbolic value which provided only maintenance of cultural identity. Baker (2011) holds that the differences in status between minority and majority languages in society lead

individuals to relate the dominant language to power, wealth and prestige and choose the language that is socially constructed as a resource for social mobility. Therefore, it would be interesting for further FLP research to examine the different ways in which the symbolic value of HLs and national languages shapes migrant families' FLP.

#### *3.3.1.4 Socio-linguistic factors and FLP*

Socio-linguistic factors refer to language attitudes in a specific socio-linguistic environment, that is, their social acceptability (Spolsky, 2004; Curdt-Christiansen, 2014). Two studies conducted in the English context provide interesting insights into the influence of sociolinguistic factors on the FLP of migrant families. Kirsh (2012) interviewed and observed the language practices of seven Luxembourgish mothers attempting to raise their children bilingually in Luxembourgish and English in England. Although the mothers showed strong identification with their Luxembourgish background and recognition of their role for provision of their children's exposure to Luxembourgish, monolingual attitudes in the socio-linguistic environment with emphasis on English-only worked against the mothers' ability to raise their children bilingually. This in turn led to ideology clashes reflected through contradictory language practices in the home in which the mothers constantly accommodated to their children's requests for English. As a result, exposure to and input of Luxembourgish were limited and consequently the mothers' ability to raise bilingual children was constrained.

In a similar vein, Okita (2002) who studied the language practices of Japanese mothers in England demonstrated that parents may be discouraged from raising bilingual children as a result of the lack of recognition and support from the environment. Okita (2002) demonstrated that the Japanese mothers were the only ones who were responsible for the children's Japanese and English development in England and it was demanding and unrecognised by the family and society. Various competing demands and time pressures affected the mother's decisions and they re-evaluated the educational priorities for their children, and as a result, they abandoned or slowed down the effort to maintain Japanese. Moreover, migrant families may be discouraged from practising their HLs as a result of a dominant ideology of bilingual development as 'deficit'. Chatzidaki and Maligkoudi (2013) studied the family language policies of 37 Albanian migrant families in Greece and found out that some migrant families' FLP was negatively affected by the dominant ideology that simultaneous development of

Albanian and Greek may hinder the development of Greek as the majority language for educational achievement and social integration.

To summarise the discussion on macro-level factors in the above sections, political decisions at governmental level about language (education) policy seem to have a pivotal influence on migrant families' FLP by defining the economic, symbolic and linguistic values of languages in society and in education. Although these studies have shed some light on this issue, in an age of increasing linguistic diversity and migration it seems necessary for further studies that investigate how governmental policies and language education policies influence migrant families' FLP. What is more, it is important to examine how macro-level forces interact with factors on a more micro-level to shape migrant families' FLP. Micro-level factors for FLP are discussed in more detail in the sections below.

### *3.3.2 Micro-level factors and FLP*

In this section I discuss the influence of micro-level factors on migrant families' FLP in relation to: 1) parents' experience, expectations, knowledge about language learning and socio-economic status; 2) teachers' language practices, perceptions and advice; 3) parents' support from social networks and extended family and 4) children's agency.

#### *3.3.2.1 Parents*

FLP studies conducted so far suggest that the FLP of migrant families is related to their beliefs, expectations, experience, knowledge, and socioeconomic status. I discuss each one in more detail below.

Firstly, some FLP studies suggest that parents' attitudes to their HLs as well as expectations about their social value combined with parents' sense of responsibility for supporting their children's language development play an essential role for their FLP. For instance, Pérez-Báez (2013) who examined the language use patterns of San Lucas Quiavini Zapotec (SLQZ) families in a home context in Mexico and a diaspora context in California, shows how parents' perception of lack of ability to support their children's bilingual development led to a language shift from SLQZ to Spanish and English. By contrast, Curdt-Christiansen (2009) found that parents' positive attitude towards their HLs may lead them to 'invest' in multilingualism. She

studied Chinese migrant families in Canada, and found that the parents' positive attitude towards the value of multilingual proficiency in relation to the market values of languages in the context of Canada provided the linguistic conditions for their children's multilingual development. Specifically, Curdt-Christiansen (2009) found that for the Chinese parents in her study, Chinese was expected to become a typical economic resource which was related to financial opportunities, material wealth and economic advantages in the future. Therefore, it seems that parents' attitudes to their HLs play an important part in their FLP and their examination is crucial to understand migrant families' FLP.

Secondly, parents' experience with language learning, education and immigration are believed to influence their FLP. In some cases, families' FLP is reported to be informed by the parents' past positive experiences with language learning. For example, King and Fogle (2006) who studied 24 middle-class families in the United States in relation to their perceptions about the value of additive bilingualism found that the parents' positive perceptions about additive bilingualism in Spanish-English were informed by their own personal experiences of learning an additional language which was believed to be an asset. Moreover, the parents' positive perceptions about additive bilingualism were also influenced by their relatives' negative experiences and missed opportunities to learn an additional language. This in turn made the parents more aware of the value of additive bilingualism and wish to avoid a similar negative experience by investing in their children's additive bilingualism. In addition, parents' immigration and education experience are also reported to shape migrant families' FLP. Curdt-Christiansen (2009), who investigated the language ideologies of 10 Chinese migrant families in Canada, demonstrated the complexity of parents' immigration experiences and their FLP. She showed that the parents' discriminatory immigrant experiences and missed opportunities for their own advancement in the migrant context of Canada led to their investment in their children's multilingualism. Specifically, the parents' decision to invest in their children's learning of three languages, English, French and Chinese was related to their experience of discrimination on the job market in Canada and need to pursue further educational qualifications to find suitable jobs. In the immigrant context, languages became both problems and resources. On the one hand, English as a majority language in Canada was a resource for upward social mobility and equal opportunity. On the other hand, Chinese as a minority language could be a potential 'problem' which could block equal opportunities for social mobility. Therefore, the Chinese parents chose to invest in multilingualism as a means for their children's educational and social success.

Thirdly, there are some suggestions in the FLP literature that parents' knowledge about children's language learning development and especially about bi/multilingual children's language development are important about the way they set up their FLP. Some studies suggest that parents' lack of information about children's multilingual development may negatively affect the practice of an HL in the family (Yamamoto, 1995; Pérez-Báez, 2013; Ferguson, 2015). For example, Ferguson (2015), who studied the language practice of Sakha parents in the Sakha-Iakutia Republic in Russia, showed that parental lack of knowledge about multilingual development led the parents believe that speaking two languages to their children was a 'problem' for the children's language development. Likewise, Pérez-Báez (2013) argued that parents' lack of knowledge and information about the nature of multilingual acquisition was the reason why parents' demonstrated lack of investment in their children's bilingualism. The parents in this study thought that speaking an HL with their children would delay the language acquisition of the dominant language and were therefore ready to abandon their HLs. These studies illustrate that parental lack of knowledge about language learning and multilingual acquisition can be a serious handicap for families. However, surprisingly, not many FLP studies have highlighted the importance of parents' access to information about multilingual language learning and further research is needed to examine how this shapes migrant families' FLP.

Fourthly, family socio-economic status is also reported to have an effect on their FLP. Some researchers argue that more educated families and with higher social status have the resources to value and practise their HLs more than less educated and lower-class families who lack those resources. For example, Stavans (2012) who examined the literacy practices of 68 Ethiopian migrant mothers in Israel illustrated that migrant families who have economic, educational resources establish an FLP to maintain their HL and they can use their economic resources to provide complementary means for their children's HL learning such as travel to HL country to visit family and relatives and use social media in the home to facilitate HL learning. By contrast, Stavans (2012) argued that non-affluent families did not have educational and economic resources and were more prone to abandon their HL for the dominant language of the host country which was hoped to lead to 'their children's scholastic and social success' (ibid, p. 14). Other FLP studies have illustrated a similar point. Availability of economic resources can be linked to parents' ability to outsource HL learning to private tuition (Curdt-Christiansen, 2014b). In her study of Chinese-English bilingual families in Singapore, Curdt-

Christiansen (2014b) found that the families were keen on sending their children to private tuition as a means for their learning of Chinese. In this sense, it appears that some families can use their available economic resources to their advantage as a means to enhance their FLP. Similarly, families in which parents are well educated and have a positive experience with education in general are reported to adopt a positive perception to the value of languages and therefore set up a bi/multilingual FLP. For example, Ren and Xu (2013) demonstrated that parents in Chinese-English families in Singapore were well educated and had positive experience of learning English at school and were therefore keen to engage in bilingual/bi-literacy practices with their children. Additionally, in the context of the United States, King and Fogle (2006) studied the FLP of 24 middle-class families trying to achieve additive Spanish-English bilingualism for their children. Although King and Fogle (2006) argued that the parents in their study had positive views about additive bilingualism mainly as a result of their positive experiences with language learning, their positive view of bilingualism was also arguably related to the parents' good socio-economic status. The parents' good socio-economic status was reflected in the fact that they were self-selected through a popular parenting website designed to provide support for new parents in the Washington metropolitan area and to pupils in an elementary school offering a Montessori bilingual curriculum. Hence, it can be argued that the parents' good socio-economic status enabled them to get access to relevant literature about bilingual parenting and their good education helped them to be selective and critical of the available information. The findings of the studies above offer interesting insights into the way in which families' socio-economic status may shape their FLP. It appears that it would be useful to examine how such factors play out in the migrant family and how this structures their FLP.

### *3.3.2.2 Teachers and FLP*

Teachers represent dominant discourses in education or as Safford (2003) argues, 'teachers carry out national policy at the individual level' (ibid, p. 1). In this sense, it is possible to suggest that teachers mediate national language education policy and they adopt certain perceptions about the role of dominant and minority languages for schooling which in turn underpins their language practice and any advice they may offer to migrant families. In this way teachers may shape migrant families' FLP and it is therefore pivotal to investigate the process by which they may do that.

Yet, the role of teachers in shaping migrant families' FLP seems to be under-researched in FLP studies. In the English context, Conteh et al. (2013) did 12 case studies with primary school children of Pakistani background and their teachers in Bradford. They demonstrated that mainstream school teachers may lack knowledge about the value of multilingualism as a mediating tool for the learning of children from migrant families and may be unable to draw on children's HLs as learning resources in the classroom. Moreover, as a result of teachers' lack of personal experience and theoretical knowledge about linguistic diversity, their prevailing attitude was that multilingualism led to confusion and was holding migrant children back.

Similarly, Lee and Oxelson (2006) who examined Californian teachers' attitudes towards the HL maintenance and engagement in classroom practices found that teachers held negative or indifferent attitudes toward HL maintenance as a result of lack of teacher training and personal experience with languages. Teachers did not see themselves responsible for promoting the value of migrant children's HLs and did not see them as an asset. In such a situation it is possible to argue that HLs are not being valued in schools and migrant families are implicitly socialised into a lower value of their HLs and they may internalise this as 'deficit' (McNamara, 2011). The studies discussed in this section illustrate that teachers' language practices and perceptions of the value of languages may have a fundamental influence on the way HLs and national languages are constructed in education. This in turn may have significant influence on migrant families' FLP and it is therefore crucial for further FLP research to examine this.

### *3.3.2.3 Support from extended family and network of friends*

#### *Extended family*

Traditionally, the role of grandparents has been reported to be essential for intergenerational transmission of HLs in the family (Kenner et al., 2008; Ruby, 2012). FLP studies generally confirm the positive role of grandparents for HL practice and transmission. For example, Ruby (2012) who studied the language practices of Bangladeshi families in East London argued that grandparents had a critical role in the maintenance of families' HLs by supporting children's HL learning. Similarly, Ren and Xu (2013) who studied the language practices of Chinese-English bilingual families in Singapore illustrated that linguistic minority families' ability to

practice their HLs may be, among other factors due to assistance from grandparents who engage in literacy practices with children in the family.

However, language practice and intergenerational transmission of HLs in the family is a dynamic process especially in an age of globalisation and migration when family configurations and practices become more complex. Indeed, the role of grandparents is not always unidirectional without external pressures from relations of power, history, economic factors and politics. The changing role of grandparents in an age of migration is illustrated in Canagarajah's (2008) study of Sri Lankan Tamil grandparents living in England, Canada and USA. Due to the British colonisation of Sri Lanka in the grandparents' time, they were more proficient in English than the children's parents and the grandparents communicated in English with the children. This shows how the migrant family is in some circumstances, unable to use grandparents as resources to practice their HLs. Similarly, Fillmore (2000) demonstrated how a Chinese grandmother living in the US with four grandchildren was powerless to practice the family's HL due to external pressures which led to children's conformation with the dominant language practices at the expense of their HL. Such contradictory findings in FLP studies call for further research into the ability of migrant families to use extended family as their form of support which ultimately may shape their FLP.

### *Social network of friends*

Regarding the ways in which support from close social networks of friends shapes FLP there are a lack of FLP studies that address this. Some researchers working with language maintenance and shift have focused on this. Li Wei (1994) for instance, analysed how the social networks of different generations of family members influenced their language maintenance or shift. He found that older family members who had more contact with same ethnic networks maintained their HL more than the younger generation. Support from members of same ethnic community is illustrated by the study of Hulsen, De Bot and Weltens (2002) who investigated the language maintenance and shift of three generations of Dutch immigrants in New Zealand found that support from members of the same ethnic community in churches was important for the families' ability to maintain Dutch.

Conversely, social network of friends may work out differently for families with different socioeconomic status. For instance, Zhang (2012) shows that a higher social class of Chinese



migrant families (Mandarin) in the US benefits from maintaining close relations with heritage ethnic groups as a way of maintaining their heritage language and culture whereas a lower class of Fujianese immigrant families benefited more from networks with speakers of the dominant language and culture in order to participate in the wider social life in the US. I argue that we need more research to understand the ways parents' social networks of friends affect the FLP in the migrant family and I discuss this issue in the finding chapters.

#### 3.3.2.4 *Children's agency*<sup>4</sup>

Researchers have argued for close examination of the critical role of children in shaping FLP. Emerging research in the field of FLP suggests that children are indeed active agents who have the ability to shape FLP in different ways by negotiating, contesting or redefining parents' beliefs and practices of bi/multilingualism (Gafaranga, 2010; Fogle, 2012; Fogle & King, 2013; Gyogi, 2015; Revis, 2016). Some researchers have focused on the interactional processes by which children influence their parents' language policies and practices. For example, Fogle & King (2013) studied children's agency and family language policy in Russian-English and Spanish-English transnational families and identified four aspects of child-parent discourse: 1) children's metalinguistic comments, 2) children's use of resistance strategies, 3) parents' response to children's increasing linguistic competence and 4) children's enactments of family-external ideologies about race and language. They argued that FLP is best seen as emerging in interactions among parents and children.

However, other research on child agency in FLP studies argues for the need to highlight the relationship between children's socialisation into the higher status of the dominant language in communities and schools, and their agency to negotiate, contest or redefine their parents' language policies and practices. For example, Gafaranga (2010) who studied the interactions between parents and children in Kinyarwanda-French families in Belgium found that children's internalisation of dominant ideologies about the higher status of French resulted in children's contestation of their parents' FLP. As a result, parents constantly accommodated to their children's 'medium requests' to switch to the dominant language, French. Gafaranga's study

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<sup>4</sup> Children's agency is defined in relation to the definition proposed by Kuczynski (2002): 'agency means considering individuals as actors with the ability to make sense of the environment, initiate change, and make choices.' (ibid, p. 9).

is a typical example of the role of children's agency through children's contestation of the parents' FLP which eventually leads to children being the driving force of FLP.

Yet, other FLP studies have examined child agency with the adoption of a wider social theory. For example, Revis (2016) studied Ethiopian and Columbian refugee families in New Zealand and examined child agency from a Bourdieusian perspective of structure and agency. She did ethnographic interviews and observations with 29 mothers and 17 children, and recordings of naturally occurring interactions from three families. Revis identified five strategies through which children negotiated language use and culture thus socialising their parents: 1) metalinguistic comments, 2) medium requests 3) language brokering 4) sociocultural socialisation and 5) majority language teaching. Revis's study is a welcome contribution to extending the discussion of FLP from a social theory perspective, arguing that children's socialisation into the dominant language and culture of the host society brings with it the potential for children to reproduce or transform the dominant ideologies. Her findings suggest that on the one hand children, may be confined by dominant ideologies in education and the practices enforced by their parents, but on the other hand children are also agents of cultural and linguistic change. This study demonstrates that in migrant families, children are able to exercise their agency by adopting the dominant language in education as their own and consequently choosing whether to collaborate with or to subvert their parents' FLP.

It appears that children's agency plays an important role in defining the FLP of families. What needs further attention in FLP research is a more detailed and in-depth examination of the ways in which children in migrant families mediate external discourses in education and society, and how they negotiate them to shape the FLP of their parents.

To sum up the discussion in the sections above, it appears that there are many micro-level factors and agents that may shape the FLP of migrant families including parents, teachers, extended family, social network of friends and children. Moreover, these micro-level factors work together with macro-level factors such as national language education policies. It appears that the resulting interplay between macro- and micro-level factors has the power to shape migrant families' FLP. It is therefore pivotal to draw on a suitable theoretical framework capable of incorporating both macro- and micro-level forces to explain the how and why migrant families adopt a particular FLP. This justifies turning to Bourdieu's theory of social practice (1977b, 1990b) which is discussed in more detail in the sections below.

### 3.4 Bourdieu's theory of social practice

For Bourdieu (1977b, 1989, 1990b) society is an ensemble of social structures that individuals reproduce or transform as a result of a dialectical relationship between individuals and social structures. His work is a systematic attempt to bring together within a single framework, traditions which have been separated by dichotomies of subjectivism and objectivism, micro and macro, structure and agency with the aim to provide researchers with a general science of the logic of social practice.

Bourdieu conceives social practice as an ongoing, dynamic process characterised by the relationship between a habitus and the current capital as it is realised in the specific logic of a given field: [(habitus) (capital)] + field = practice (Bourdieu 1984, p. 101). Bourdieu's set of 'thinking tools' (i.e. habitus, capital and field) aim to deconstruct the logic of social practice by investigating cultural and social (re)production as well as the mediating role of agents and institutions. Consequently, Bourdieu's conceptual tools were considered appropriate for this study because they offer a conceptual lens to understand the ways in which migrant families' FLP is structured in relation to parents' mediation of their subjective experience (and available resources) and the objective linguistic norms in education and the wider society in England.

The concepts of habitus, capital and field are discussed in more detail in the sections below.

#### 3.4.1 *Habitus*

The aim of this dissertation is to examine the ways in which parents in migrant families set up their FLP in relation to the ways in which they mediate their subjective experience at micro-level and the objective linguistic norms in education and society at macro-level. This justifies turning to Bourdieu's concept of habitus. For Bourdieu (linguistic) habitus is a system of dispositions which incline individuals to think, perceive and act in certain ways depending on their past experience within a given social context (Bourdieu, 1977b, pp. 82-83; Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991, p. 77). Hence, the usefulness of drawing on the concept of habitus is that it has the potential to bring together individuals' subjective experience and objective linguistic norms in order to explain the regularity of individuals' practices and how individuals come to

internalise the linguistic norms in a specific context (Maton, 2008). Several aspects of habitus are important for this study.

First, individuals' past experience in Bourdieu's theory is very important because it shapes individuals' practice and this allows the analysis in the current study to examine how parents' past experience shapes their FLP. In particular, Bourdieu argues that past experience such as family upbringing, schooling and peer socialisation play an important role (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991). This is because early experiences are formative and have a particular importance as habitus tends to ensure constancy and defence against change (Bourdieu, 1990b). Experiences with family and schooling are particularly important: 'the habitus acquired in the family underlies the structuring of school experiences and the habitus transformed by schooling, itself diversified in turn underlies the structuring of all subsequent experiences... and so on from restructuring to restructuring'. (Bourdieu, 1977b p. 87). This conceptualisation of habitus allows for in-depth analysis of how parents' past experience with family upbringing, schooling as well as wider social experience influences the ways they perceive their HLs and English which ultimately structures their FLP.

Second, Bourdieu's conceptualisation of habitus as 'a structured and a structuring structure' (Bourdieu, 1984 p. 170; 1990b, p. 53) provides a valuable framework for discussing migrant families' FLP. On the one hand, as a structured structure the use of habitus allows the analysis to take into account the social forces and power relations that structure parents' dispositions towards languages which in turn structure their FLP. Bourdieu argues that individuals are constrained by surrounding societal structures such as linguistic norms, institutions and individuals' place in society. These structures shape individuals' habitus and act as limits to what individuals may achieve. When this is related to migrant families' FLP it may be argued that their FLP has been set up within the boundaries of dominant linguistic norms in a particular social context. The norms in education and the wider society in England for example, may provide a structure that shape parents' linguistic dispositions which in turn may orient their action to set up a particular FLP. Hence, habitus is a structured structure.

On the other hand, habitus is also structuring which allows the analysis on migrant families' FLP to look for ways in which parents may exercise their agency and generate diverging responses. While individuals live within certain structures they are able, to a certain degree, to exert changes. For instance, if individuals possess different forms of power (or capital) such as

knowledge (including linguistic knowledge), economic standing or support from social network of friends, it provides them with a certain position in the field and they can break out of their social position and avoid being confined to exhibiting certain tastes or values to which their class, gender or race seems to confine them. In this sense, habitus acts as a structuring structure and individuals may contest or reproduce existing norms by generating diverging perceptions and actions.

Third, the idea of reflexivity and habitus allows the analysis of migrant families' FLP to include a possibility for parents' ability to contest dominant linguistic norms and produce a diverging FLP. Bourdieu has been criticised for his theory as being somewhat deterministic and individuals' actions being overly constrained by social structures. The criticisms come mainly due to his focus on the pre-reflective dimension of action, that is his argument that habitus works below the level of consciousness and individuals act mostly without conscious thinking (Jenkins, 1982, 1992). Although widely criticised for focusing on reproduction, Bourdieu argues that there is limited space for human agency; habitus is able to develop and change because it is continually exposed to and influenced by experiences which either reinforce or modify its structures: 'it is creative and inventive but within the limits of its structures, which are the embodied sedimentation of the social structures which produced it'. (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 19). With regard for the possibility for reflexivity, Bourdieu's response is in his book, 'In Other Words: Towards a Reflexive Sociology' (Bourdieu, 1990a) in which he argues that reflexivity emerges only 'in situations of crisis which disrupt the immediate adjustment of habitus to a field' (ibid, p. 108). However, everyday, mundane reflexivity is neglected and other researchers in this field have demonstrated that mundane reflexivity does indeed play an important role for diverging responses of habitus (Reay, 2004; Li, 2015). Transposing this to the family context, it allows the analysis to address issues about the role that reflexivity may play in migrant families' FLP and to examine the ways in which it may manifest itself.

The ways in which habitus mediates subjective experience and dominant linguistic norms depends on the availability of resources, or capitals, in Bourdieu's terms. Capital is discussed in the following section.

### *3.4.2 Capital*

Bourdieu (1997) uses the notion of capital to refer to all material and symbolic resources such as financial resources, knowledge, attitude, skills and educational qualifications. In particular, Bourdieu (1997) makes a distinction between three forms of capital: cultural, social and economic (ibid). When the various types of capital are perceived as legitimate and are related to prestige they become symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986; 1989). Capital plays an important part in the social theory of practice because it is a form of power and the entire logic of social practice is based on the accumulation of various types of capitals which are distributed in the social space with an exchange value, they are transmissible and convertible.

Capital is an important conceptual tool for this study which allows the analysis to examine how the parents used their cultural, social and economic capitals to set up a particular FLP. In Bourdieu's theory, individuals' possession or lack of capital determines their choices in a particular social context which is related to their reproduction or transformation of social structures (Bourdieu, 1989; Postone, LiPuma & Calhoun, 1993). Hence, having the 'right' form of capital means having power and privileges in a specific social context. However, the 'right' form of capital is socially constructed and imposed as dominant capital which is then mediated by social individuals who may misrecognise the dominant capital as the only legitimate form of capital and reproduce the social structure or contest it and transform the social structure. Transposing this to migrant families' FLP, it may be interpreted to mean that if parents possess capitals then they are able to transform dominant linguistic norms, and conversely, if parents lack capitals they conform to established linguistic hierarchies and reproduce dominant linguistic norms. Hence, the study aims to examine how parents' availability and use of the various forms of capitals may structure their FLP.

Firstly, Bourdieu's definition of cultural capital as a broad variety of resources such as educational qualifications, general cultural awareness, knowledge, attitude and appreciation allows the analysis to examine in what ways parents draw on their knowledge and attitudes to set up a particular FLP. In particular, cultural capital in this study can be used to examine how parents' knowledge about multilingual language development and appreciation of the value of multilingualism shapes their FLP. In addition, cultural capital can also be related to parents' attitude to their HLs and English and their expectations of their social value which could be used to examine how they structure their FLP. Examination of the parents' attitude to and expectations of the social value of their HLs and English is pivotal because they may be decisive for the way in which migrant families establish their FLP. Cultural capital also refers

to educational qualifications which means that the parents' possession of educational qualifications may offer them knowledge and appreciation of multilingualism which in turn may shape the way they set up their FLP. Conversely, parents and children in migrant families may be unable to draw on their HLs and other capitals they had acquired in their home country. For example, Moskal (2014, 2016) who studied transferability of cultural capital from HL country and social mobility of young Polish people in Scotland found that cultural capital cannot be easily transferred; embodied cultural capitals such as use of language, social competence, self-assurance and confidence, knowledge about educational or job market cannot be transferred.

Consequently, migrant families may decide to practise the dominant language with their children to transmit it as a valuable cultural capital in the educational and social context of which they are a part and discourage HLs as an impediment for educational and social success and integration. Yet, even if migrant families in which parents lack the dominant cultural capital may still decide to get involved in their children's education as a means for the family's social mobility. For example, Lopez-Rodriguez (2010) who studied working class Polish migrant mothers in London and the strategies they undertook to achieve status in relation to their children's education and future prospects in the UK, found that parents' lack of educational qualifications as their cultural capitals did not disempower them but it triggered them to act and get involved in their children's education by being unaware of social constraints.

Secondly, language skills are conceptualised as linguistic capital. In this study linguistic capital is a useful tool to examine how the parents' English language skills and (similar) language backgrounds shape their FLP. In addition, Bourdieu's concepts of taste and distinction are important here to understand how individuals' competence in the dominant language functions as linguistic capital. Bourdieu and Thompson (1991) argue that individuals possess different quantities of linguistic capital (such as linguistic competence in the dominant language) and those who lack it seek to acquire it and exploit the system of differences to their advantage and secure a profit of distinction. However, distinction in a market dominated by one legitimate language 'goes hand in hand with a deep-seated conformity with regard to established hierarchies' (Bourdieu and Thompson, 1991, p. 18). It is therefore important for the current study to examine how parents' English language skills may shape their FLP.

Thirdly, Bourdieu's conceptualisation of social capital as social networks (Bourdieu, 1997) allows the analysis in this study to investigate how the parents' close network of friends and the availability of support from extended family shapes their FLP. Bourdieu argues that individuals' practice depends on the size of the social network that an individual can effectively use and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed by 'each of those to whom he is connected' (Bourdieu, 1997, p. 51). This provides the study with a valuable conceptual tool to examine the ways in which the advice, information and support the parents are able or unable to receive from their friends and extended family shapes their FLP. Some studies on families illustrate that families interact with their social networks and exchange information, material and non-material goods and services (Bernardi, 2011) and it is therefore pivotal how social capital may shape migrant families' FLP.

Fourthly, Bourdieu's conceptualisation of economic capital as financial resources allows the analysis to examine how parents use their financial resources to set up a particular FLP. In this study economic capital is used to refer to the ways in which the parents in migrant families are able or unable to use it to 'buy' other forms of capital, that is to invest' in travelling to their HL countries or to send their children to summer camps or holidays in their HLs countries with the aim to practise and transmit their HLs. Indeed, the use of the concept of capital in this study provides a frame for a relational analysis between the families' social standing and their FLP. This is related to the social position of the migrant family and the amount of capitals they possess, and the ways parents mediate structure and agency which ultimately structures their FLP. In Bourdieu's conceptualisation, agents who occupy similar positions with similar volume and forms of capital are placed in similar conditions and they have encountered similar social situations (Bourdieu, 1989). Yet, in education studies researchers such as Arnot and Naveed (2014) warn that families with a similar social standing are not homogeneous, they have a diversity of experiences and therefore their practices may differ. Therefore, the current study aims to investigate how migrant families' differential access to economic capital may influence their FLP.

### *3.4.3 Field*

The concept of field refers to the social space within which individuals produce their practices (Thompson, 2008). This study draws on Bourdieu's concept of field to examine how parents' understanding of expectations in terms of language use in different social spaces such as



schools, communities and the family shapes migrant families' FLP. For Bourdieu field is 'a structured social space' which means that individuals occupy different social positions which are defined by the distributions of different kinds of capitals, and the resulting power relations make individuals become continually engaged in a competition to gain socially recognised credentials to improve or maintain their position in the field. There are a number of different fields with their sub-fields and each field is semi-autonomous with its own accumulation of history, forms of recognised capital and logic of practice (Thompson, 2008).

Several aspects of Bourdieu's notion of field are relevant to this study. Firstly, Bourdieu's idea about the existence of many different fields allows the present study to conceptualise education, the health visitor network and the family as fields which have their linguistic norms and values. This allows the analysis on migrant families' FLP to examine how the parents' immersion in the different fields shapes their FLP. For example, Bourdieu (1984, p. 85) argues that the family and the school are the two most important fields which have the power to define, reward and sanction different (linguistic) competences: 'the family and the school function as [...] markets which, by their positive or negative sanctions, *evaluate* performance, reinforcing what is acceptable, discouraging what is not, condemning valueless dispositions to extinction' (ibid, italics in original). In the present study, the family and the school are indeed important fields in which migrant families' FLP is mediated and Bourdieu's idea of field provides the study with a valuable conceptual tool to examine the processes whereby the family and education shape migrant families' FLP.

Secondly, Bourdieu's argument that each field is dominated by one legitimate language which individuals aim to acquire is important for this study to examine how migrant families' FLP may be related to parents' internalisation of English as the only legitimate language in different fields in England. Specifically, for Bourdieu, each social field is characterised with an implicit and tacit domination by one legitimate language (linguistic domination) and individuals in the field unconsciously aim to acquire it, guided by their practical understanding of its symbolic value (Bourdieu, 1977a, b; Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991). In relation to migrant families' FLP this is relevant to examine how FLP is structured in relation to the way in which parents embody the dominant linguistic norms and values through their engagement in different social fields. Bourdieu's concepts of misrecognition and symbolic violence are important here. Misrecognition occurs when social agents who compete for acquisition of the legitimate language in a particular field recognise it as legitimate without critical questioning of the

arbitrary way in which it has been imposed as the only legitimate language. In this way, individuals whose own language may be unrecognised as legitimate may abandon it and aspire to acquire the legitimate language which means that they participate in their own (symbolic) domination and this is symbolic violence (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991). Consequently, the use of the above conceptual tools allows the analysis in this study to reveal the processes by which parents in migrant families may embody English as the only legitimate language in different fields which in turn may shape their FLP.

Thirdly, Bourdieu's idea about the existence of struggles between newcomers and established individuals who represent the dominant norms in each field enables the study to account for migrant families' FLP in relation to influence from teachers and health visitors who represent dominant linguistic norms in the fields of education and the health visitor network. Specifically, Bourdieu argues that each field is defined by struggles for transformation or preservation with newcomers struggling for recognition of their resources and dominant individuals trying to maintain the status quo (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). This is relevant for this study to examine how migrant families' FLP is established in relation to how parents as migrants navigate in different fields and position themselves in relation to advice and practice of teachers and health visitors who have the power to define which languages are legitimate and which are not. This is important because parents' struggles will determine whether they reproduce or transform English as the dominant linguistic capital. For example, Bourdieu argues that the education system is 'a crucial object of struggle' (Bourdieu 1989, p. 652) because it has a monopoly over the reproduction of the dominant language as legitimate linguistic capital. In addition, he argues that teachers reproduce the dominant language as the only legitimate language (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991). In empirical studies this point is illustrated by Flynn (2013) who studied how primary school teachers in England respond to the arrival of Polish pupils in English schools after Poland became part of the EU. She demonstrates how teachers' practice is aligned to the expectations of the education field to teach for children who are native speakers of English and therefore serve to legitimise only English in education. In a similar vein, Blackledge (1999) who studied the literacy practices and attitudes of Bangladeshi families in England demonstrated how mainstream schools and teachers legitimised English and disempowered migrant parents by devaluing their HLs. Blackledge (1999) illustrated how dominant linguistic norms in mainstream schools in England promoted English as the only legitimate language for migrant families and their children's educational achievement and social success; rewarded those who

already possessed it, and penalised those those who lacked it. This is related to Bourdieu's (1977a) idea that in fields with dominant norms there are sanctions which act as positive and negative reinforcements which incline individuals to perceive and act in certain ways. It is therefore important to investigate how parents' mediate teachers' perceptions, practice and advice, and how that shapes migrant families' FLP.

Fourthly, Bourdieu's (1996a) conceptualisation of the family as a field allows investigation of the potential power relations between family members and the way they structure migrant families' FLP. Bourdieu's idea is that the family is a field with power relations: 'the family tends to function as a *field*, with its physical, economic and above all symbolic power relations' (Bourdieu, 1996a, p. 22). This is important for the current study because it means that the family is not a neutral space but a space of potentially conflicting power relations between family members. Furthermore, Bourdieu (1996a) argues that the power relations in the family may be a result of the different volume and structure of capital possessed by each individual member. This allows the analysis in the current study to investigate how the parents' varying possession of different forms of capital adds to their power and determines who has the largest amount of capital in the migrant family to decide on the family's FLP. Bourdieu's idea about masculine domination is important here. He argues that unequal power relations between men and women may lead to domination of men or masculine domination (Bourdieu, 1996b; 2001). This is important for the present study to examine how masculine domination may manifest itself in the family field and shape migrant families' FLP. For example, for Bourdieu (2001) masculine domination is exercised in tacit ways through symbolic violence which manifests itself with women's unconscious acceptance of men's imposed norms and values as normal which contributes to their own subordination and domination. Transposing this to the current study on migrant families' FLP, masculine domination may be interpreted as a process whereby fathers in migrant families may impose a particular language as the only legitimate language in the family and the processes by which mothers may submit to such relations of power. Although Bourdieu (1996a) argues that there are struggles for conservation and transformation of power relations in the family, he also argues that masculine domination can persist over time (Bourdieu, 1996b). Therefore, this study aims to examine how potential power relations between spouses in the migrant family may shape their FLP.

#### *3.4.4 Using Bourdieu's framework in the English context*

Bourdieu's work provides effective 'thinking tools' and has gained popularity among social researchers who seek to understand educational issues related to social inequality, cultural capital, educational attainment and parental involvement in schooling (Reay, 1998). Many empirical studies around the world have documented the impact of domination, educational experience and educational outcome.

Using a Bourdieuan framework to analyse the data in a context of migrant families' FLP and power inequalities between English and HLs in this study is relevant from two perspectives. Firstly, Bourdieu (1989) conceives language as an instrument of power and in the case of migrant families' FLP there are clearly symbolic power relations between HLs and English whereby societal structures with their domination of English may contest the use of HLs as non-legitimised languages. Secondly, power relations within the family are clearly at stake in the migrant context in which parents may have different language skills and entitlements which may bring about differences and power relations between parents in the family which may consequently shape migrant families' FLP.

The application of Bourdieu's theory for migrant families' FLP in England has to come to grips with the English context. Many critics of Bourdieu argue that his theory was produced at a specific time relevant to issues in the French context, and while Bourdieu recognised the context-specific issues of the French society and his general theory, it is important to explain how his theory is relevant in the English context because it does transcend beyond the social issues in France. Rather than trying to solve exclusively social issues in France, Bourdieu's work is an attempt to reveal 'the most deeply buried structures of the different social worlds that make up the social universe, as well as the mechanisms' that tend to ensure their reproduction or transformation' (Reay, 2004, p. 431). The implication of this for the current study is sensitivity to aspects that are specific to the cultural and social context in England. Regarding the social and political background of the English context, England has embraced neo-liberalism and globalisation which has resulted in migration and domination of English in the education system which in turn has struggled to develop a curriculum for a multilingual and multicultural nation (Conteh, 2012). As Welply's (2010, 2013) comparative studies of immigrant-background children's construction of identities in primary classrooms in England and in France show, in England the domination of English as the dominant linguistic and cultural capital in mainstream schools is tacit and implicit which makes Bourdieu's theory of symbolic domination quite relevant in the English context because Bourdieu is concerned with

tacit, more invisible forms of domination and its effects on people's lives. The specificity of the English educational context suggests that importing Bourdieu's theory into social investigation requires a treatment which is empirically grounded and flexible. Indeed, Bourdieu's theoretical framework is grounded in empirical research and for him practice and theorising are mutually generative of the ways of collecting data, analysing it and developing explanations (Grenfell & James, 1998). Therefore, the analysis of migrant families' FLP in this study by using Bourdieu's thinking tools is grounded in ethnographic study supported by thick description and analysis of the families' language practice which further informs the flexible use and extension of his concepts.

### 3.5 Research questions

The current ethnographic case-study examines how migrant families in which parents have different linguistic backgrounds and live in England set up a particular FLP drawing on Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital and field. The focus of this study is related to the fact that the number of migrant families in which parents have different linguistic backgrounds and may need to handle two, three or more languages is increasing due to processes of migration and globalisation (Lanza & Li Wei, 2016; King & Lanza, 2017). This in turn raises issues about maintenance of HLs in migrant families and the role of HLs in educational systems in Western contexts regarding individual and social benefits of multilingualism (Baker, 2011). The review of the FLP literature in the above sections revealed that the fundamental question that FLP researchers are trying to answer is why do some migrant families practice and maintain their HLs whereas others do not? (Curd-Christiansen, 2009; 2013a). The literature review of FLP studies above also identified two broad, inter-related factors which may influence the ways in which migrant families establish a particular FLP, namely macro- and micro-level factors. The question then is how do both macro- and micro-level factors play out differently in different migrant families to produce a particular FLP? Arguably, integration of macro- and micro-level factors would provide a holistic view of migrant families' FLP with the potential to reveal why some migrant families practice and maintain their HLs and others do not. This is also related to Bourdieu's (1977b) argument that in order to reveal the logic of individuals' social practice one needs to look at the dialectical relations between objective structures and individuals' subjective experience and access to resources within those structures. Therefore, this study aims to examine how broader macro-level factors such as the socially constructed values of English and HLs in language education policy in England and in different social spaces such

as schools and communities are interpreted by parents in migrant families through their subjective experience in those social spaces which in turn affects their decisions to set up a particular FLP on a micro-level.

It is important to note that the focus on parents in migrant families in this study is for several reasons. Firstly, the review of the FLP literature has shown that parents are usually the ones who decide on a family's FLP, although other family members such as children and grandparents may also have an important influence on FLP, and this study acknowledges that. Secondly, the focus on parents in this study is justified with the fact that it is interested in how parents who have different linguistic backgrounds set up a FLP. Thirdly, the primary focus on parents is due to practical reasons such as the limited time for a PhD project and a word limit for a PhD dissertation. However, while the main focus in this study is on parents, the role of children and grandparents is also taken into consideration and discussed in subsequent finding chapters.

Firstly, it is possible to suggest that different migrant families have different agendas and aspirations which are reflected in their decision to adopt a particular FLP. Therefore, the first research question of this study is:

1. What is the FLP of migrant families in England in which the parents have different linguistic backgrounds, and how do parents explain their decision to establish a particular FLP?

Secondly, the review of the FLP literature above revealed that families' FLP may be related to parents' own experience such as language learning or immigration experience within given social contexts (King & Fogle, 2006; Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). This justifies turning to Bourdieu's concept of habitus because for him habitus mediates between objective structures and individuals' practice and is related to individuals' subjective experience (Bourdieu, 1977b; Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991). Therefore, the second research question of this study is related to how parents' own experience may shape their decision to set up a particular FLP:

2. How does parents' own experience shape migrant families' FLP?

Thirdly, it was shown that another factor which could have a potential influence on migrant families' FLP was parents' knowledge about language learning, attitude to their HLs, socio-economic status and support from social networks and extended family (Li Wei, 1994; Ruby,

2012; Stavans, 2012; Pérez-Báez, 2013; Ren & Hu, 2013; Curdt-Christiansen, 2014b; Ferguson, 2015). In Bourdieu's theory, the above is related to the concept of capital, that is individuals' access to multiple material and non-material resources. Therefore, it seems necessary to further examine how a differential access to multiple forms of resources may shape migrant families' differently. This is related to the third research question for this study:

3. How does parents' access to multiple material and non-material resources shape migrant families' FLP?

Fourthly, the review of the FLP literature suggested that when parents make decisions about their FLP they may take into consideration the discourse in the socio-linguistic environment such as schools and communities which is underpinned by the language (education) policy context (Okita, 2002; Kirsch, 2012; Lane, 2010; Chatzidaki and Maligkoudi, 2013; Seloni & Sarfati, 2013; Curdt-Christiansen, 2014b, 2016). For example, it was shown that parents' understanding of national language policies which promote monolingualism in public and family spaces encourages families to adopt the dominant language rather than their HLs (Lane, 2010; Seloni & Sarfati, 2013;). In a similar vein, national language education policies which promote the dominant language in schools were also shown to encourage families to adopt the dominant language in education (Curdt-Christiansen, 2014b, 2016). This is related to Bourdieu's concept of field as any social space in which there are implicit expectations of individuals who enter that space. It is therefore important to examine how implicit expectations in terms of language use in different social spaces shapes migrant families' FLP. This is related to the fourth research question:

4. How does parents' understanding of other people's expectations in terms of language use in different places shape migrant families' FLP?

Finally, the review of the FLP literature and Bourdieu's theory suggests that bringing together macro- and micro-level factors is necessary in order to examine how they shape migrant families' FLP:

5. In what way does the interplay of parents' own experience, access to resources and understanding of expectations of language use shape migrant families' FLP?

### 3.6 Conclusion

This chapter examined the relevant literature and the theoretical framework that underpins this study. It started with a review of the field of Family Language Policy (FLP) in section 3.2 in which two broad critical themes were identified as relevant to this study: 1) macro-level factors and FLP and 2) micro-level factors and FLP. This justified turning to Bourdieu's theory of social practice with his key concepts of habitus, capital and field in section 3.3. Habitus as a conceptual tool in this study refers to parents' past experience and presumably, the way they mediate it structures their FLP. Capital refers to material and symbolic resources including economic, cultural and social and arguably migrant families' differential access to such resources may shape their FLP in different ways. Field is a useful conceptual lens for the study as it enables the analysis to define schools, communities and families as social fields in which there are implicit expectations in terms of language use and arguably parents' understanding of such implicit expectations of language use may shape migrant families' FLP differently. The next, section 3.4 in this chapter discussed the applicability of Bourdieu's theory into the English context. Finally, the research questions for this study were presented in section 3.5.

Having examined the relevant literature and the theoretical framework for this study, the next chapter examines the adopted methodology and research design.



## **Chapter 4**

### **Methodology and research design**

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the design of the study in a way that allows for systematic documentation and analysis of the migrant families' language policies and practices. In section 4.2 the appropriateness of adopting a constructivist-interpretive paradigm with embedded critical perspectives for this study is explained. Next, in section 4.3 I outline the methodology for the study with a justification of the choice of an ethnographic case-study with embedded critical perspectives and I provide a detailed discussion about issues of access, choice of setting and participants and researcher's reflexivity. In section 4.4 I discuss the adopted data collection methods and processes in detail including ethnographic interview, observation and family self-audio recordings. The next section, 4.5 discusses the process of data analysis. Finally, the chapter ends with a discussion of issues of ethnical considerations in section 4.6.

#### 4.2 A constructivist-interpretive paradigm with embedded critical perspectives

A paradigm is defined as a 'worldview' (Creswell, 2007, p. 19) and 'a basic set of beliefs that guides action' (Guba, 1990, p. 17) in the sense that the researcher chooses to adopt particular ontological, epistemological and methodological premises to answer the research questions. This study adopts a constructivist-interpretive paradigm as a primary perspective which is complemented by embedded critical perspectives. The adoption of a constructivist-interpretive paradigm with embedded critical perspectives in this study is considered appropriate for several reasons.

First, this study is constructivist because its aim was to investigate how parents in migrant families set up a particular FLP depending on the way they constructed reality in their immediate setting (Robson, 2016), that is how their FLP was mediated by their lived experience within the socio-educational context in England. Second, the adoption of an interpretive 'worldview' was based on the premise that there was no immediate access to reality (ontology) but that social reality was co-constructed between the migrant families and me. This enabled me to understand the multiple social realities (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007) by relying

on the families' accounts of their FLP which means that meaning was negotiated between the families and me (epistemology). Hence the adoption of a constructivist-interpretive paradigm enabled me to obtain meaning within the migrant families themselves and the ways they co-constructed the meaning of their FLP. Third, the actions taken to conduct the study were closely related to the constructivist-interpretive paradigm. This study was designed to elicit migrant families' multiple perspectives on their FLP through interviews and observations, and the literature views the multiple-perspective study design as a feature of the constructivist-interpretive paradigm (Robson, 2016). Furthermore, as Creswell (2013) contends, within the constructivist-interpretive paradigm the researcher designs interviews which allow the researcher to listen carefully to what participants have to say so that they participate in the co-construction of meaning. This is closely related to the semi-structured interviews in this study which aimed to understand how migrant families set up a particular FLP based on their perceptions and lived experience.

Yet, while the primary aim of the study was to understand migrant families' language policies and practices by investigating their lived experience, it also sought to examine the ways in which unequal power relations and social structures shaped their FLP. Therefore, the constructivist-interpretive paradigm in this study was complemented by a critical perspective which operates on the assumption that social structures constrain people's choices but that people have agency to contest such limitations (Erickson, 2011). Specifically, the constructivist-interpretive paradigm with embedded critical perspectives in this study addressed the complex interplay of the co-construction of meaning between the migrant families and me, and the influence of the social structure (national and school language ideologies and policies) on the families' FLP within the socio-educational context in England.

The critical perspective in this study is related to the use of Bourdieu's concepts which are empirically proven to be useful analytical tools to understand the construction and (re)production of relations of power. To overcome the dichotomies between subjectivism and objectivism, micro and macro, agency and structure, Bourdieu (1989) argues that it is necessary to bring them together at the epistemological level to reveal the dynamics of the logics of practice which generate perceptions and action and which are at the same time structured (*opus operatum* and thus open to objectification) and structuring (*modus operandi* and thus capable of generating perception and action) (Grenfell, 2008). In other words, according to Bourdieu (1989), we need both an immediate understanding of the lived experience of social agents and

an understanding of objective relations which structure agents' practices and representations because there exist within the social world itself objective structures outside of the consciousness of individual agents; structures which are capable of guiding and constraining the practices and representations of social agents. Including individuals' experience in the analysis is a valuable step because it allows the analysis to 'account for daily struggles, individual and collective, which purport to transform or to preserve these structures' (Bourdieu, 1977b, p. 15). Hence, at the epistemological level, the incorporation of embedded critical perspectives within the primary constructivist-interpretive paradigm in this study illuminated not only understandings of the ways in which parents in migrant families co-constructed the meaning of their FLP, but it also provided insights into how relationships of power between majority and minority languages constrain or create opportunities for the way in which migrant families in England set up their FLP.

A constructivist-interpretive paradigm with embedded critical perspectives in this study was considered more appropriate than a critical paradigm. The reason is that this study was concerned with how meaning emerged from the co-construction of reality between the participants and myself on the one hand, and implicit expectations in relation to language in England on the other hand, rather than on a mere focus on how social structures determined the families' choice of an FLP. Bourdieu's theory is often criticised for being overly deterministic (see for example Jenkins, 1982, 1992) and a constructivist-interpretive paradigm was considered more appropriate because it provided the analysis with more opportunities for discussion into how human agency works to shape migrant families' FLP.

## 4.3 Methodology

### *4.3.1 Ethnographic case-study with embedded critical perspectives*

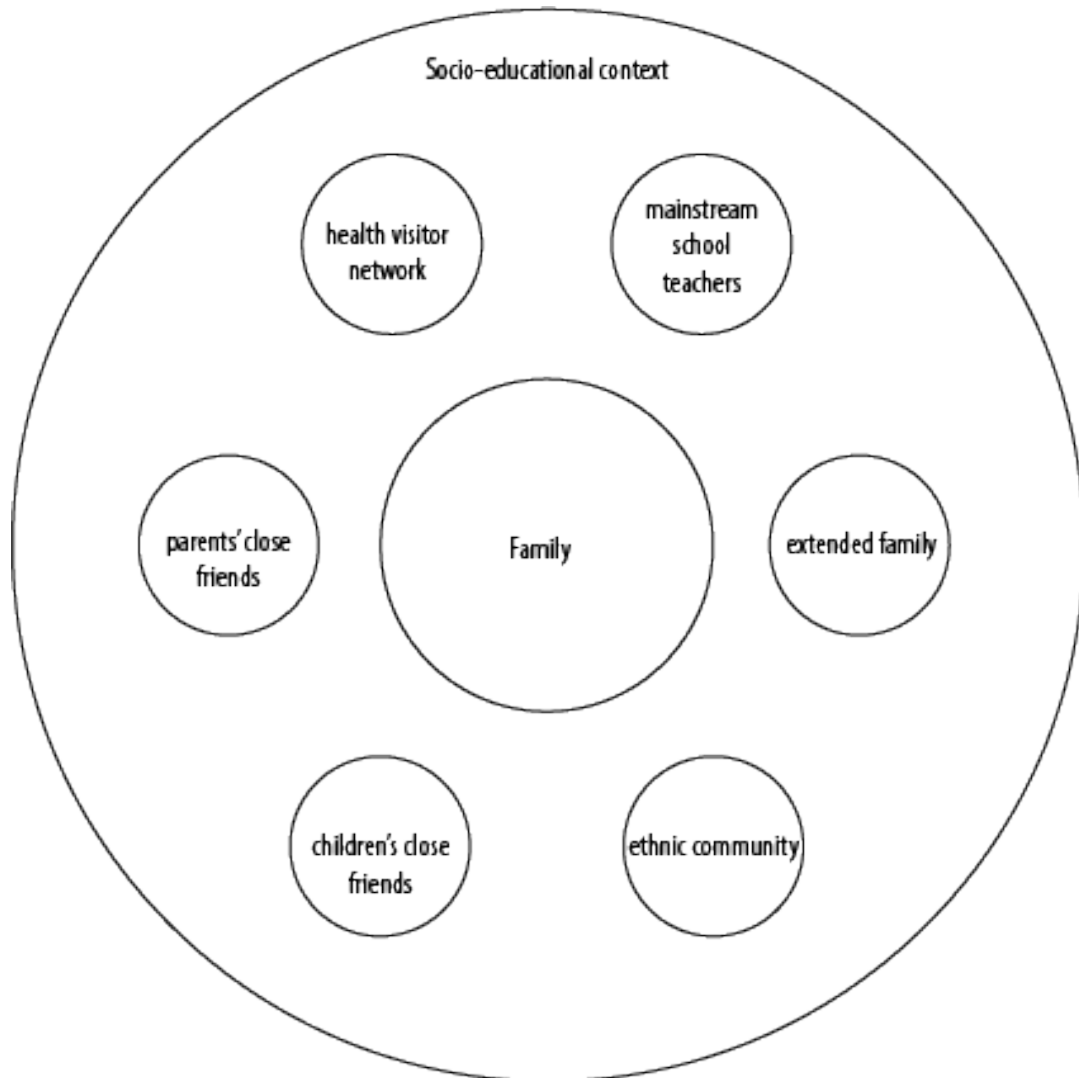
The main aim of this study was to examine why parents in migrant families in England set up a particular FLP and how they mediate their FLP at the micro-level by making sense of their lived experience and availability of resources within the dominant linguistic norms in the socio-educational context in England. As the research questions were concerned with 'how' and 'why' (Yin, 2014), it seemed necessary for the study to adopt an ethnographic case-study approach. Several criteria guided the choice of an ethnographic case-study approach.

First, an ethnographic case-study was considered to be appropriate for the proposed study because it provides a complementary methodological tool to investigate migrant families' FLP. A case study focuses on an in-depth investigation of individual cases and it provides a holistic understanding of the phenomenon in question with a focus on the complexity of relationships and processes in each case (Yin, 2009). Ethnographic research allows the researcher to carefully examine how a group's shared patterns of social practice develop over time by spending an extended period of time in the natural setting of participants (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Creswell, 2013). In this sense, the adoption of an ethnographic case-study enabled me to provide rich data on migrant families' FLP by spending time with them in their natural setting which allowed for in-depth exploration of the way parents' past experience, resources and the dominant linguistic norms within the socio-educational context in England were mediated by the parents to shape their FLP.

However, interpretive ethnographic research has been criticised for lack of inclusion of the macro-level, socio- historical and cultural forces that influence participants' actions (Creswell, 2013). This justified the adoption of embedded critical perspectives. Arguably, the adoption of a critical perspective in this study helps to unveil the ways in which migrant families' language practice operates in unequal power relations between dominant (English) and minority languages (HLs). In particular, the critical perspective in this study addresses the relationship between possibility for human agency (parents' decisions which language(s) to practice with their children) and influence of the social structure (national language ideologies and policies) within the wider socio-educational context in England.

#### *4.3.2 The case*

A case is a bounded system which can be an individual, a group, an organisation or a geographical area (Stake, 2006). Each case in this study is a particular family and the people with whom it interacts regularly and who are thought to have important influence on their family language policy and practice including teachers and health visitors, their extended family, friends and ethnic community within the wider socio-educational context in England. The case visually presented in Figure 1 below:



**Figure 1: Conceptualisation of a case in this study**

There are five embedded cases (Yin, 2014) of families in this study. This means that interviews and observations regarding the FLP in the five families were conducted with the focal family but also with the people with whom the family had regular contact and/or those who were likely to influence their FLP such as teachers, family friends, extended family and ethnic community. Data from all interviews, observations and family self-audio-recordings in each family is used primarily to interpret the construction of language policies and language practices of a particular family; yet, when the analysis highlights issues which recur across cases then such issues are brought together to illustrate a particular theme. The rationale for including five cases

is based on a one-year time constraint to conduct the PhD fieldwork. However, five cases are considered to be enough to capture the diversity of migrant families' experiences, and the study will try to make a modest contribution to theory (Yin, 2014).

#### *4.3.3 Site*

The fieldwork took place in London as a typical multilingual site where people from 179 different nations live permanently (Vertovec, 2007). London was chosen as a typical site of globalisation and super-diversity where there are multilingual migrant families; as a matter of fact, one in three families in London is thought to be multilingual (OECD, 2010). Also in London there is a Macedonian ethnic community, a Macedonian Orthodox Church and a Macedonian heritage language school where I was granted access by the Macedonian community. Therefore, the choice of London as a research site is based on its appropriateness for investigation of the research problem in terms of its 'typicality' (Robson, 2016) as well as pragmatic considerations including accessibility, feasibility and cost (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

#### *4.3.4 Sampling*

Sampling went hand in hand with the research questions in this study. The choice of migrant families was based on purposive sampling (Maxwell, 2012). The decision to include migrant families in which parents had different language backgrounds was made due to lack of studies that investigate the language practice and experience of migrant families in which parents have different language backgrounds even though the number of migrant families has been increasing as a result of processes of migration and globalisation (Lanza & Li Wei, 2016; King & Lanza, 2017). Also, the decision to focus on migrant families in which the majority of the parents (the mothers) had a Macedonian background was based on the lack of inclusion of migrant families with an Eastern European background in FLP research. Specifically, the Macedonian ethnic group is among the relatively 'new' immigrant groups in England which have received little empirical attention when compared to other, relatively 'older' immigrant groups which have settled in England earlier (see for example, Blackledge, 2001; Raschka, Li and Lee, 2002; Rampton, 2005; Kenner et al., 2008).

I considered several aspects before choosing five focal migrant families for this study. First, the choice of five families was coherent with the research focus and methodology which aimed to focus on depth rather than breadth (Denscombe, 2014) and this offered several advantages. It enabled me to spend enough time with each family which helped me gain deep insights into the perceptions and practices of migrant families in relation to their FLP, become familiar with each family and develop trust and rapport with participants. It also allowed me to have sufficient time to do interviews and observations with each family and to explore the way parents in migrant families mediated their FLP. Also, the decision to include five families was based on getting rich data which would enable me in-depth exploration of the various ways in which parents in migrant families might mediate their past experience, available resources and dominant linguistic norms in education and the wider society which in turn shape their FLP. Second, parents with varying degrees of different language backgrounds were chosen to analyse if the degree of different language backgrounds were a mediating factor which structured migrant families' FLP. For example, some families had a more similar language background than others. Third, the families had to have at least one young child or a teenager who was attending primary or secondary school in order to analyse if there was any variation in migrant families' FLP depending on the age of their children. It also allowed me to analyse if, how, and why parents might have changed their FLP over time. Three of the migrant families have young children and two of them have teenagers. Fourth, I decided to include migrant families whose children went to the Macedonian heritage language school and migrant families whose children did not go to the school to analyse if that made any difference to their FLP. Finally, the participating families were not supposed to be close social network members with each other because I was going to interview their separate social network of friends to check how that shaped their FLP.

The purposive sampling technique was complemented with convenience sampling (Cohen et al., 2007) as I come from Macedonia and I speak Macedonian. Initially, this enabled me to obtain access to the Macedonian community in London and later to the participating families and their homes as well as their consent to participate in the study. In the course of the study, the fact that I shared the linguistic and cultural background with the mothers in the participating families, and that I am currently living in England as a student, helped me build rapport with the families and obtain valuable data. Finally, having in mind that the study was demanding and time-consuming for the families, I chose those families who were keen to commit themselves to the study and to help me contact their social networks and the children's teachers.

The mothers in the five families are all Macedonian whereas the fathers are either English, Italian, Chinese, Scottish or Serbian. The participating families are presented in Table 1 below:



Family No.	Parents' linguistic background/nationality	Parents' pseudonyms <sup>5</sup> and their age	Parents' educational level	Parents' occupation	Children	Time spent in England for parents
1	M: Macedonian	M: Bisera, 39	Master's degree	Urban design	D: Scarlett, 8 S: Mathew, 3	18
	F: English	F: Jason, 40	Foundation degree	Support worker in social care		born in England
2	M: Macedonian	M: Vesna, 37	Secondary education	Homemaker	D: Giulia, 7 S: Tim, 10 S: Paul, 5	15
	F: Italian	F: Giorgio, 42	Vocational degree	Restaurant worker		17
3	M: Macedonian	M: Mira, 38	Bachelor's degree	Occupational therapist	D: Ann, 6	19
	F: Chinese	F: Chen, 44	Master's degree	City planner		40
4	M: Macedonian	M: Violeta, 45	Foundation degree	Rehabilitation therapy assistant	S: Tom, 14	23
	F: Scottish	F: Ian, 51	Secondary education	Housing manager		23
5	M: Macedonian	M: Lepa, 46	Master's degree	Medical scientist	D: Anastasija, 14	26
	F: Serbian	F: Dragan <sup>6</sup>	Bachelor's degree	Electro-engineer		36

**Table 1: Participating families in the study**

*M: Mother, F: Father, D: Daughter, S: Son*

<sup>5</sup> The names of the family members are all pseudonyms. The choice of pseudonyms corresponds to the participants' original linguistic background, i.e. if a pseudonym is of a Macedonian origin then the real name was Macedonian, too, etc.

<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, Dragan had passed away almost two years before the study and the account of his perceptions about the value of HLs and English and his FLP strategies was given by Lepa, the mother in this family.

### *The Macedonian-English family*

The Macedonian-English family was an aspiring middle-class family which consisted of four family members: the father, Jason, the mother, Bisera and two children: Scarlett, 8 and Mathew, 3. Jason worked in social care, he was born in England and spoke only English. Bisera worked in urban design and she had come to England to study for her degree which made her perceive English as an important language skill for one's success in education. Indeed, both Jason and Bisera were ambitious and were determined to develop their careers by investing in their own education and the education of their children. Worried about Scarlett's educational progress at a largely EAL school, Jason and Bisera had decided to move her to a school where the majority of the children did not have 'too much of a language barrier' and were 'similar to her, they liked to study'. Such perceptions of the high educational value of English had an important impact on their FLP. The family social networks included a Macedonian-Dutch family and a Macedonian-English family.

### *The Macedonian-Italian family*

The Macedonian-Italian family was a working-class migrant family which comprised of six family members: an Italian father, Giorgio, a Macedonian mother, Vesna, three children (Tim, 10, Giulia, 7 and Paul, 5). Giorgio was originally from Sardinia, Italy, and he could speak Italian and Sardinian but his English was still developing because of his limited opportunities in the past to learn English as a low paid worker in an Italian speaking restaurant in London where he was still working and speaking '99 per cent Italian'. The mother, Vesna, was a homemaker and was still looking for a job. She believed that the difficulty to find a job was a result of her lack of educational qualifications and because her English was 'not perfect'. Both parents had low levels of economic, linguistic and cultural resources and this shaped their perceptions about the value of English and their HLs which ultimately influenced their FLP. The Macedonian grandmother had come to live with the family ten years ago to help them raise the children. The family did not have close contact with Macedonian and Italian communities in England, and the family's closest contacts in England included the mother's sister married to another Macedonian, a Macedonian friend married to another Italian and a woman of a Chinese background married to an Englishman.

### *The Macedonian-Chinese family*

There were three family members in the Macedonian-Chinese family: the father, Chen, the mother, Mira and the daughter, Ann, 6. Chen had immigrated with his family from Hong Kong and had come to England at a very young age of ‘three or four’. He was the youngest child in his family and he was brought up by his older siblings who made a ‘mistake’ and spoke Hakka to him instead of Cantonese. Mira was born and raised in Macedonia and she came to England as an au pair when she was 19. When she first arrived, she lacked English language skills and struggled to find a job. Chen and Mira rose from their modest beginnings to a middle-class family; Chen worked as a city planner and Mira was an occupational therapist. Both Chen and Mira were detached from their respective cultures and had only a few friends. Apart from the Macedonian grandmother who visited the family a few times a year, usually during summers to take care of their daughter, Ann, the closest social networks of the family included a Macedonian woman married to an Englishman who was very close to the mother in the family because they came to England together and shared similar views, and a Romanian woman whose daughter was in the same class at school as Ann.

### *The Macedonian-Scottish family*

The Macedonian-Scottish family consisted of three family members: the father, Ian, the mother, Violeta and their 14-year-old son, Tom. Ian worked as a housing manager whereas Violeta worked as a rehabilitation therapist. Although during the study Violeta was an active member of the Macedonian church committee in London and had close contact with other Macedonians, her situation during the first years in England when her son was a young child was completely different. Having emigrated from Macedonia as an au pair 23 years ago, Violeta ‘accepted English quickly’ and rarely made contact with other Macedonians in England; indeed, at that time her closest contacts were mostly English. The father, Ian, came to England 23 years ago to look for a job. He was the dominant member of the family and he preferred a quiet life without much social contact. Such a family situation and previous experience had an important influence on the parents’ perceptions of the value of English and their HLs. The closest social networks of the family were mostly friends whose children used to go to the same Macedonian HL school as Tom: a Macedonian-Croatian family and a Macedonian friend.

### *The Macedonian-Serbian family*

In the Macedonian-Serbian family there were initially three family members: the father, Dragan, the mother Lepa and the daughter, Anastasija. Sadly, Dragan had passed away two years before the study. He had worked as an electro engineer and had lived in England for 36 years. He had been a strong advocate of speaking only Serbian and Macedonian to their daughter in the home. Ambitious and outspoken by nature, Lepa was also a strong supporter of maintaining the family's cultural and linguistic heritage. She had come to England at a young age as an au pair with limited English language skills 26 years ago; however, she had studied, gained a Master's degree and had become a medical scientist. A striking characteristic of this family was that they strongly identified with their heritage background which was evident in Lepa being a proactive member of the Macedonian church committee; she used to teach folk dancing in the Macedonian HL school; their daughter possessed Macedonian and Serbian traditional dance dresses and was still attending a Serbian folk dancing group in London and the family practiced heritage traditions related to cooking food, observing religious holidays, watching TV and listening to music. All of this was related to Lepa's perceptions of Macedonian and Serbian as valuable linguistic and cultural resources which in turn influenced this family's FLP. The family's closest social contacts were two other Macedonian friends with whom Lepa had regular contact.

#### *4.3.5 Negotiating access and procedure*

In ethnographic research, successful fieldwork entry is challenging because of the prolonged engagement of participants in the study, with the researcher following their everyday activities (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Also, permission for access to collection of data depends on gatekeepers, including organisations or people who are in touch with potential participants.

Initial negotiation of access to migrant families started in early February 2014 when a letter explaining my research was emailed to the Macedonian Embassy in the UK, the Immigration Agency of Macedonia, the Association of Macedonians in the UK and the Macedonian Orthodox Church in London. The above institutions helped me get in touch with potential Macedonian families in different ways. Contact details of the teacher in the Macedonian heritage language school in London and the priest in the Church were sent to me by the

Immigration Agency of Macedonia; the Macedonian Embassy sent me contact details of two active members of the Church committee and the Association of Macedonians put the information for my study on their website. Initially, interest was shown by young couples in which the women were usually Macedonian and their husbands were of another nationality. However, these families were young couples who did not have children yet and were therefore not suitable for this study.

More emails were sent to potential families. Using emails to contact migrant families in these initial stages proved to be a less successful strategy. The response was low and only two families responded. I realised that gaining initial access to more migrant families at this point was going to be more successful if I got in touch with them in person because I was still an outsider for the community. It is pivotal therefore, if a community member of the group can act as an intermediary or a facilitator (Fetterman, 2010). This was possible with the help of a Macedonian woman who could be considered as my social network member (or my social capital) because she knows my family in Macedonia. Meeting this woman was serendipitous and it happened on the first meeting with the parents in the Macedonian heritage language school when we found out that our families originate from the same village in Macedonia. This was very helpful because the group's trust in the woman as a facilitator was extended to me as the researcher, and negotiation for my access to the group was successful. I met parents whose children went to the Macedonian heritage language school in London and chatted and had coffee with them. The majority of the parents were Macedonian mothers married to husbands of other nationalities. I told them more about myself and my studies. This face-to-face contact with potential families was important because they had a chance to meet me and get to know me better. For the Macedonian mothers I was a student who needed their help and many of them empathised with me and wanted to help me with my research.

The fieldwork with the five families in this study was conducted in parallel, I traced their language policies and practices simultaneously. This study had three phases. After being granted access to the Macedonian community in London in the first phase I started to build rapport with potential families as I visited the Macedonian heritage language school and participated in informal gatherings such as church meetings and celebrations in the Macedonian community. During this time, I did informal observations and tried to identify potential families which would fit the criteria for this study. This personal contact with the parents proved to be

a useful strategy and several families agreed to participate in the study and gave me their full consent.

In the second phase I identified the participating families and did interviews with the family members and visited them for informal chats and observations while at the same time I was attending the lessons in the Macedonian heritage language school and the service in the Macedonian church. Sometimes I went to social events organised by the Macedonian community and socialised with the families and had meals together.

During the third phase I negotiated access to the families' close networks of friends and the children's school teachers and I arranged interviews with them. The parents and the children's networks of close friends were included in the study with the aim to examine how their support, advice or criticism might influence migrant families' FLP. This was based on Li Wei's (1994) argument that the individuals with whom a family exchanges direct aid, advice, criticism and support may exert a powerful influence on a migrant family's language practices. Access to the families' networks was made easier as the families had already gained their trust in me. In a similar vein, access to mainstream school teachers was made possible by the parents' negotiation with them: after having established rapport with the parents, they were willing to help me with my project and to ask their children's teachers for an interview with me. I wrote a letter to the teachers explaining my research which was further supported by a letter of support from my academic supervisor. Then the parents were asked to give the letters to the teachers, to explain the aim of my research and to contact me by email to answer any questions they had and to arrange a time for an interview with them. This strategy appeared to be useful because the parents had already established a close contact with the teachers, unlike me who was an outsider for the teachers. The response and negotiation period was long. At first only two teachers replied. Even after they replied I had to negotiate the best time for them to have the interview and my strategy was to give them the freedom to choose the time and place. In order to get response from the rest of the teachers I asked parents to ask teachers again and at this point I sent them emails directly explaining my research. After this I was able to arrange interviews with three more teachers. I did not have an interview only with the teacher in the Macedonian-Scottish family because the boy in the family refused to have the letter given to his teacher and he explained to me that he felt shy to share his background with the teachers. I respected his sense of privacy and did not pressurise him to do that but at the same time I made sure I provided his account why this was the case. In the Macedonian-Chinese family the girl's

current teacher did not respond and after several attempts when she failed to respond I contacted the girl’s kindergarten teachers who were keen to have an interview and I interviewed them instead. In the Macedonian-Serbian family my ideal plan was to interview both a language teacher and a pastoral care teacher but the pastoral care teacher did not think she was the expert to talk about the girl’s language. I explained to her that she did not have to be a language specialist to talk about multilingualism; however even after this she preferred not to take part. I respected her decision and I interviewed only the language teacher.

The following table presents the people who were interviewed for each of the five focal families including their social networks of friends, extended family and teachers:

Family	Other people interviewed (close friends, teachers and extended family)
Macedonian - English	Macedonian-English family (Macedonian mother, English father, two boys, 7, 5) Macedonian-Dutch family (Macedonian mother, Dutch father, girl, 6) Mainstream school teacher (English background) Mainstream school teaching assistant (Bulgarian background) Macedonian school language teacher
Macedonian - Italian	Macedonian grandmother Vesna’s sister and her family (two Macedonian parents and two children, 7, 5) Macedonian friend Macedonian friend’s son, 8 Chinese friend Mainstream school teacher (Somali-Arabic background)
Macedonian - Chinese	Macedonian grandmother Macedonian friend Romanian friend Romanian friend’s daughter, 6 Kindergarten teachers (x2)
Macedonian - Scottish	Macedonian-Croatian family (two parents and a boy, 13) Macedonian friend (kindergarten teacher, 39) Son’s Macedonian-Serbian friend, 14
Macedonian - Serbian	Macedonian friend Macedonian friend Daughter’s Macedonian-English friend, 14 Mainstream school teacher (Spanish background)

**Table 2: Other people interviewed for each of the five focal families in the study**

#### *4.3.6 Reflexivity*

Researchers' biases and assumptions are constantly being critically examined during the research process. The way to achieve knowledge is through researcher's reflexivity which Bourdieu stresses heavily in his 'Invitation to Reflexive Sociology' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Researcher's reflexivity is central to Bourdieu's method. For Bourdieu (1990a) reflexivity means that researchers need to recognise and acknowledge their own position within the academic field and the way it influences the analysis of their participants. As Deer (2008) contends, Bourdieu's reflexive approach allows researchers to reduce a failure to recognise the effects of their own relation to the object of their research. Specifically, Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) suggest that three types of biases may blur a researcher's sociological gaze, namely his social origin (class, gender, ethnicity), his position in the academic field and his intellectual bias.

A critical reflection of my own background or my 'habitus', my views and experience helps to produce less partial knowledge. Indeed, the choice of my research topic is closely related to my position as a woman, a student, a Macedonian, as well as my previous teaching experience.

My experience as a teacher who used to teach children from migrant families and whose first language was not English made me more aware of the opportunities and challenges in such families as well as a widespread inequality between languages. Before I came to study at Cambridge I was a Grade 3 teacher in an international school in Macedonia where I had a chance to work with migrant children who spoke another language at home with their families. The backgrounds of children varied from non-Anglophone including African, Albanian, Croatian, Greek, Hungarian, Macedonian, Russian, Serbian and Ukrainian to Anglophone including English, Canadian and American. The school's official policy was to use only English as the medium of instruction which in practice however, proved to be challenging for many nine-to ten-year-old children from non-Anglophone backgrounds that I was teaching. For instance, although a Russian speaking girl (7) and a Macedonian speaking girl (10) were keen learners, they often asked for translation of some English subject matter concepts in order to be able to understand them. In other cases, they would check if their understanding of the English word was the same as their understanding of the Russian or the Macedonian word. This way, I often wondered how to help those children learn by providing some Macedonian and Russian words, and at the same time to respect the policy to use only English to teach these



children. In my view, non-Anglophone children's learning of subject matter in English was challenging for their parents too, because their home languages were different from English, and often parents had limited command of English themselves to help their children learn. This concern was often expressed by the mother of the Macedonian girl (10) and she was considering taking the girl to a Macedonian speaking school. However, the mother had taken the girl to an English school because of it being more prestigious and the opportunities it would give the girl to study abroad in the future. Hence, I often wondered how the families' FLP was related to the social value of languages and their unequal social status. For instance, a Macedonian-Scottish family reported using only English at home because they wanted their children to be successful at school and the boy and the girl had a limited proficiency in Macedonian, even though they were living in Macedonia.

After coming to study at Cambridge I started to reflect even more on this issue. I remembered the language practices of my own relatives who had immigrated to Australia and Germany. My uncle and aunt who live in Sidney, Australia are both Macedonian but they decided to speak to their four children in English. When my grandmother visited them she was baffled to learn about their decision to speak English to them and when she asked them why they had decided to speak English to their children they told her that they wanted the children to be 'among the first ones at school'. This meant that they were implicitly concerned that the children would lag behind other English speaking children if they spoke Macedonian to them and that this would negatively affect their chances for educational success. By contrast, my cousins who live in Dusseldorf, Germany speak Macedonian to their children because they think that is the only way for their children to learn Macedonian.

My teaching experience and my relatives' linguistic practices which I described above have shaped my own beliefs about multilingualism. It is therefore important to acknowledge that my personal belief about multilingualism is that it is beneficial for individuals and for society. However, I was careful not to make this evident during the field work when I interviewed and observed the migrant families because I was aware that this might influence their usual linguistic practices and perceptions about the value of speaking their HLs and English.

Another issue in ethnographic research that I was aware of was field relation with participants. Relationships with participants are sensitive (LeCompte, Preissle & Tesch, 1993). Building a relationship of trust with participants is needed so they feel comfortable to share their

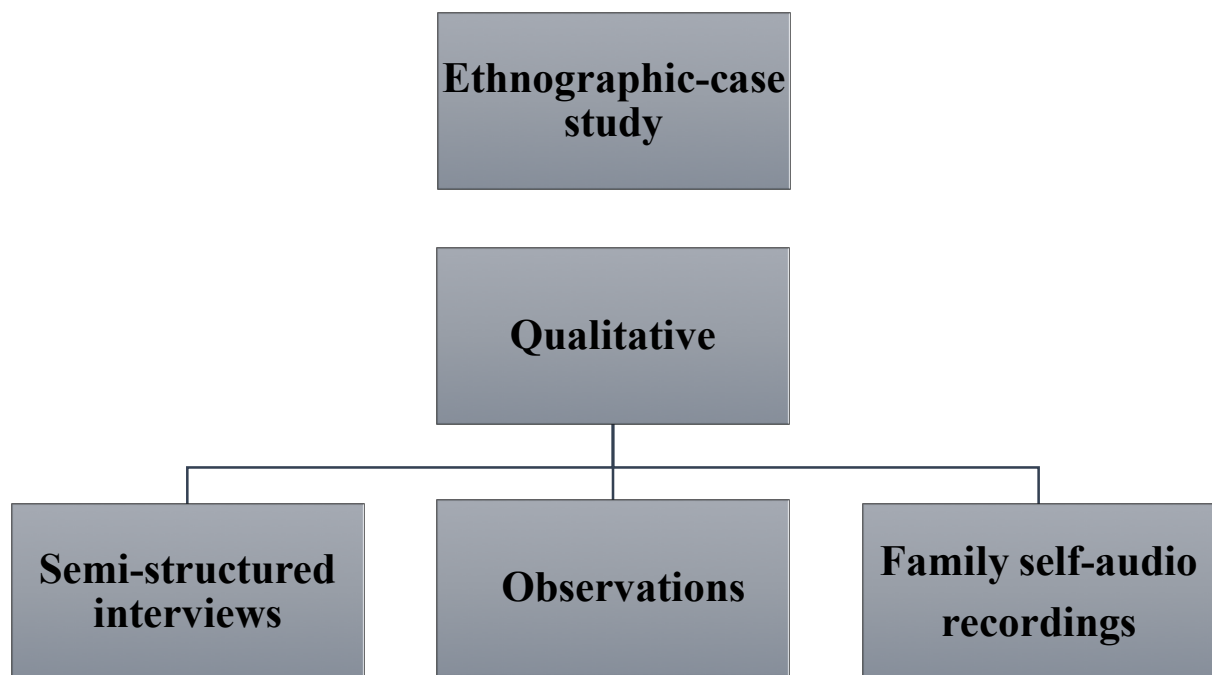
experiences with the researcher. Nevertheless, building rapport with participants in this study was approached very carefully. On the one hand, it is important to establish a relationship of trust with participants to obtain their honest answers. On the other hand, I was aware that over-*rapport* with my participants and personal identification with their perspectives may bias my ability as a researcher to treat their perspectives as problematic. An example of the consequences of over-*rapport* is Willis's (1981) study on working class boys in the UK, which resulted in his inability to distance himself from the views of the boys. Another potential threat that I was aware of, was the possibility for parents see me as an expert or critic of what good language practice is. Therefore, whenever I was asked what I thought about speaking English or HLs I did not offer my personal views, agreements or disagreements with the families' language practices, but I tried to keep a distance as a 'marginal native' (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). A marginal reflexive ethnographer keeps social and intellectual distance which allows for the analytic work of the ethnographer. This means that I alternated field roles from non-participant to participant roles, in order to collect different kinds of data that would enhance interpretation of the language practices by the families. Therefore, I built rapport with the families to obtain their trust, but at the same time the research was reflexive to minimise the dangers of over-*rapport*.

I believe that the access to the families in my study was a success as a result of several factors. First it is my position. As a student in England I am a migrant myself and the parents, their social networks and the teachers were keen to assist me because they could relate to my situation as a result of their own earlier experiences as migrants in England. Yet, I was aware that studying at Cambridge I might be perceived as elitist. However, having met the woman who knows my family back in Macedonia was helpful to dispel this and I shared with them that I was studying on a scholarship. Second, being a Macedonian woman myself helped me as well because of the close relationships I could build with the mothers who were also Macedonian and having gained their trust they helped me get access to their husbands, their family friends and their children's teachers.

This self-awareness that I have described above helped me stay vigilant of possible contradictions; it reminded me to suspend any preconceptions and keep an open mind placing any preconceptions under constant examination.

#### 4.4 Data collection methods<sup>7</sup>

This study aimed to explore migrant families' FLP in relation to how parents mediated their past experience, available resources and dominant linguistic norms in the socio-educational context in England. Therefore, an ethnographic approach with extended periods of time with the families appeared necessary to explore the complex ways in which various micro- and macro-level factors shaped migrant families' FLP. Data collection in ethnographic studies is longitudinal and relatively 'unstructured' to allow the researcher to document data as they are naturally occurring in observations and conversations with participants in the setting (Fetterman, 2010). Primary data was collected from interviews and field notes from participant observations, whereas complementary data was obtained from family self-audio recordings and naturally occurring data which was used to enrich my own understanding of the migrant families' FLP rather than for a systematic analysis. The data collection design and methods are presented in Figure 2 below:



**Figure 2: Data collection design and methods**

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<sup>7</sup> Data collection methods were piloted with one Macedonian-English family in London in May and June 2014

In the above multi-method approach the methods complemented each other in the sense that this design enabled me to triangulate the data by comparing what the parents said and what they did. The data collection process lasted for a year, from September 2014 to August 2015<sup>8</sup> and the prolonged stay in the field enabled me to develop insights into the everyday life of the families, establish trust and rapport with them and to engage in observations and conversations with the families throughout the fieldwork. This prolonged ‘immersion’ with the migrant families allowed me to get in-depth understanding of the parents’ aspirations and expectations which were very important factors informing their FLP. Each method is discussed in detail in the sections below.

#### *4.4.1 Interviews*

The interview in qualitative research is used as a method to understand people's subjective experience and perceptions (Cohen et al., 2007). The choice of interviews in this study was justified by the aims of the study which were to investigate how migrant families’ FLP was shaped by the way the parents mediated their experience, perceptions and available resources. Also the aim of the study was to examine how the perceptions, language practice and experience of close friends, extended family and the children’s teachers had the potential to shape migrant families’ FLP and therefore interviews were also conducted with them. In all cases the interviews were semi-structured with open-ended and non-directive questions to be discussed to give the participants freedom to discuss topics of their choice (LeCompte et al., 1993). An important aspect here is that participants have freedom to organise the context the way they wish (Denscombe, 2014). This format is often used in ethnographic interviews and it resembles a two-way conversation that flows freely to allow for participants' unique contribution by sharing their individual experiences with the researcher. However, as Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) note, the difference between conversations and ethnographer's interviewing is that the ethnographer has a research agenda and therefore he/she needs to retain some control over interview proceedings. For this reason, a semi-structured interview format was adopted with a flexible list of topics for discussion.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> See Appendix for the stages of the study

<sup>9</sup> See Appendices

49 interviews were conducted with the five focal families, their network of friends, extended family and teachers who were expected to have some influence on their FLP. All interviews were audio recorded with a professional recording device to guarantee the quality of the recording. All interviews were transcribed verbatim as soon as they were conducted during the fieldwork. All interviews which were conducted in Macedonian were analysed in Macedonian in order to keep any nuances in meaning and selected excerpts for different categories were only translated at the last stage of data analysis. There are three sets of interview data in the study all of which were obtained from interviews face-to-face with the participants.

### *Interviews with the focal families*

The first set of interview data consists of interviews with the five focal families in this study including the parents and the children. In these interviews I elicited the parents' experience with migration, language learning, education, their perceptions about the value of their HLs and English, their knowledge and appreciation of multilingualism, how they decided which languages to speak to their children, etc. The children in the five families were asked about their language practices with family members, their attitudes towards using English and HLs and opportunities to share their HLs in mainstream schools. The interviews lasted between one hour and one hour and a half. The interviews with the children were shorter and lasted for up to forty minutes. The interviews with the family members were conducted in Macedonian and in English. All mothers with the exception of the mother in the Macedonian-Chinese family preferred Macedonian. The fathers used English and the children were given the choice which language to use. All of the children used English because they felt they could express themselves better in English.

First, the mothers were deliberately interviewed individually either in the Macedonian heritage language school or in the comfort of their homes. This strategy had several important aspects. Firstly, as the mothers are all Macedonian, I wanted to establish rapport with them first and to gain their trust so that I would be in a more favourable position to get access to the fathers and to carry out interviews with them, too, as well as with the family social network of friends and the children's teachers later on in the fieldwork. Secondly, my expectation was that by interviewing the mothers in the absence of the fathers, the mothers were going to be able to use Macedonian during the interviews and to feel free to tell me about their migration and language learning experience in greater depth, as well as any other aspects that they might have felt

uncomfortable with in the presence of their husbands. For example, Violeta felt free to share with me that her husband had a negative attitude towards Macedonian and how this led to her use of English which shaped this family's FLP to some extent. Therefore, the decision to carry out individual interviews with the mothers was a valuable strategy which enabled me to gain deep insights into the way unequal power relations between the parents in the migrant family may shape their FLP. This might have been impossible if the interviews were conducted with the two parents simultaneously.

Next were the interviews with the children. Interviews with children were conducted either after the lessons in the Macedonian heritage language school in London or in the family homes. The fact that I used to be a primary school and an EFL teacher in Macedonia helped me build rapport with the children and elicit their perceptions successfully. All of the children in the five families were collaborative and were keen to share their experience with me. During the interviews only Tom (Macedonian-Scottish family) seemed to be a little reluctant to discuss his experience with me. Having in mind that he was a teenager I adopted a strategy of being friendly and engaged in a talk with him about sports and hobbies that I knew he was interested in before I did the formal interview with him. This strategy was successful to help him relax and to see that I was genuinely interested in a conversation with him and that I valued what he had to say as a chance to learn from his experience. In a similar vein, when doing the interview with the youngest of all the children in the focal families, Ann (Macedonian-Chinese family) she was at first answering questions with a simple 'yes' or 'no', and yet, my adoption of a friendly, collaborative attitude by asking for further clarifications in a supportive and non-threatening manner made her feel safe and relaxed to share her ideas with me. Therefore, from my experience with interviewing children in this study, I would argue that during interviews with children it is pivotal for them to feel safe and the adoption of a friendly attitude, establishment of a close relation of trust and genuine interest in what they have to say is crucial for successful elicitation of valuable data. Also, during the interviews with the children, I realised that I needed to use simple terminology to make myself understood. For example, with Tom I used the term 'proficiency' when discussing his ability to use English, Macedonian and Scottish Gaelic and I realised that it needed to be simplified with more common language so that any misunderstanding was avoided.

Finally, the interviews with the fathers followed shortly after the interviews with the children at their earliest convenience. I interviewed all of the fathers in the family homes and the

interviews were conducted in English. The fact that the fathers were interviewed in the family homes gave me a chance to visit the families' homes (again) and to build rapport with them even more and form a basis for future contacts and visits during the study. In a similar vein to the interviews with the mothers, the fathers were asked about their experiences with languages, migration, education, attitudes towards HLs and English, and language practices within the family among family members. Individual interviews with the fathers were a chance to cross check if they had the same account of the decisions (and reasons) about language use in the family and also to cross check their attitudes and perceptions of English and HLs with those of the mothers with the aim to identify if there was a potential mismatch between the two and to investigate further how that might have shaped their FLP.

#### *Interviews with the families' social network of friends and extended family*

The second set of interview data was with the close social network of friends and extended family in each family. The interviews with the families' network of friends and extended family were arranged with the help of the parents. They took place in different locations: their homes, in cafes, in the Macedonian heritage language school in London, the Macedonian Orthodox church in London or the families' homes.

Firstly, interviews with the families' close network of friends were conducted. They were family friends with whom the participating family had a regular and direct contact and who were of some importance to them (Li Wei, 1994; Bernardi, 2011). Names of the parents' and the children's close social network of friends were elicited through a name-generating method and the interview procedure of Cochran et al. (1990)<sup>10</sup>. The parents' close friends included people whom they saw frequently and with whom they exchanged information about schooling and language use. The themes for discussion with the parents' network of friends were similar to those with the parents in the focal families, except that in the interviews with the parents' friends, they were asked if they had shared advice with the parents in the focal families about language learning and practice. This was done with the aim to check if the parents' friends had any significant influence on the focal families' FLP. It is important to note that due to the dynamic nature of social contacts and change of network membership, the list of social network contacts of each family referred to one point in time, that is, while the research was in progress.

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<sup>10</sup> See Appendices

In a similar vein, the children's close friends included the children whom they identified as being their best friends or the children with whom they spent most of the time, either in the mainstream school or in the Macedonian heritage language school. The aim of the interviews with the children's friends was to gain greater understanding into how children's perceptions about the value of HLs and English and their socialisation into the value of languages in the home and in schools (mainstream and heritage) might influence the way the children shaped migrant families' FLP with their agency to accept, contest and negotiate the families' FLP.

Secondly, interviews with the extended family of the focal families were conducted. The opportunity to conduct interviews with the focal families' extended family was to some extent limited due to fact that all of the focal families were nuclear which meant that they consisted only of parents and children and in almost all of the cases the extended family lived back in Macedonia or in another country.<sup>11</sup> However, six interviews were conducted with extended family members to check how they might have influenced the focal families' FLP with the languages they spoke to the children, their perceptions about the value of HLs and English, and their advice and support to the parents.

#### *Interviews with teachers*

The third and final set of interview data was with the children's teachers (mainstream school and Macedonian heritage language school). The interviews with the teachers were semi-structured, with open-ended questions to allow the teachers to express themselves on issues of their choice while at the same time using prompts to guide the discussion (see Appendix).

Seven teachers were interviewed in total. The Macedonian heritage language school teacher was the same for all of the children as there was only one Macedonian language school in London. The other six teachers were mainstream school teachers: two kindergarten teachers (Macedonian-Chinese family), two primary school teachers and one primary school teaching

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<sup>11</sup> Of all the focal families only Vesna's (Macedonian-Italian family) sister lived in London with her family which were interviewed. Also, the Macedonian-Italian family was the only family which lived together with the (Macedonian) grandmother, who was interviewed. The Macedonian grandmother in the Macedonian-Chinese family was interviewed because she was in England to help the family take care of their daughter for a few months during the study. Although Chen's (Macedonian-Chinese family) extended family lived in England (brothers and sisters with their families) and investigation of their views would have been valuable for the study, it was considered that it was inappropriate to conduct interviews with them at that time due to terminal illness of one of the extended family members.



assistant (Macedonian-English family, Macedonian-Italian family) and one secondary school teacher (Macedonian-Serbian family).

Mainstream school teachers were asked questions about their experience of teaching migrant children, their usual language practice in the school, if and how they included HLs in the lessons, their perceptions of multilingual children and multilingual migrant families. The aim of the interviews with the mainstream school teachers was to examine how they might have shaped the migrant families' FLP with their perceptions about the value of English and HLs, with their language practices, and with any advice to migrant families about language learning and use. The interview with the Macedonian heritage language school teacher focused on her perceptions about migrant families' FLP from her experience and observations of migrant families in the school, her perceptions about the role of the school for supporting migrant families' FLP and also additional information about the attitudes and language practices of some of the participating focal families in this study.

In order to do the interviews with the teachers successfully, I deliberately asked them to choose the time and place of the interview. The interviews with the teachers took place in their schools after they had finished work. I established rapport with them by having a friendly talk before I switched on the audio recorder to help them relax. I talked to them about their experience of being a teacher and about general information about their school. Also, before the audio recorder was switched on, the teachers were reassured about their anonymity and the confidentiality of the interview. They were thanked for their time and the importance of their participation for the study was also acknowledged. Another advantage which helped me build rapport with the teachers more easily was the fact that I was in a similar age range with them, in fact they were all young teachers in their early thirties or early forties. Also, it was helpful that I used to be a teacher myself and shared that with the teachers. The interviews with the teachers lasted for approximately an hour. They were audio-recorded and transcribed shortly after they were conducted. Also interviews were accompanied by field notes of informal conversations before and after the interview. The field notes of the informal conversations with the teachers were taken as soon as possible after the interview, usually immediately after the interview in order to stay close to teachers' original words.

The following table summarises the description and aims of all of the interviews in this study:

Interview respondents	Description	Aim
Interviews with the focal families	<p>Interviews were conducted with 5 focal families including 9 parents and 7 children. There were 4 fathers of different backgrounds (English, Italian, Chinese, Scottish) and 5 Macedonian mothers. Regarding the gender of the children in the families, there were 5 girls and 3 boys aged between 6 and 14.</p> <p>Interviews with the family members were conducted separately. The first round of interviews was carried out with the Macedonian mothers which was followed by interviews with the children and the final round was with the fathers.</p>	<p>Explore how parents' past experience, resources and perceptions of the value of languages shaped their FLP.</p> <p>Explore the perceptions of children of their HLs and English.</p> <p>Explore how children's socialisation in the family and the school shapes their attitude to English and HLs.</p> <p>Explore how children shape the families' FLP with their agency to accept, contest or negotiate parents' FLP.</p>
Interviews with the families' social network of friends and extended family	<p>Interviews with a total of 20 network of friends were conducted. 13 were parents' friends and 7 were children's friends.</p> <p>6 extended family members were interviewed. 2 grandmothers, 1 aunt, 1uncle and 2 cousins</p>	<p>Explore how the network of parents' and children's friends shaped the families' FLP with their advice, support or criticism.</p> <p>Explore how other migrant families' past experience, resources and perceptions of the value of English and HLs shaped their FLP.</p>
Interviews with teachers	<p>7 teachers were interviewed in total. 1 teacher was Macedonian heritage language teacher and 6 were mainstream school teachers, 2 kindergarten teachers, 2 primary school teachers, 1 primary school teaching assistant and 1 secondary school teacher</p>	<p>Explore teachers' perceptions of the value of HLs and English, their language practices in the classroom and advice and support for migrant families' language practices.</p> <p>Explore how teachers shaped migrant families' FLP with their perceptions, practice, advice and support.</p>

**Table 3: Interviews: Description and aims**

#### 4.4.2 Observation

In ethnographic research observation is regarded as an important source for data generation which enables the researcher to obtain ‘live data’ (Denscombe, 2014; Robson, 2016). Observations in this study were initially open/unstructured which gradually shifted to progressive focusing to provide complementary perspectives on migrant families’ FLP ranging from the general to the particular (Cohen et al., 2007). Observation was carried out in this study to fulfill two aims. Firstly, observation was well suited to examine the actual FLP of the five focal families in this study, and to cross-check the families’ reported FLP with their actual FLP. This was important because the study did not only rely on the families’ reported FLP but also on the actual FLP that could be observed from actual interactions among family members of a particular family. As the majority of the families reported having an English FLP during the interviews, great variations of their English FLP were generally not observed. The exception to this was the grandmother in the Macedonian-Italian family who reported having a Macedonian-only FLP with the children in the family but was in fact having a Macedonian-and-English FLP. In this sense observation was a valuable method to complement interviews and ensure triangulation by verifying reported FLP with actual FLP and investigation of the reasons for any discrepancy. Secondly, it was important to observe not only which languages the parents were using but also what parental aims, aspirations and ambitions underpinned their FLP. In this sense, observation was a valuable method to document not only *language use per se* but also what parents *aimed to do* with the languages they used in the actual interactions with their children, spouses, friends and extended family.

Observations were initially unstructured and started gradually from the Macedonian heritage language school and Macedonian Orthodox church in London and then into the families’ homes. As Fetterman (2010) states, during the initial stages of observation in ethnographic research, the ethnographer takes his/her time to ‘get acquainted’ and become familiar with the groups’ way of life. This is what I did during the initial stages of the fieldwork. After negotiating access to the focal families I regularly travelled from Cambridge to London to go to the Macedonian heritage language school and the Macedonian Orthodox church as well as to other places for social gatherings, celebrations and observations of religious holidays in the

Macedonian ethnic community in London<sup>12</sup>. During the initial observations in the church, the school and other places for social gatherings of the Macedonian ethnic community I had a chance to adopt ‘a wide lens’ (Wolcott, 2008) to observe migrant families and their language choice in informal interactions with other migrant families and members of the Macedonian community as well as with their children. In this sense, participation in informal social gatherings at the beginning of the study was particularly useful for me to get a general idea of the language practices of the focal migrant families but also of other migrant families. The mothers from the Macedonian-Scottish and Macedonian Serbian family were very active members in the Macedonian community and the contact with them was useful to meet other migrant families and to engage in informal conversations and observations of their language practices.

After this initial period, my attention gradually shifted from descriptive to focused and selective observations on particular instances of the families’ language practice and the reasons behind their FLP. This meant that the observations did not only focus on the families’ language use but also on other aspects related to what their observed FLP was telling me about the parents’ expectation about the role of English and HLs for educational and economic success, their value for cultural affiliation, etc. In order to build rapport with the focal families I engaged in informal conversations with the parents and the children in the five focal families about the children’s school activities, academic progress, family life, etc. However, I was careful not to put pressure on the families or invade their privacy. I was aware that families had their daily activities and routines. Therefore, while I tried to observe them regularly for several times a month, observations in the family homes were conducted during interviews or when families themselves invited me in their homes. Overall, in observations, the language use of the families was observed and noted down with the aim to ask for clarifications in follow-up conversations. The children in the Macedonian-Italian family and the Macedonian-English family who attended the Macedonian heritage language school in London were observed during lessons twice a month (usually on alternate Sunday mornings) and these observations lasted for two hours each time. This was another opportunity to observe the families’ FLP.

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<sup>12</sup> For example, I attended a food fair in London in which the Macedonian ethnic community was taking part, as well as gatherings in restaurants for observation of religious holidays, celebrations in the Macedonian Embassy in London etc.

Yet, a potential threat in observation is the ‘observer paradox’ or ‘Hawthorne effect’ (Denscombe, 2014). This means that participants may not display their "real" behavior during my presence. However, as Wolcott (2008) holds, there are several strategies to counter this. First, ethnographic research is longitudinal – in this case up to 12 months and during long periods participants and researchers develop a more natural stance during which it is difficult to maintain pretended behavior. For example, even though the grandmother in the Macedonian-Italian family told me she spoke only Macedonian to the children in the family. I soon discovered that this was not the case by observing her actual language practice in the course of the fieldwork and by cross checking with other family members. This is related to triangulation of data. Ethnography is known for unhurried judgments (Fetterman, 2010), and in this ethnographic study multiple views were obtained to help me create a holistic picture of the families’ FLP.

#### *4.4.2.1 My role as an observer*

An ethnographer may choose to adopt either a non-participant or a participant observation role, or to alternate between these two roles in the course of the research in order to collect different data sets which are suitable to answer the research questions (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). During the fieldwork I constantly reflected upon my role and my actions in order to maintain my identity as a researcher.

At the beginning of the study, a non-participant role was adopted so that I had a chance to familiarize myself with the families’ language practices. As the families became used to my presence in their environment my role gradually shifted between non-participant and participant roles for two reasons. First, participant observation involves doing the same activities as participants (Fetterman, 2010). In this study participant observation meant that I attended formal and informal social gatherings in the church, the Embassy, the heritage language school and the families' homes for celebrations or leisure time activities. Arguably, a participant role gives the ethnographer an opportunity to become involved in the groups' activities, to interact with them and thus learn about their culture (Wolcott, 2008). I agree that this is an important aspect of ethnographic research, and for this reason I consciously decided to be present at social gatherings and religious observations in the Macedonian Orthodox church and Macedonian Embassy in London. This was particularly useful during the initial stages of the fieldwork which enabled me to build rapport with the participating families in the

sense that they had opportunities to get to know me better so that later during the fieldwork they felt comfortable to share their perceptions and experiences with me.

However, while the adoption of a participant role enabled me to obtain an insider's understanding of the families' 'subjective' views and practices in their natural setting with my active engagement and 'immersion' with their activities, I was aware that my identity and my role as a researcher may be blurred if I take a constant role as a participant. For that reason, I consciously took a step back at times and adopted a non-participant role, or as Wolcott (2008) puts it, I tried to keep 'a low profile'. This strategy was useful because it allowed for my analytic work as a researcher. Another potential threat I was aware was the possibility for parents to see me as an expert and evaluator of their practices. My aim was to minimise this threat by adopting a role as a learner who had an opportunity to learn from the families. The adoption of this role was made easier by the fact that I am younger than the parents in all cases; I am a student; and I do not have children of my own. This way, the parents were keen to share their language strategies with me without thinking I was the expert on that issue.

#### *4.4.2.2 Field notes*

Systematic, 'thick' description of the families observed social practices were documented by taking field notes (Cohen et al., 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Consistent with a qualitative research design, this study provided thick descriptions (Mackey & Gass, 2015) of the context and participants' language use, and it generated focused data progressively through ethnographic interactions. There were two kinds of field notes, namely descriptive and reflexive. Descriptive field notes were taken 'in situ' to capture the families' verbal and non-verbal actions, and information about the context (audience, setting). They were expanded and developed shortly after observations. My strategy was to organise field notes as soon as possible after observations. Reflexive field notes took the form of memos (Maxwell, 2012) which served two purposes. First, they enabled the development of analytic ideas and systematic monitoring of the research progress. Second, reflexive accounts of the ethnographer's "feelings of personal comfort, anxiety, surprise, shock, or revulsion" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007, p. 151) throw light into the ethnographer's personal and subjective responses and relationships with participants during fieldwork. I was aware that these feelings may influence what I perceived as noteworthy, strange or problematic in the

research. For this reason, the existence of such feelings and their possible influence on the research were acknowledged.

A concern about recording observation in ethnographic research is often raised (Delamont, 2012). In this sense, note taking should be carried out with care and self-conscious awareness because it may disturb the parents' usual ways of practicing languages. Therefore, the role of note taking was explained to participants in this study, and I took conscious steps how to minimise its effect on their usual practices; whenever I thought it was inappropriate to take notes I made a conscious decision to remember the issue being observed and I noted it down as soon as possible after the event.

#### *4.4.3 Family self-audio recordings*

A complementary method in this study, family-self audio recordings were used to learn more about the usual language practice in the five families without my interference. Due to the ethnographic nature of this study the families had freedom to choose when they did the audio recordings and how long they lasted for. They were provided with suggestions to audio record their interactions with their children at home during family meals and homework sessions. The families had different commitment and time to do the self-audio interactions which resulted in differing amounts of recordings from each family. 13 family self-audio recordings were obtained from the five families with nearly 180 minutes of recording in total. However, rather than as a primary source for data analysis family self-audio recordings were used to enrich my own understanding of the usual family language policy and practice. Also the primary focus of this study was not on language practices per se but on the reasons that led parents to adopt such language practices in the first place. In view of this, the value of the family self-audio recording was the expectation for the families to use languages in a way they did without my presence and this was expected to provide insights the usual language practice between family members. This design aimed to address Denzin's (1997) argument about lack of representation and legitimacy in ethnographic research, that is the FLP in the migrant families in this study was documented not only from my own observations and the families' self-reported practices but also from actual language practices that took place and were recorded. Also, from previous FLP studies which had used family self-audio recordings it was expected to gain insight into how languages were used between family members and what insights it may provide about the use of languages by parents and children to socialise each other. For example, in Fogle's (2012)

study in the US context, families' self-audio recordings at home revealed that children with a Russian background, who were adopted by American families, exercised their agency in the socialising activities by asking questions and code-switching between Russian and English. The family self-audio recordings of the families' natural interactions at home in this study was a valuable resource to better understand their FLP. For example, it provided some useful insight into issues of how some families' FLP was shaped by issues of difference between the parents' and their children's English language skills which is discussed in the finding chapters.

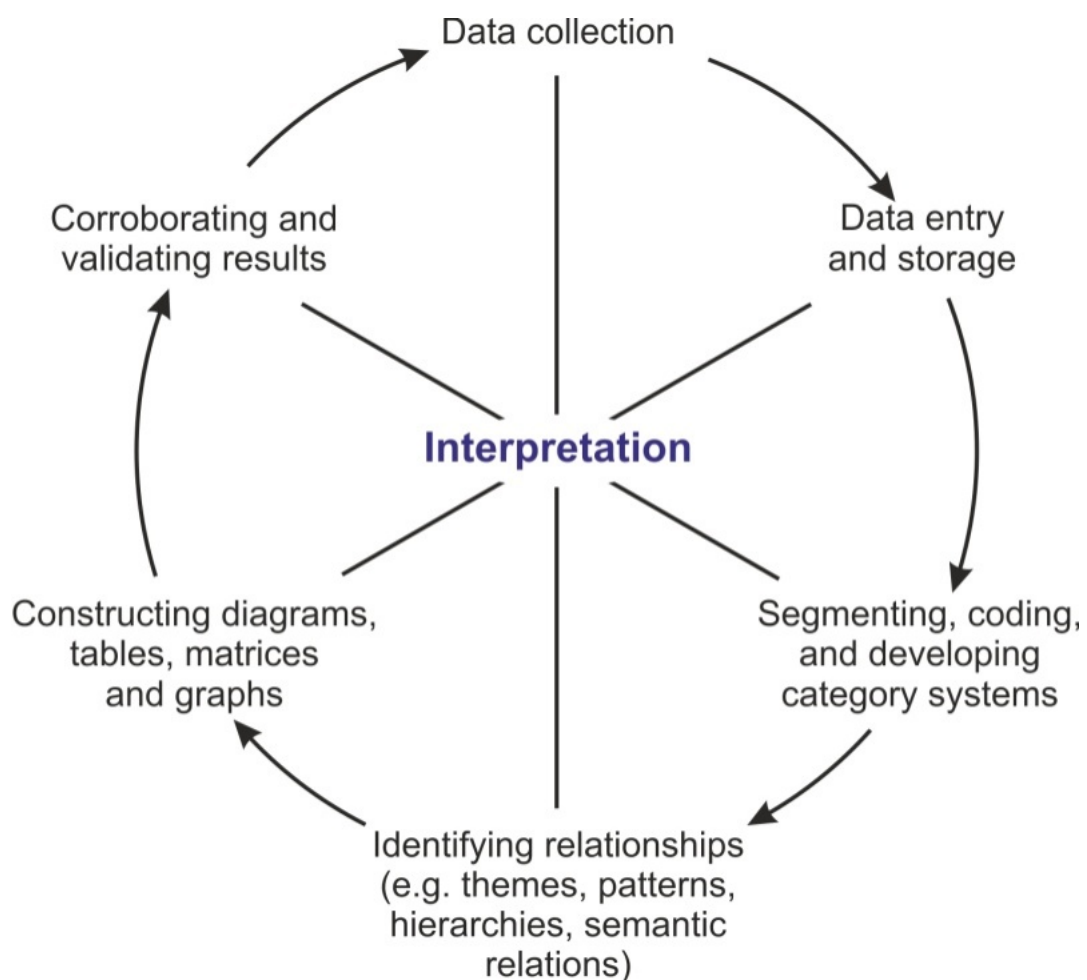
#### 4.5 Data analysis

Data analysis in this study followed the ethnographic approach which means that central to the data analysis was interpretation of meanings embedded in the data and data analysis was an ongoing process which began with the start of the fieldwork (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Robson, 2016). For example, as soon as I did one or two interviews I left time to transcribe them, organise my raw field notes and write summaries of interviews before the next meeting with a particular family. This early and continuous analysis which is strongly recommended by Miles and Huberman (1994) helped me get valuable insights and general sense of the data. However, as ethnographic data are voluminous and mainly 'unstructured', organising data into finite sets of categories is a demanding and reflective process, that is, text data are 'materials to think with' (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p.158) Consistent with the research questions in this study, data analysis examined how migrant families' FLP was shaped by the way the parents mediated their past experience, available resources and the dominant linguistic norms in different social spaces within the socio-educational context in England.

Qualitative data analysis was the main strategy used for analysis of interviews and field notes. Analysis started with my 'immersion' in the data which were organised into categories by a process of progressive focusing on certain themes and looking for patterns and events (Saldaña, 2013). The next stage included thematic coding based on the method of 'constant comparison' developed by Strauss and Corbin (1998). In this approach themes emerged inductively from the data but they were also guided by the research questions, the literature and the theoretical framework. This means that my study does not represent a 'grounded theory' study because the categories emerge both from the data and from the theoretical framework and previous literature. The coding process which involved the breaking of data from interviews and field notes into utterances, sentences or small paragraphs enabled me to reduce the data to useful



analytic concepts and categories which facilitates understanding of the phenomenon in question and makes the analysis more systematic (Delamont, 2012). However, the process of data analysis was not a linear process but an iterative one which means that I returned to different stages of data analysis in a cyclical manner. Data analysis was firstly carried out ‘within-case’ for each family and then it was developed across cases (Stake, 2006). The qualitative data analysis software, NVivo was used to facilitate the coding process (Saldaña, 2013). The following figure (Figure 3) illustrates the process of qualitative data analysis in this study:



**Figure 3: Qualitative data analysis (Adopted from Johnson & Christensen 2012, p 517)**

#### 4.6 Validity and reliability

Validity and reliability in ethnographic research refer to the extent to which researchers' constructions and interpretations are based on the constructions of those they have studied and they are understood to be relative to the theoretical perspective of the researcher and not an absolute, objective claim (Maxwell, 2012). This study adopts the term 'trustworthiness' developed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) to relate to issues of validity and reliability. Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that researchers ensure trustworthiness by prolonged activity in the field, triangulation and respondent validation. Johnson and Christensen (2012) added several more strategies for trustworthiness in qualitative research such as low inference and reflexivity. The potential threats to this kind of study were considered and a number of steps were taken to minimise them. Firstly, regarding reflexivity, it refers to the role of the researcher in the field and their position, values and relation with participants. Reflexivity was discussed in detail in the sections above but another point needs to be made here. I was aware of the threat of researcher bias due to my background. As I have spent five years in England I can be considered a migrant myself and I was aware of a danger to limit my interpretation based only on my personal experience. On the contrary I would argue that this experience was particularly useful for me to understand the issues that migrant families might be facing regarding setting up an English FLP as a means for integration and success in England.

Secondly, regarding low inference during interviews and observations I was open-minded to the way parents set up their FLP, was careful not to ask misleading questions and I recognised that my views about FLP may be different from the views of the parents and did not offer criticism or advice on their FLP even though if I disagreed with their perceptions and their FLP. Thirdly, triangulation was used to ensure the validity and reliability of the study. The interview data were complemented with observations and family self-audio recordings to cross-check the data and see whether it led to the same interpretations and conclusions. The use of field notes complemented the interviews and provided thick descriptions which enabled triangulation. The prolonged stay in the field and the thick, in-depth descriptions and closeness to participants added to the validity of the data. Also all interviews were fully transcribed during the fieldwork. My strategy was to transcribe interviews and write up interview summaries as soon as possible after I conducted each interview. I translated the illustrative excerpts from interviews from Macedonian by myself and my previous experience of teaching English as a foreign language in Macedonia as well as some translation experience were very

useful. After the initial translation I went back to the excerpts to double-check the translations. Fourthly, respondent validation was sought from the participants to verify my interpretations and conclusions and address any bias in my interpretation. Finally, I was aware of the threat of what Cohen et al. (2007) call the Halo effect, that is, I was careful not to let any personal bonds with the parents to influence my judgments during data analysis.

### *Representativeness and generalisability*

This study with its focus on five focal migrant families in which parents have different language backgrounds does not claim to be representative of all such migrant families in England and does not aim to generalise from the findings. The aim of the study was to gain deep insights into migrant families' FLP by looking at the ways in which parents with different linguistic backgrounds in migrant families might mediate their past experiences, available resources and dominant linguistic norms in education and society in England to set up their FLP. However, this does not mean that this study is concerned only with the particular as Hammersely (1992) argues that the potential of ethnographic studies is to illuminate the general by shedding light on the particular.

### 4.7 Ethical considerations

Central to ethnographic research is the ethnographer's openness, transparency and respectfulness for the participants and the site (Creswell, 2013). This involves being open and honest with participants about collecting data in a way that causes no harm to participants, preserves their dignity and respects their privacy. Also, Fetterman (2010) maintains that potential ethical issues in ethnographic research are gaining access, staying and collecting data in the field, and the relations between the ethnographer and the participants in the field. In this study these issues have been considered and the ethical guidelines from BERA (2011) are used to maximize the steps taken to ensure that the study was conducted ethically: <https://www.bera.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/BERA-Ethical-Guidelines-2011.pdf>.

The study was longitudinal and the five families were asked to take part in the study for twelve months. I was aware that this was a long-term commitment for the families and therefore care was taken not to put pressure on them. All arrangements for interviews, observations and recordings were made in agreement with their availability. Indeed, interviews with all

participants were conducted at their choice of place and time. Interviews were conducted either in the comfort of the families' own homes or in the Macedonian language school after the lessons had finished. The interviews with the parents' and the children's close friends were conducted in various locations depending on the convenience for them including their own homes, in the homes of one of the five families, in the Macedonian language school, in the social area of the Macedonian church or in a café. In the case of school teachers, the interviews were carried out in the school premises after a lunch or a coffee break at a time which was most suitable for them. Also, if possible, with the permission of the interview respondents, the audio recorder was deliberately put in a place that was less visible and less distracting for participants. For example, if possible, instead of putting the audio recorder on the table between myself and the interview respondent, with the approval of the respondent, the audio recorder was put on a table behind the participant, on a side table or on the floor. In this way participants appeared to be more relaxed during the interview and yet the quality of the recording was not affected as it was recorded with a good quality, professional audio recorder. In addition, the participants with whom I shared a Macedonian language background were given the choice of which language to be used during the interviews depending on which language they felt most comfortable with. This was particularly useful for the children and the mothers. Regarding question-asking, Wolcott (2008) warns that ethnographers often ask participants *why* they do some actions to which they may not always have ready answers. Therefore, questions were asked in a supportive and non-threatening way, and respondents were given sufficient time to think and answer the questions I asked.

Informed consent was sought from both parents<sup>13</sup>. The consent explained the purpose of the study and guaranteed the confidentiality of the information they provided and protection of their identities. I used pseudonyms instead of the real names of the parents in this study.

Regarding data collection methods, conscious steps to minimise potential threats to the families' privacy and sense of self-worth were taken. As Christians (2011) notes, no one deserves embarrassment or harm during research, and therefore families' sense of self-worth was respected and nonthreatening questions were asked when discussing their experiences with migration, education and English language learning. If I noticed that an issue appeared to be too embarrassing or unpleasant, family members and their social network members were not

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<sup>13</sup> See Appendices

asked to give in-depth explanations of it. For example, I noticed that Mira, the mother in the Macedonian-Chinese family, seemed to be a little ashamed of her Macedonian dialect and to make her feel more comfortable I explained that I also come from a town in Macedonia where they also speak a dialect and that I speak in that dialect with my family. In my view, being honest with the parents and accepting the way they expressed themselves was very important for them to feel safe and inform me what they really thought about practising their HLs and English and this appeared to be a successful strategy.

Another ethical concern in interviews was that as the study included children from 5 to 14 years of age, it was important for children to have a sense of security. As a former teacher with experience with both young children and teenagers I knew that the children's sense of security was important. I was friendly with them and often talked about other things such as school, their likes, sports, music in order to help them feel safe and relaxed before the formal interviews took place. Appropriate arrangements with the parents were made and the children were either interviewed in the comfort of their homes or in the Macedonian language school in the presence of their parents.

In terms of observation, Erikson (2011) notes that a potential threat may be asymmetry in power relations between the observer and the observed, as well as the positionality of the observer, that is, the ways in which he/she is perceived in terms of gender, class, age and ethnicity. In view of this, the relationship with the participants was non-hierarchical (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007) and the families and their social network members were recognised as active agents whose voice was important in making meaning. Also, reflexivity was adopted as a strategy to minimise my influence on the families' privacy. Observation is important for ethnographic research but observation in homes in this study was conducted after building rapport with the families so that they were comfortable with my presence in their homes. Reflexivity and sensitivity to context were adopted as strategies to judge when it was appropriate to observe the families' activities. Observation in homes was carried out during interviews or when the families themselves invited me in their homes because I did not want to put pressure on them and to invade their free time and privacy.

#### 4.8 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the methodological approach for this study with a constructivist-interpretive paradigm with embedded critical perspectives underpinning the data collection and analysis. The rationale for employing ethnographic case-study was explained and issues of researcher's reflexivity were discussed in detail. What followed was detailed explanation of the inquiry processes and methods, firstly with a brief justification of the choice of site, participants and then a detailed explanation of inquiry approaches such as interviewing, observations, family-self audio recordings, and an explanation of the way the data were analysed. Ethical considerations were elaborated at the end of the chapter. The next part of the dissertation (Part II) presents the findings of this study.

## **PART II**

## **FINDINGS**

## **Chapter 5**

### **Variation of FLP in five migrant families**

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the five migrant families in this study and provides a critical account of the variations of their family language policy and practice (FLP). The five migrant families in this study are: 1) a Macedonian-English, 2) a Macedonian-Italian, 3) a Macedonian-Chinese, 4) a Macedonian-Scottish and 5) a Macedonian-Serbian family.

The aim of this chapter is twofold. Firstly, it discusses the variations of FLP in the five migrant families in relation to the parents' aspirations for educational achievement and social advancement, upward social mobility, social inclusion and social status. In addition, the migrant families' FLP is also discussed in relation to parents' submission to pressure from implicit expectations of monolingualism by health visitors and teachers but also in relation to parents' sense of cultural identification with their HL background. Secondly, this Chapter aims to provide the basis for further analysis which is discussed in subsequent finding chapters.

#### 5.2 The Macedonian-English family: Aspirations for educational achievement and social advancement with an English FLP

##### *5.2.1 The family language policy and practice: 'English as a first language'*

The Macedonian-English family adopted mainly an 'English-only' family language policy and practice, although there were some variations. The father, Jason, strongly supported the 'English-only' FLP and practised only English with their two children. The mother, Bisera, also supported the 'English-only' FLP although she occasionally broke it when she communicated with her Macedonian parents via Skype or when she tried to 'teach' the children some Macedonian vocabulary.

The driving force for this family's English FLP was the parents' internalised perception of English as the only language which they could use to achieve educational achievement and social advancement for their children. Indeed, both parents viewed English, not Macedonian,



as the legitimate linguistic capital for their children's educational attainment and social advancement. Convinced of the educational value of English, Bisera asserted: 'I wanted her (the daughter, Scarlett) to know English well before she started school'. In a similar vein, Jason's perceived English as a necessary linguistic capital for the children 'to progress' at school and more generally in the English society.

The English FLP in this family was a result of the parents' own educational experience. Bisera placed a high value on English as valuable linguistic capital for educational success as a result of her experience of using English to study for her Master's course in urban design in England. By contrast, as a pupil in a mainly English-speaking school, Jason had been socialised to devalue other languages than English by not considering them important for educational success. Furthermore, this family's English FLP was reinforced by their close social networks' support. Indeed, this family socialised with another Macedonian-English and Macedonian-Dutch family because they had similar ambitions for their children's educational success through English.

In the following sections I discuss the parents' English FLP in relation to their educational and social aspirations in more detail.

### *5.2.2 'We read a lot': A sense of investment in developing English language skills*

The parents in this family demonstrated a sense of 'investment' in developing their children's English language skills as the 'right' form of cultural and linguistic capital on the education market. English was conceptualised as a legitimate capital which functioned to secure an advantage for socio-educational advancement. The parents' sense of investment in English was evident in their routine of developing their children's English literacy skills:

'Her (Scarlett's) English is very good because I read to her in English, we write together and if I invested that time in learning Macedonian with her, it is possible that her understanding of English would be much poorer.' (Bisera, Macedonian-English family, interview)

'It's everything, it's the main thing we've emphasised with her (Scarlett), reading, writing, every night and so far so good. It's working. She's very good at her grammar and punctuation. She's

a lot better than I was at her age, she's better than me now for some things.' (Jason, Macedonian-English family, interview)

The excerpts above reveal that the parents developed self-awareness of the high symbolic value of English on the education field. English literacy skills and English proficiency were perceived as 'gatekeepers' for the children's educational attainment. The parents were therefore prepared to invest in English and use it as linguistic capital for their children's educational and social success.

The parents' investment in English as the 'right' form of symbolic capital for educational and social success was further evident in the parents' decision to remove Scarlett from her previous school with a large EAL student population. Worried that Scarlett's English language progress was 'suffering because people not speaking English in the school', Jason explained:

'We took her out because she, the school was holding her back (...) A lot of kids have maybe too much of a language barrier to be honest in this (Scarlett's previous) school.' (Jason, Macedonian-English family, interview).

The parents' decision to remove Scarlett from a largely EAL school demonstrates their fear of educational failure due to lack of investment in English. For them an EAL school posed a risk of jeopardising their daughter's accumulation of English linguistic capital. Guided by their belief of the essential role of English linguistic capital for educational success they placed Scarlett in a new school where they believed her peers did not have 'too much of a language barrier' and were 'similar to her, they liked to study' (Bisera, Macedonian-English family, interview).

Finally, the parents' own educational background had a positive influence on their expectations for their children's English language learning through an English FLP. The parents had benefitted a great deal from their own successful educational experiences and they worked to ensure that their children acquired English in order to maintain or surpass their current social status and improve their lifestyle. Their fundamental belief was that English had an essential role in education and society as linguistic capital for educational and social success. Bisera had studied in England and had obtained a Master's degree in urban design. She was 'now building a career in city planning' (interview). Of all the participating families in the study Bisera was

the most interested one in my PhD studies and she enquired about the terms of studying at Cambridge. During one of our conversations she informed me that she was going to explore opportunities for herself to apply and study at Cambridge. This was underpinned by her ambition for social success through education, as she explained: ‘we take turns (to study) so that we can pursue our careers and look after the children.’ (Bisera, Macedonian-English family, field notes).

In a similar vein, Jason had invested in developing his own English language skills to make progress in his own career. He had re-qualified from previously working in a shop and in a hotel to work as a support worker in social care by taking English language lessons:

‘Certain things by-pass you as an adult but I’ve done the same thing, I’ve taken English classes to refresh and I think you’ve got to show your kids that learning is fun.’ (Jason, Macedonian-English family, interview).

Evidently, the parents’ sense of investment in English was underpinned by their internalisation of English dominant cultural values and literacy practices as a form of cultural capital:

‘The way I see the English culture is that they pay a lot of attention to language.’ (Bisera, Macedonian-English family, interview).

Such internalisation of dominant English cultural values demonstrated the parents’ ready submission to the legitimacy of English as dominant cultural and symbolic capital in different social spaces in England. The parents seemed to be quite ambitious and interested in the opportunity for success through education in English and an English FLP seemed to be a ‘natural’ choice for them to achieve their aim. Indeed, the assumed educational and social advantages that English conveyed were so high that the parents decided to adopt an English FLP to give their children an opportunity to accumulate English as their linguistic and symbolic capital that could be used for educational achievement and social advancement in the future.

### *5.2.3 ‘Somehow we didn’t manage to do it’: Low educational value of Macedonian*

The parents in this family internalised a disposition that Macedonian did not have the capacity to function as valued linguistic and symbolic capital on the education field in England and

therefore it was not worth investing in it. This in turn underpinned their low expectations and unsuccessful strategies for transmitting Macedonian.

Jason devalued Macedonian due to his perception that it was ‘quite a minority language’ (interview) and his essential belief that Macedonian did not serve an important educational and social role: ‘I think certain things need to be sacrificed in our life, to do it (speak Macedonian) because you know every day, still we do something’ (interview). Indeed, Jason did not consider himself responsible for supporting the children’s learning of Macedonian and reckoned that it was Bisera’s responsibility to ‘teach’ them Macedonian. However, he asserted that their main goal was to develop their children’s English language skills and the family’s available time for learning Macedonian was limited. This suggested Jason’s domination in the family evident in his sense of entitlement to decide on an English FLP which, according to him, was in the best interest for the family.<sup>14</sup>

Bisera seemed to agree with Jason’s devaluation of Macedonian because she was convinced that it had little educational value: ‘Macedonian can be added as an additional language.’ (Bisera, Macedonian-English family, interview). Overall, Bisera adopted a lenient approach and a laissez-faire attitude to her children’s Macedonian language learning:

‘it will be her (Scarlett’s) decision whether she will learn it (Macedonian) to a certain level, whether she will continue to learn it and then to learn more, but I wanted this to be her choice and not me as a mother to tell her: ‘You have to learn this language.’” (Bisera, Macedonian-English family, interview)

It was evident that Bisera’s primary concern was for the children to learn English and her English FLP illustrated this. Consequently, she paid less attention to Macedonian which was evident in her unsuccessful and unrealistic strategies to ‘teach’ the children some Macedonian. For example, she had a romanticised expectation that Scarlett would miraculously learn to communicate in Macedonian by learning five questions or by putting stickers in Macedonian in their house.<sup>15</sup> Also, Bisera had unrealistic expectations that Scarlett would learn to speak

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<sup>14</sup> This might have also been the case as a result of unequal power relations between Jason and Bisera. Gender relations and their effect on migrant families’ FLP is discussed in detail in Chapter 8.

<sup>15</sup> This was evident in one of the conversations with Bisera: ‘Once I wanted to see if it is possible to teach her five questions, like ‘What is your name? Where do you live?’, you know, those basic questions so that she could manage herself. But somehow she didn’t accept the questions maybe they were too different for her, she was very little, she was 5.’ (Bisera, Macedonian-English family, field notes). Similarly, rather naively, Bisera thought that

fluent Macedonian by going to the Macedonian HL school twice a month. She thought that it was easier that way because Scarlett could ask her questions about what she had studied at school and that she would eventually learn Macedonian. However, despite Bisera's claims that going to the Macedonian HL school was improving Scarlett's Macedonian, in my field notes I noted that Scarlett's attendance in the school was irregular for the duration of the study and she found it difficult to understand and speak Macedonian to the teacher. Soon after the study finished, the lessons in the Macedonian HL school stopped because of lack of funding and Scarlett's opportunity to learn Macedonian became even more constrained.

The unsuccessful strategies that Bisera employed for Macedonian reflected the family's low investment in it due to its low value on the education market in England. Indeed, the Macedonian-English family adopted an English-only FLP guided by their fundamental belief that English had a high symbolic value and that Macedonian had a low symbolic value for their children's educational achievement and social advancement.

### 5.3 The Macedonian-Italian family: Aspirations for upward social mobility with an English FLP

#### 5.3.1 *Three heritage languages, one English FLP: 'We speak English at home'*

The family language policy and practice in the Macedonian-Italian family was 'English-only' with some exceptions. The father, Giorgio strongly supported this policy and spoke only English with the three children. He almost never used Italian or Sardinian in the family home except when his extended Italian family came for a visit. By contrast, Vesna occasionally broke the English-only policy when she added in her English some Macedonian vocabulary for traditional Macedonian food and expressions of shame, likes and dislikes.

Another exception to the 'English-only' policy was the use of Macedonian between Vesna and the Macedonian grandmother who was living with the family. However, the Macedonian grandmother implicitly supported the 'English-only' family language policy and spoke mainly

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Macedonian could be learnt from stickers: 'Now that she knows the alphabet (in Macedonian) I would like to ask her to put stickers around the house. (...) For example she can write 'book' on the sticker and things like that, 'shelf', those things that are around her, let's say it would be interesting to have them in the kitchen, in the toilet, those basic objects she knows and then it might be easier for her (to learn Macedonian).' (Bisera, Macedonian-English family, interview)

English with the children. Also, the family's social network of friends and the Macedonian extended family members who were living in England spoke only English with the children thus socialising them into English and reinforcing the English family language policy.

The English FLP in this family was a result of the parents' aspirations to capitalise on English to achieve upward social mobility. This was a result of their position as a working-class migrant family which lacked cultural, linguistic and economic capital in the form of educational qualifications, English language skills and financial resources, respectively. Indeed, the parents perceived English as the necessary linguistic and cultural capital that needed to be accumulated so that it would increase their children's chances for upward social mobility in the future.

The English FLP and the parents' aspirations for upward social mobility are discussed in more detail in the following section.

### *5.3.2. 'I can't help them': the parents' working-class position and lack of capitals*

The parents in this family demonstrated an aspiration to better their life and improve their social status by capitalising on English. In other words, English was appreciated as a symbolic capital for the family's upward social mobility.

The parents' position as low skilled, working-class migrants in England stirred them to invest in an English FLP with their children. As low skilled migrants, the parents could not capitalise on their educational qualifications gained in Macedonia and Sardinia. Vesna was a homemaker and she found it difficult to find a proper job in England because the exchange value of her educational qualification was low, making it valueless in her efforts to improve her social position. In a similar vein, Giorgio worked in the same restaurant where he started working at when he first came to England. At his job he was still speaking '99 per cent Italian' (interview).

The conditions of such a working-class existence made the parents self-aware of the limitations and constraints of their position. They realised that their children would have better opportunities for upward social mobility in England if they accumulated English linguistic capital. This is evident in the excerpt below:

G English is the most important obviously, for obvious reasons. You know work, in the future wherever she's gonna work.

V Study, yeah, study in English.

G Yeah, work, wherever she's gonna to work I mean you know with English it's a way easier' (sic.) (Vesna and Giorgio, Macedonian-Italian family, field notes)

As the parents' comment above illustrates, in the Macedonian-Italian family the English FLP was related to the parents' expectation that proficiency in English would bring economic and educational benefits for their children and would secure their upward social mobility. As a result of the parents' own constraints they invested their unfulfilled wishes upon their children with high expectations toward their English language learning as a means for upward social mobility. The English FLP in this family was therefore underpinned by the parents' basic belief that their children stood a better chance to improve their working-class position by accumulating English and converting it into material and symbolic capital for their upward social mobility.

Furthermore, the parents in this family internalised a sense of linguistic inadequacy due to their lack of English language skills as the dominant linguistic capital in England. They perceived their ability to support their children's English language learning as inadequate due to their own educational constraints. Giorgio was acutely aware that his lack of English language skills limited his career choice in England. He regretted that he did not have a chance to learn English in his native Sardinia. Similarly, Vesna felt she was unable to help the children develop their English language skills. However, she was committed to ensuring that her children achieved academic success despite her English language constraints. This was reflected in her usual practice to reinforce the children's English language learning and education in general. For example, in one of the family's self-audio recordings Vesna insisted that the children learnt what quarter means in English. The family was having lunch and the family members in the excerpt below are grandmother (GR), Vesna (V), the daughter, Giulia (G) and the older son, Tim (T):

V: Again, what is quarter in minutes, quarter past twelve, what does it mean? Twelve and how many minutes?

GR: Kaza baba, sega kaza. (You've said it dear, you've just said it).

G: Five.

T: I don't know. Why do you need to ask me stuff I don't know? (annoyed)

V: But I just asked you now. The big...Uh... whatever it's called, what's it called?  
 G: The hand.  
 V: Handle. Is at three...  
 G: (Repeats) **Hand**.  
 V: (Ignores the correction). How many minutes is? (sic).  
 G: It's called **a hand**.  
 V: It's not called a hand. It's called an arrow or something...  
 G: My teacher says it's a hand.  
 V: Ooh, right. Ah, how many is? (sic). (family self-audio recording, Macedonian-Italian family)

The above excerpt is a telling example that the parents in this family had decided to have an English FLP because they wanted their children to learn English and to succeed in England. The parents' lack of English language skills limited their own chances for success, but it also prompted their propensity to think about the opportunities that would be available to their children if they were proficient in English. In the above excerpt, is evident that Vesna's own lack of English language skills is what limited her ability to assist the children with their English language learning. Yet, at the same time this was what motivated her to insist that the children practised English and did well at school. This is further evident in her comment below:

'Giulia is for now very good at English *literacy*, her spelling isn't very good, but we're trying, you know.' (Vesna, Macedonian-Italian family, interview)

By contrast, Giorgio had a more *laissez-faire* attitude to encouraging and studying with the children. Constrained by limited cultural capital, he tended to be non-interventionist in relation to his children's education. Nonetheless, he had high expectations about the children's opportunity to improve their social position because he was confident that by practising only English with the children they already had an advantage.

In this sense, the parents in the Macedonian-Italian family refused to accept their working-class position and lack of English language skills. Instead, a working class position and lack of capitals prompted their aspirations to capitalise on English as they they consciously and unconsciously decided that it was possible to improve their position by investing in practicing English with their children.



### 5.3.2 *'You can't gain anything extra with Macedonian': Low value of Italian, Sardinian and Macedonian for upward social mobility*

The parents' fundamental belief that Macedonian, Italian and Sardinian had little value on the linguistic market in England structured their disposition to devalue them.

Giorgio demonstrated a more tacit understanding of the low value of Italian and Sardinian on the linguistic market. He struggled to explain why he did not speak Italian or Sardinian with his children. The reason was that he had internalised a disposition to adjust to the objective conditions of valuation of English as the dominant linguistic capital in England. For him speaking English was normal and natural because the children were going to live and work in England, as he succinctly put it: 'I know that life is here.' (interview). By contrast, Giorgio reckoned that speaking Italian was inappropriate and unnatural because it was valueless on the linguistic market in England: 'it's just not natural cause it's not the language' (interview). This statement implies that Giorgio understood that he needed to comply with dominant linguistic norms on the linguistic market in England in order to succeed in his intention for the family's upward social mobility. Unlike English, Italian or Sardinian did not have a symbolic value which could be used for upward social mobility in England and therefore he rejected them.

In a similar vein, Vesna rejected Macedonian due to its devaluation on the linguistic market. She did not see the point in practising Macedonian when it could not be used to the advantage of the children's opportunity to improve their social position in England. Her strong belief that Macedonian had no value in England is evident in the following excerpt:

'it is not a very important language you know, with Macedonian you can't gain anything extra... it would be nice if she (the daughter) learns Macedonian but with that her value does not grow. I mean, it is not something to use worldwide'. (Vesna, Macedonian-Italian family, interview)

Vesna's comment in the above excerpt reveals that she was self-aware that Macedonian was not a valuable symbolic capital on the linguistic market. Unlike Giorgio, she demonstrated a more conscious reflection of the low value of Macedonian on the linguistic market. Therefore both Giorgio's tacit understanding and Vesna's self-conscious thinking seemed to have

influenced their linguistic dispositions, working to discourage their investment in practicing Macedonian, Italian or Sardinian.

Similarly, the extended family members of the Macedonian-Italian family devalued Macedonian thus supporting the English FLP in this family. For example, Vesna's sister viewed investment in Macedonian as unrewarding and undesirable for future opportunities thus supporting parents' rejection of their HLs. Likewise, the Macedonian grandmother who lived with the family implicitly supported the parents' determination to capitalise on English for upward social mobility by speaking mainly English with the children.<sup>16</sup>

In sum, the parents in the Macedonian-Italian family chose to have an English FLP due to their fundamental belief that English would offer their children better job opportunities which was the only way to obtain a better life as working-class migrants in England who lacked valued material and symbolic capitals. The perceived low value of their HLs on the linguistic market structured their disposition to devalue them and to prioritise English as a legitimate linguistic capital for upward social mobility.

#### 5.4 The Macedonian-Chinese family: An English FLP for social inclusion and social status

##### 5.4.1 *The family language policy and practice: 'An English-speaking household'*

The family language policy in the Macedonian-Chinese family featured 'English-only' with some variations. It was strictly followed by Chen, the father in the family as a result of his fundamental belief that Hakka had a low social status and it was of little social value. In a similar vein, the mother in the family, Mira mainly spoke English with their daughter guided by her sense of affiliation with the high symbolic value of the English language.

The English FLP in this family was broken when the Macedonian grandmother visited the family two to three times a year to take care of their daughter, Ann. Then Mira occasionally

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<sup>16</sup> The girl in this family, Giulia, explained that her grandmother only spoke 'in Macedonian when she doesn't know English words' (interview). Although the grandmother tried to speak Macedonian to the children in my presence it became evident during the study that it was not her usual practice as she had to switch into English for the children to understand her. Although the grandmother took Giulia to the Macedonian language school she implicitly supported the English FLP of the parents. Paradoxically, she took Giulia to the Macedonian language school in London because she was a member of the church committee which organised it and by taking her to the school she wanted to maintain her integrity in the eyes of the Macedonian community.

broke the English family language policy and spoke Macedonian with the Macedonian grandmother and with Ann. Macedonian was used exclusively in the interactions between Ann and her Macedonian grandmother<sup>17</sup>.

The English family language policy and practice in this family were mainly determined by the parents' sense of being 'culturally and racially' different as well as their wish for detachment from their respective ethnic communities. The English FLP was underpinned by the parents' aspirations for social inclusion into the mainstream English society and the parents' sense of entitlement to social status.

The parents' aspirations for social inclusion and social status with an English FLP are discussed in more detail in the sections below.

#### *5.4.2 'It's become our first language': aspirations for social inclusion with English*

Mira and Chen had an English FLP guided by their aspiration to capitalise on English to 'fit in' the English dominant culture. They believed that the family was 'culturally and racially' different and by practising English with their daughter they hoped to increase her chances of being accepted as an equal member of the English society. An example of this was Mira's decision to practice English after her daughter started going to nursery. Mira initially attempted to speak both English and Macedonian to her daughter when she was born. However, with Ann's start of nursery Mira realised that English was the dominant language there and she felt encouraged to speak mainly English:

'In nursery they spoke in English and the majority of them are English. They all spoke English.'  
(Mira, Macedonian-Chinese family, interview)

Mira's realisation that English was the dominant symbolic capital in her daughter's nursery made her appreciate English as it provided 'access' to her daughter's socialisation and participation in a field dominated by English-speaking peers and teachers. By speaking English Mira wanted Ann to fit in with the established English language practice in the nursery and to

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<sup>17</sup> Macedonian was the only language that the Macedonian grandmother could speak. The Macedonian grandmother and Ann had a close relationship and they spent most of the time together talking in Macedonian and playing. That is how Ann learnt to speak conversational Macedonian. Ann even translated for her grandmother when the grandmother took Ann to school or when they went shopping together.

be accepted as an equal member. That was how English became, as Mira said: *'our first language.'*

Conversely, Mira and Chen regarded lack of dominant English language capital as a sign of lack of one's aspiration for social inclusion and participation in society as a full and equal member. Non-mastery of English as the dominant language in England was perceived as illegitimate. They expressed their depreciation of some of Chen's family members who had been living in England for years and spoke little English. Chen explained:

'One of my sisters has been here maybe for years and her grasp of English is fairly minimal she knows when she goes to the shop she can buy stuff but you know she's never... she hasn't got any English friends she won't be able to hold a conversation in English and she's been here for years.' (Chen, Macedonian-Chinese family, interview)

Chen's comment reveals his perception of English as the only legitimate language that allowed social inclusion and participation in society. The parents' disapproval of their extended family members whom they considered incompetent revealed the parents' sense of contempt and conveyed a message that it was not for them. The fact that English was spoken by the majority in the English society made the parents appreciate it as a dominant form of symbolic capital for inclusion and participation and they perceived their relatives who lacked it as non-citizens. Indeed, Mira and Chen viewed their Chinese extended family members as outsiders to the English dominant society as a result of their lack of English language proficiency. Having seen the effects of lack of English linguistic capital in the case of their Chinese extended family, the parents developed self-awareness that English was a 'gatekeeper' to social inclusion and participation in the English society and therefore they decided to invest in it as the 'right' form of linguistic and symbolic capital in England. Furthermore, the parents' feeling of inferiority due to their perception of themselves as racial minority led them to adopt an English FLP with the hope of increasing their daughter's opportunity for social inclusion and equal participation. This was evident in Chen's comment below:

'I have tried living outside London and I find it very... sort of a... not scary but it's... I am not comfortable. I am comfortable in London cause everyone is accepted in London and that's where I feel at home.' (Chen, Macedonian-Chinese family, interview)

#### *5.4.2 'This society suited me better': parents' sense of detachment from their HL backgrounds and aspirations for social status*

Mira's and Chen's decision to practice English with their daughter was also related to their sense of detachment from their respective Macedonian and Chinese background. The low status of Macedonian and Hakka stirred a sense of alienation from their Macedonian and Chinese ethnic communities and they wanted to disclaim their language origins and to conceal their language background. The parents' sense of detachment from their ethnic background was evident in their strong opposition to the idea of taking Ann to a Macedonian or a Chinese language school and socialising with their respective ethnic communities. Positioned as outsiders to their HL background, the parents demonstrated a sense of estrangement from their HL background and wish to disown their HL habitus. Mira's sense of detachment from her Macedonian background seemed to be related to her perception of the low status of her Macedonian dialect. Her sense of shame from her Macedonian dialect became evident when I went to the family home to interview the Macedonian grandmother who had come to visit the family. Feeling a bit embarrassed before I started the interview with her mother, Mira told me: 'we speak in kumanovski (a provincial dialect in Macedonia)'. What is more, she described the Macedonian grandmother as a 'simple, peasant woman' because she could not speak English.

In a similar vein, Chen depreciated his Hakka language background. He did not speak Hakka nor learned Cantonese because he 'did not mix with other Chinese'. Guided by the objective condition of having grown up in England, having attended English schools and mostly socialising with English-speaking friends, he felt he was different from other Chinese in the sense that his habits and likes were more English-like and more sophisticated, closer to the Western culture. By speaking English with his daughter, he wanted to express this sense of detachment from his linguistic and cultural background and affiliation with the English language and culture. This was evident in his explanation:

'When I was at college I joined the Chinese society and I went to two meetings 'cause it was something that I didn't fully understand you know I am probably, it is a bit different, you know. In the Chinese society when they meet they want to sit all day in a restaurant, well not all day but they want to spend the evening in the restaurant eating, chatting usually about Hong Kong. **I have, you know, no similarity with them** so I went to the Chinese society a couple of times

and that was it. I used to see my Western friends at college.’ (Chen, Macedonian-Chinese family, interview)

The parents in this family were eager to develop their own taste in order to pursue a kind of social distinction. Under such circumstances the parents sought to acquire a new status, manage their identities by passing as members of the dominant English language and culture group. By practicing English and detaching themselves from their respective ethnic communities, Mira and Chen wanted to present themselves as Westernised citizens who had different, more sophisticated, tastes and likes. A clear example of this is when Mira chose to speak English with myself and her friends. In my field notes I noted:

Mira and her daughter came to visit me in Cambridge and during the day she introduced me to her Serbian friend with whom she used to live during her initial years in England and with whom she used to speak Macedonian and Serbian. However, during our conversation in the restaurant in Cambridge I noticed that her friend and I were speaking in Macedonian and Serbian but Mira chose to speak in English. I noticed that she chose that on purpose because she wanted to sound more sophisticated in front of her friend whom she had not seen for a long time and to show that she was well integrated into the English culture. (Macedonian-Chinese family, field notes)

Clearly, Mira devalued her Macedonian background as low taste because such membership was not exclusive enough to create distinction. Having immigrated to England aroused consciousness of status in her leading to her perception of herself as distinct, more sophisticated and superior to other Macedonians. For example, she refused to speak to other Macedonians when she was on holiday so that she was not identified as having a Macedonian background (Macedonian-Chinese family, fieldnotes).

By contrast, Mira expressed a taste for affiliation with the English culture evident in her proud statement: ‘this society suited me better in terms of me as a person’ (interview). This was true about speaking English: ‘when I need to express myself I do it better in English’ (field notes). She viewed English as ‘good taste’ and an indicator of status as Mira explained: ‘English is a dominant language, of course you have to speak it’ (interview). The above statements reveal that the parents conceived English as a symbol of distinction and it signaled high social status which in turn guaranteed a family habitus valued by the privileged class. The perceived symbolic profits associated with English were so valuable that the parents opted to capitalise

on English to position themselves as members of the more privileged social group, to embody a privileged class habitus.

To summarise this case, the Macedonian-Chinese family adopted an ‘English-only’ FLP as a result of their aspirations to take advantage of English for social inclusion and social status. Macedonian and Hakka were rejected as a result of their low value and inability to be used as capitals for social inclusion and social status.

### 5.5 The Macedonian-Scottish family: An English FLP to conform to implicit expectations of monolingualism by health visitors and teachers

#### *5.5.1 The family language policy and practice: ‘We live in England and this (English) will be the language’*

The parents in this family, Violeta and Ian, currently had an ‘English-only’ family language policy and practice. Yet, the parents used to have a different FLP when their son, Tom was first born. The initial FLP in this family was English when the Ian was present and Macedonian when Violeta was alone with their son. At the beginning Violeta spent more time with her son and when he ‘first started speaking, his first word was Macedonian’ (interview).

However, Violeta was ‘coerced’ to practise English with her son as a result of advice from a health visitor and school pressure to speak English. As a result of such pressure, Violeta accepted English as the dominant form of linguistic capital and practiced English with her son. Similarly, Ian internalised a perception that Scottish Gaelic and Macedonian had little educational and social value and he strongly supported the ‘English-only’ FLP.

#### *5.5.2 ‘She told me to read to him more in English’: parents’ submission to pressure from health visitors and schools to practice English*

English became the dominant language in this family as a result of the parents’ submission to pressure from health visitors and schools to practise English and their appreciation of English as the only legitimate language. The parents internalised a perception that Macedonian was a potential problem as a result of the devaluation of Macedonian by a health visitor who advised Violeta to speak English:

M: There is a health visitor for the child's development. And according to their measurement, T.'s (her son's) language wasn't at the required level.

R: When he was two?

M: Two or two and a half. And then she told me to read to him more in English, in one language because he did not have...I mean those words that at that age.. she showed me a book for example that at that age the child should have those 40 words, that range of vocabulary.

R: And then you decided ...?

M: As a new mother you believe in everything they tell you. (Violeta, Macedonian-Scottish family, interview)

The health visitor's advice to this family to speak English-only with their son was crucial and had a profoundly negative effect on this family's FLP leading to their adoption of an English-only FLP due to the parents' fear for their son's language development. The parents at that time did not question the health visitor's advice and had trust in the health visitor's advice because the health visitor had the authority and professional knowledge. However, the parents were unaware that the health visitor's advice was indeed based on criteria for monolingual children's language development. As a result of her migrant position, Violeta lacked the symbolic power to oppose such advice based on domination of monolingual criteria. Instead she was 'coerced' to accept it because she did not question the health visitor's advice in fear of jeopardising her son's language development.

Moreover, Violeta's attempt to practice Macedonian with her son was further negatively sanctioned by the education field. He was put in a 'special group' in reception:

M: When he was in reception then they put him into something like a special group so that he could develop his language more, it was for children who weren't free in expressing themselves.

R: And did this influence you to decide to speak to him in English?

M: Yes. (Violeta, Macedonian-Scottish family, interview)

The above excerpts illustrate how the social structure with its dominant monolingual norms imposed English as the only legitimate linguistic capital whereas Macedonian was given a status of a 'deficit'. The health visitor network and the education field decapitalised Macedonian. Under such conditions practising English became, as Violeta said, 'more natural'. This in turn influenced Violeta's perceptions and she internalised English as the dominant



linguistic capital. To sum up, Violeta's perception at that time was that it was better to accept the health visitor's advice and speak English to her son because she wanted her son's English to develop properly and that he succeeded educationally.

### 5.5.3 *'Why are you speaking Macedonian?': rejection of Macedonian and Scottish Gaelic*

Having been 'coerced' to practice English as the legitimate form of linguistic capital on the education field this family internalised a lasting perception that Macedonian and Scottish Gaelic had low social value.

Ian reflected on the advice from the health visitor and his son's placement in a special group in nursery and internalised a perception that Macedonian and Scottish Gaelic had a low educational value:

'Scottish Gaelic or Macedonian is not widely spoken at school. In fact, it's a fair bet that Tom is the only child in the school with Macedonian heritage.' (Ian, Macedonian-Scottish family, interview)

As a result of his internalised perception of the low educational value of Macedonian and Scottish Gaelic, Ian disempowered Violeta in her attempt to practice Macedonian by demanding that she practiced English:

'We live in England and this (English) will be the language that is used in everyday interactions.' (Ian, Macedonian-Scottish family, interview)<sup>18</sup>

In a similar vein, Tom, the son in the Macedonian-Scottish family rejected Macedonian as a result of having been socialised into English dominant language and culture. Tom went to the Macedonian HL school twice a month for 5 years from the age of nine to fourteen. Yet, due to lack of early socialisation into Macedonian, attendance at the Macedonian HL school was a waste of time for Tom. Although he attended the lessons, learning was difficult and Violeta's efforts to transmit Macedonian to Tom by sending him to the school seemed to be ineffective. Furthermore, Tom's rejection of his Macedonian background was evident in the fact that he chose to speak English with me saying that learning and speaking other languages was 'difficult

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<sup>18</sup> This was a result of unequal power relations between Ian and Violeta. Gender relations and their effect on migrant families' FLP is discussed in detail in Chapter 8.

and stressful' (interview). He refused to give my letter to his teachers saying that he preferred not to share his language background with the teachers in his school. (field notes).

Tom's lack of appreciation of Macedonian as a valuable linguistic capital became evident when towards the end of the study he questioned the usefulness of learning to speak it. Indeed, both parents in this family seemed to have realised that the family had missed the chance for their son to learn Macedonian. Violeta regretted her decision and Ian seemed more keen to learn Macedonian. This became evident during one of the last visits to the family home. In my field notes I wrote:

'When I visited this family today Ian tried to speak some Macedonian with Violeta and myself. This was because the family had spent a few weeks for a summer holiday in Macedonia and Ian found it difficult not being able to communicate with Violeta's relatives. Tom, looking puzzled by his father's decision asked him: 'What are you doing? Why are you speaking Macedonian?' Ian answered: 'Well you know I am trying to learn some Macedonian to talk to your mum's relatives when we go back next summer'. Tom still looking surprised by his father's actions, answered: 'Well, it's not a very useful language.' (Macedonian-Scottish family, field notes).

As this family had chosen not to practise their HLs when Tom was a child, he rejected the value of learning them when he had become a teenager. The above excerpt demonstrates that during the study Tom had a negative attitude towards his HLs. It seemed uncertain whether Tom would change his attitude and want to learn his HLs when he became an adult.

To conclude this case, the Macedonian-Scottish family adopted an 'English-only' FLP as a result of their 'coercion' to practice English by the health visitor network and school pressure. The parents internalised a perception that English was legitimate linguistic capital, and their submission to pressure to practice English was a sign of fear not to put their son's language development and education at risk.

5.6 The Macedonian-Serbian family: A Macedonian and a Serbian FLP to maintain cultural identity

### *5.6.1 The family language policy and practice: ‘We didn’t speak a single word in English in the house’*

The Macedonian-Serbian family currently had a Macedonian FLP which was frequently broken.<sup>19</sup> The mother in this family, Lepa insisted that her daughter, Anastasija spoke Macedonian to her all the time. However, Anastasija broke the Macedonian family language policy very often by switching to English. As a result of that Lepa too, often broke the Macedonian family language policy in order to accommodate to her daughter’s preference for English.

Yet, this family used to have a strict ‘Serbian-only’ FLP which later changed to ‘Serbian-with-father’ and ‘Macedonian-with-mother’ FLP. When Anastasija was a young child the family had a Serbian-only FLP. At that time, Serbian was a more dominant language in the household. Lepa sometimes broke the ‘Serbian-only’ policy and added English words because she found it difficult to persist with the policy especially after the daughter started school and started speaking English. Yet, Dragan, the father in this family, strictly followed the ‘Serbian-only’ family language policy based on his strong belief of the cultural significance of Serbian for the family’s cultural identity. He insisted on not using English in the family home. Later, as a result of support from Dragan and close friends Lepa started using Macedonian with Anastasija.

Practising Macedonian and Serbian in the home was complemented by the parents’ conscious attempts to create opportunities for Anastasija to practice them outside the family home. The parents visited Macedonia and Serbia frequently and sent Anastasija on holidays and summer camps in Macedonia. They also sent her to Macedonian and Serbian schools and folk dance groups in England.<sup>20</sup> The HL-only FLP reflected the parents’ wish to maintain their cultural identity by transmitting Macedonian and Serbian as the family cultural capital in their daughter’s dispositions.

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<sup>19</sup> The Macedonian-Serbian family currently consisted of the mother, Lepa and her 14-year old daughter, Anastasija. Sadly, the father, Dragan had passed away two years before the study.

<sup>20</sup> The parents took their daughter first to a Serbian language school from the age of ‘five or six’ until she was about ‘11, 12’ and to a Macedonian language school from the age of eight to 14. As a result, Anastasija was proficient in speaking, reading and writing in both Macedonian and Serbian.

The HL-only FLP in this family was a result of the parents' ability to recognise Macedonian and Serbian as their cultural capital and part of their cultural identity. It was a result of the father's strong sense of self-identification with his Serbian background as well as Lepa's reflection on her extended family's negative experience and her husband's and close friends' advice and support.

### 5.6.2 *'Say it in Serbian': Serbian and Macedonian as family cultural capital*

A striking characteristic of this family was their strong identification with their cultural and linguistic background. Their Serbian and Macedonian FLP was an illustration of such cultural identification. In this sense Macedonian and Serbian had cultural value to the parents because they felt they were part of their cultural identity. An example of this was Lepa's active role in the Macedonian community in London. She was a proactive member of the Macedonian church committee and she always took Anastasija with her to the church. Lepa also used to teach folk dancing in the Macedonian HL school. Anastasija possessed Macedonian and Serbian traditional dance dresses and was still attending a Serbian folk dancing group in London. The family still practiced Macedonian and Serbian cultural traditions related to cooking food, observing religious holidays, watching Macedonian and Serbian TV and listening to Macedonian and Serbian music.

The parents' close cultural identification with their heritage background was reflected in their policy to speak only Macedonian and Serbian in the household as Lepa explained: 'we didn't speak a single English word in the house'. Dragan and Lepa's effort to transmit Macedonian and Serbian as valued family cultural capital is evident in Anastasija's explanation:

A: 'I didn't actually learn English until I was about four or five when I went to school and when I learnt English, obviously because I was at school every day English like became easier for me to speak but my parents didn't want me speaking to them in English (...) I would like say something to them in English and they just replied to me with: 'Ne te razbiram. Ne razumem sta oces da kazes' (I don't understand. I don't understand what you are saying).

R: Aha, and how did you feel?

A: I would get annoyed. So then I just had to start speaking Serbian and Macedonian.'  
(Anastasija, Macedonian-Serbian family, interview).

The HL FLP in this family was a result of the parents' transformative propensity. An engineer by profession, Dragan had no language specialist background but he was still able to recognise Macedonian and Serbian as the family cultural capital:

'She (the daughter) started *nursery* when she was three and even though we didn't speak a single word in English in the house she learnt it very quickly and then when she would come back from school she couldn't remember how to say a word in Macedonian and she would say it in English and I used to answer it. But her father didn't answer it. He was driving her crazy. She would cry, she would say: 'I hate you, and he would say: 'OK, even if you hate me, say it in Serbian.' She would say: 'I can't, I don't know how.' He would say: 'Tell me what you already know.' Once it was about a tomato, we were in Macedonia and she couldn't remember how to say tomato in Macedonian, and her father said: OK, you can't remember'. She remembered it in Serbian, she said: 'I know *mum*, it's *paradajz* (tomato)' and she told him: 'I know it in Serbian, you are Serbian, why are you protesting?' And he said: 'But you are in Macedonia now, and you should remember. Come on, describe it with words, but I would like you to describe it in Macedonian.' She said: 'But you don't speak Macedonian' and he told her: 'Yes but your mother is here.' So she was showing resistance even though she was young. But he was very persistent, he didn't let her say a word in English because you learn only then.' (Lepa, Macedonian-Serbian family, interview).

The cultural value of Macedonian and Serbian as the family cultural capital was translated in Dragan's firm decision for his daughter to practice them. This was despite Anastasija's rejection because of the implicit legitimization of English in the education field ('when she came back from school she couldn't remember how to say a word in Macedonian'). Early socialisation into Macedonian and Serbian was crucial due to the ease with which Anastasija internalised such early language socialisation. Lepa remembered that her policy to speak Macedonian to her daughter was successful because the daughter learnt Macedonian at that age very easily: 'everything I would tell her in Macedonian she would remember it, she was like a sponge' (Lepa, Macedonian-Serbian family, interview). As a result of the parents' inculcation efforts over time Anastasija was able to embody Macedonian and Serbian as her cultural and linguistic capital.

The parents' investments in Macedonian and Serbian brought returns. Cultural capital accumulated in early childhood helped Anastasija acquire symbolic capital at a later stage. The cultural capital that Anastasija accumulated was recognised as legitimate by peers in

Macedonia and Serbia enabling her to build friendships with them. Macedonian and Serbian were also recognised as her cultural and symbolic capital at school. For example, Anastasija was praised at school for being quick to pick up other languages and was asked to be a buddy translator of other Serbian newly arrived migrant children.

### 5.6.3 *'Half and half': gradual shift to English language and identity*

The HL-only FLP in this family slowly shifted towards English as Anastasija became a teenager. Without Dragan's presence and insistence on an HL-only FLP Anastasija was increasingly using more English with Lepa:

'now it's just me and my mum, I would say it's kind of half and half, again mostly we speak Macedonian but if there's something I don't know or something that she doesn't know then we will speak to each other in English.' (Anastasija, Macedonian-Serbian family, interview).

Anastasija's gradual switch to English was evident in observations of the usual language practice between herself and Lepa. Anastasija spoke mostly English despite her claim that she spoke Macedonian:

A: Can I go to Tesco to get something to eat?

L: Ajde dobro zemi ja jaknata ne sakam gola da odis (OK, that's fine but take your jacket, I don't want you to go out without it)

A: No, it's fine, it's fine. I am fine, I am fine, I am running to Tesco, it's like around the corner. (Macedonian-Serbian family, field notes)

English was slowly becoming Anastasija's dominant linguistic capital. She felt she could express herself better in English. For example, given the option to choose between Macedonian and English for the interview with me she chose English, despite Lepa's insistence that my study was about learning Macedonian and that she should speak in Macedonian with me. Internalisation of English as part of her identity was the reason Anastasija switched to English:

'I always refer to myself as an English citizen because that's what I am, I have an English passport, I was born here, I have lived here but I will always, always go back to the fact that I am half Serbian and half Macedonian.' (Anastasija, Macedonian-Serbian family, interview).

Such adoption of English as her dominant cultural capital and identity was a result of her contact with English-speaking peers and daily participation in an English-dominant field. Anastasija had started having more English friends and she spent more time with them, going less to Macedonia and Serbia (field notes). Although she had embodied a cultural and linguistic connection with her heritage background, she was slowly appropriating English as her cultural and linguistic capital. The case of the Macedonian-Serbian family demonstrates that the parents in this family adopted an HL FLP guided by their strong identification with their linguistic and cultural background, and a wish to transmit it as a valued form of family cultural capital. However, this case shows that migrant families' FLP is dynamic and it may be influenced by parents' propensity, but also it may be modified and changed over time as a result of children's agency to contest parents' FLP.<sup>21</sup>

## 5.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have outlined the family language policy and practice of the five migrant families in this study. Four out of five migrant families chose to have a predominantly English FLP for different reasons. Four migrant families had an English FLP guided by their aspiration to capitalise on English for educational achievement and social advancement (Macedonian-English), upward social mobility (Macedonian-Italian), social inclusion and social status (Macedonian-Chinese), or as a result of pressure from the education system and the health service to adopt English as the only legitimate language for children's successful education and language development (Macedonian-Scottish). Yet, other families (Macedonian-Serbian) set up a predominantly HL FLP as a result of their close identification with their HL background.

This raises several implications for further analysis in this study. Firstly, it was evident that some parents drew on their own experience with educational success through English when they decided to have an English FLP. For example, the parents in the Macedonian-English family had an English FLP based on their positive past experience of using English for educational success and career advancement which suggests that parents' past experience may have had an important influence on parents' FLP. Past experience is related to Bourdieu's notion of habitus and in order to examine how the parents' past experience shaped their FLP

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<sup>21</sup> Children's agency and its influence on migrant families' FLP will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 8.

further analysis is provided in the next finding chapter (Chapter 6). Secondly, another factor for migrant families' FLP seemed to be their English language skills, their socio-economic status, their attitude towards their HLs and English and support from extended family. For example, the parents in the Macedonian-Italian family lacked English language skills, educational qualifications and had a low socioeconomic status. In addition, they had a negative attitude towards their HLs and a positive attitude towards English, and did not have the support for an HL FLP from their extended family. This is related to Bourdieu's notion of capital expressed through individuals' access to multiple material and non-material resources and the way it shaped migrant families' FLP is discussed in detail in Chapter 7. Thirdly, as the case of the Macedonian-Scottish case clearly illustrates, migrant families' FLP might be structured in relation to parents' understanding of expectations in terms of language use by teachers, health visitors, spouses and children in different places such as schools, communities and the family. This is related to Bourdieu's concept of field as a structured social space in which there are implicit expectations of individuals who enter it, and this is discussed in Chapter 8.

The next, Chapter 6 analyses how migrant families' FLP was shaped by the parents' past experience.



## **Chapter 6**

### **Habitus and migrant families' FLP**

#### 6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter examined the variations of FLP in the five migrant families in this study. In order to understand these variations, this chapter aims to investigate the parents' past experience and how it shaped the parents' linguistic dispositions which ultimately influenced the families' FLP. This is related to Bourdieu's concept of (linguistic) habitus. For Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Thompson, 1991) the linguistic habitus is comprised of linguistic dispositions which are the ways in which individuals think, perceive and act in relation to language choice and language use. The (linguistic) dispositions of individuals are related to their past experience such as family upbringing and schooling (Bourdieu, 1977b). Relating this to the migrant families' FLP, it means that examination of the parents' past experience is a necessary step to understand how it shaped their linguistic dispositions which in turn shaped their FLP.

This chapter firstly examines the ways in which the parents' own childhood socialisation within their family setting structured their linguistic dispositions and their FLP in section 6.2. Then, in section 6.3, the analysis turns to parents' schooling experience and the ways it shaped their FLP. What follows in section 6.4, is an exploration of the ways in which the parents' wider social experience as migrants influenced their linguistic dispositions and their FLP. In section 6.5 I discuss how parents' reflection on their own experience and the experience of other migrant families structured their FLP. Finally, the chapter ends with a conclusion of the findings in section 6.6.

#### 6.2 Parents' early childhood socialisation within the family setting

Findings in this study suggest that the parents' exposure to language use and attitudes in their own family during their early upbringing structured their linguistic dispositions in different ways, which in turn shaped their FLP differently. In Bourdieu's theory, the family is a particularly important site for one's socialisation into the social value of languages because 'the habitus is linked to the market through the conditions of use, by hearing and speaking,

through exchanges in the family...presenting the child with models or sanctions.’ (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991, p. 81).

In some cases, the parents internalised their family’s negative attitudes to other languages than English which ultimately inclined them to have an English FLP. This was the case of Jason, the father in the Macedonian-English family. In Jason’s family, the parents had a negative attitude towards public display of linguistic diversity and linguistic difference:

Today I chatted with Jason who told me that as a child he would often hear his father openly criticising immigrants for speaking their languages in public. (Jason, Macedonian-English family, field notes)

Jason tried to distance himself from this view by acknowledging that linguistic diversity was a reality in London; yet he also demonstrated, albeit unconsciously, his own disapproval of other migrant families speaking other languages than English in public in his daughter’s school:

‘I was a minority in the playground in the sense cause people talking, you can't understand them. A lot of Polish, yeah.’ (Jason, Macedonian-English family, interview)

Jason’s statement above clearly demonstrates that his childhood socialisation in the family inculcated in him a disposition to perceive English as the only legitimate language for public participation in the wider public space, and to see any expression of linguistic difference as inappropriate. In this way, as a result of family upbringing, Jason had unconsciously internalised a sense of a linguistic hierarchy in which English was the dominant language and HLs were of less importance. This was evident in his English FLP and his comments that Macedonian was ‘quite a minority language’ and that it had ‘to be sacrificed’.

Yet, in other cases, the parents did not merely reproduce their family’s negative attitudes to other languages, but they developed more creative response to the conditions of family upbringing. In some cases, the parents’ childhood socialisation into a low-status HL instilled in them a sense of contempt and devaluation of their own HL which led to their adoption of an English FLP. This was the case of Chen, the father in the Macedonian-Chinese family. Much to his dislike, he was brought up by his family speaking a low-status language, Hakka, rather than Cantonese, which had a much higher social status in his native Hong-Kong:

‘My family speak a language called Hakka, which I can speak but Hakka is not spoken by many people in Hong Kong, because people in Hong Kong speak Cantonese but there is a dialect called Hakka my family spoke it but not many people speak it (...) They made the mistake with me and my sister (...). All they ever taught me was ... was Hakka (lowering intonation, seems disappointed). What they (his older siblings) spoke was Hakka but with their own children they spoke Cantonese and so also my nieces and nephews they all spoke...they can speak Cantonese. They grew up speaking Cantonese. I didn’t grow up speaking Cantonese. That’s the reason I can’t speak a second language and I have shown no inclination to learn.’ (Chen, Macedonian-Chinese family, interview)

Chen’s experience of having been socialised into Hakka as the language in his home which had a lower value in the wider social space compared to Cantonese, prompted him to internalise a long-lasting disposition not to invest in a language which only had value in the home domain. In the above excerpt Chen openly legitimises Cantonese as the dominant linguistic capital in relation to the linguistic market in Hong Kong. It implies that his experience led him to think that practicing a language is only worth if it is the dominant linguistic capital in wider society. Having been one of the few family members to be socialised into Hakka made him feel disadvantaged compared to his siblings and nephews because they possessed the dominant linguistic capital in Hong Kong and more widely. Such early experience and awareness that he had inherited a language which did not have the capacity to function as linguistic capital, led Chen to reject Hakka and practice English with his daughter because he was self-aware that it is the dominant linguistic capital in the English context.

Yet, in other cases the parents were able to transform the linguistic dispositions they had acquired during family upbringing due to subsequent experiences which developed their ability for critical thinking. This is related to Bourdieu’s argument that ‘habitus is an open system of dispositions that is constantly subjected to experiences and constantly affected by them in a way that either reinforces or modifies its structures’ (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 133). The parents’ ability to transform the linguistic dispositions acquired during family upbringing is evident in the case of a Croatian friend of the Macedonian-Scottish family. As a child, the Croatian friend was socialised by his family to appreciate English for educational purposes:

F On Thursday it was always English at home.  
(...)

R Why did she (his mother) want you to speak English on Thursdays?

F I don't know she wanted us to know... uh...

R Practice?

F Yes, practice in English. So if you didn't know how to say I am hungry or I need this, I need that in English she would just ignore us she would always correct us and feed in and sort of exchange the words or the words that we didn't know. She would sort of let us know but we laughed a while but she would just ignore us. It was sort of English books and dictionaries and things like that but always, I was probably about at primary school level, 6 or 7 we started so there was this English Thursday, lessons, things like that. (Croatian friend of Macedonian-Scottish family, interview)

The above excerpt demonstrates that the family of the Croatian friend socialised him into valuation of English. He was born in Zambia but both his parents were Croatian. The valuation of English was related to its dominant position as legitimate linguistic capital in Zambia. Although he was socialised to value English, he was able to reverse his childhood experience. In other words, he did not reproduce his mother's perception of English as a dominant linguistic capital and he did to do the same with his own son as a result of his subsequent experience and ability to think critically. He went back to Croatia and then immigrated to England but his ability to reflect on his childhood experience made him even more aware of the importance of Croatian in the English context. He spoke Croatian to his son because of his fundamental belief of its importance for communication with family back in Croatia: 'it's the sort of contact that he (his son) can have with his family in Croatia, with my parents while they are still alive, then I've got two brothers, their family and nieces and nephews.'(interview). This demonstrates that although family upbringing and childhood socialisation into/with language were important for the formation of the parents' perceptions of the value of their HLs and English, some parents had a transformative propensity to transform their upbringing socialisation into English as the dominant language and to adopt an HL FLP.

The cases of the three fathers which were discussed above demonstrate the different ways in which the parents mediated their family upbringing which structured their FLP differently. Some parents internalised their early childhood experience and reproduced it, yet other parents demonstrated critical evaluation of the conditions of their family upbringing and had more creative responses. On the one hand, Jason's case illustrates that some parents' English FLP was a result of their internalisation and reproduction of negative attitudes towards linguistic

diversity acquired in his own family. This was evident in Jason being uncomfortable with the idea of his children speaking other languages than English, especially in public. On the other hand, the cases of Chen and the Croatian friend of the Macedonian-Scottish family demonstrate that the parents' FLP was also a result of the parents' creative responses to the conditions of their family upbringing. Chen's case illustrates how parents' past experience of being socialised into a lower-status language in the family setting instilled in them a sense of loathing their own HL background which illustrates that sometimes parents developed a creative response to the circumstances of their family language socialisation. Chen was able to develop self-awareness of the relation between the value of the language acquired in his family home and its value in the public domain and weigh up the difference. Such self-awareness made Chen starkly aware of the low social status of Hakka compared to Cantonese and as a result of that he rejected it as valueless. Consequently, this had a significant impact on his decision to adopt an English FLP with his own daughter.

By contrast, the case of the Croatian friend illustrates that the parents in the migrant families in this study were not merely unconscious recipients of family norms and rules but they had the propensity to develop alternative linguistic dispositions due to exposure to subsequent experiences which re-structured their linguistic dispositions acquired in the family. This was evident in the fact that the Croatian friend practised Croatian with his own son even though he had been socialised into valuation of English by his own parents. The relationship between the Croatian friend's view about multilingualism and its influence on the FLP of the Macedonian-Scottish family is discussed in Chapter 7.

### 6.3 Parents' schooling experience

The parents' own schooling experience and socialisation into the value of languages on the education field was another factor that shaped their linguistic dispositions in different ways which ultimately structured their FLP. Bourdieu (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990) argues that education is the most powerful social space, which through a process of socialisation and inculcation, has the power to shape individuals' linguistic dispositions and language practice with its imposition of one dominant language as the only legitimate language.

Parents' own academic success in England as a result of their high level of English proficiency made them realise that English was an important form of linguistic capital for educational

success which in turn structured their English FLP. This is evident in the case of Bisera, the mother in Macedonian-English family:

‘I wanted her (the daughter’s) English to be perfect, especially when I was doing my postgraduate studies here (in England) it was very important to know English in *perfection* to be able to study.’ (Bisera, Macedonian-English family, interview)

Bisera’s comment above reveals that her successful schooling experience and academic success in England as a result of her ability to draw on her English language proficiency had a profound impact on her valuation of English. Bisera had a Master’s degree and had benefitted from her own educational success, and as a result, she wanted to transfer such opportunity for academic success to her children, by having an English FLP with them. She seemed to refer to her own past experience with academic success through English (‘it was very important to know English in *perfection* to be able to study’) and took it as a powerful example to facilitate her children’s educational achievement with an English FLP. She anticipated that an English FLP would enable her children to move upwards in terms of educational qualifications and therefore she invested in an English FLP.

Other parents had similar successful schooling experience and academic success through English in England:

I don’t know if you had an interview...I had an interview before I enrolled at university so for everything, for college, for work I think it (English) will influence their opportunity. (Macedonian friend of Macedonian-Chinese family, interview)

Evidently, the successful educational experience of some parents was converted into a high level of expectation in terms of their children’s English language learning. As a result of their schooling experience, the parents developed a disposition that English was the only legitimate language to achieve social and educational advancement. English proficiency served as academic capital on the education field that converted to educational mobility. In other words, the parents’ orientation towards their children’s education motivated them to ‘invest’ in an English FLP with them with an expectation of their academic success in the future. They were keen to invest in English to ensure that their children maintained or surpassed the family’s current social position. The reason why the parents valued English so highly was because

English was not the linguistic and cultural capital they had inherited from their own family. On the contrary, the parents themselves were migrants in England and they had experienced the importance of English for gaining access to the education field ('I had an interview') and accumulation of educational qualifications in England. Therefore, the parents' aspiration was to transmit English as linguistic capital to their children because it would give them an advantage and increase their chances for success on the education and job markets in England.

Conversely, parents whose schooling experience in relation to English language learning was less successful, developed a deep sense of regret and even a stronger desire for their children to acquire English which resulted in their English FLP. This was the case of Giorgio, the father in the Macedonian-Italian family. The following conversation between Giorgio (G) and the mother, Vesna (V), is a powerful example:

V We learnt English. English was first and Russian was second.

G That's how it should be.

V And then, it was less German at least in Skopje, I know.

G It makes sense for French because we are close (Sardinia and France) we don't like each other much. But English should have been the first language you teach as a foreign language in the school. It should be like that everywhere else.

V They do.

G They do now, not when I was a kid. As I said, everybody chose the English class but there was not enough teachers. (sic.)

V We couldn't choose. We were given that and that's it.

G We could. French or English. Everyone was for English but there was like 80 per cent of the class were French. So if you were one of the lucky ones... (Giorgio and Vesna, Macedonian-Italian family, field notes)

The most prominent feature in the excerpt above is Giorgio's sense of regret for having missed a chance to acquire English as his linguistic capital during his schooling. His sense of regret comes with his realisation that English is dominant linguistic capital in England and a lingua franca worldwide ('English should have been the first language you teach'). Due to his unfortunate schooling experience, Giorgio was unable to capitalise on English because he was not in the English class ('if you were one of the lucky ones'). This experience prompted him to try and attempt to realise his unfulfilled aspiration for upward social mobility with English by investing in an English FLP with his children.

Other parents' schooling experience with language learning was related to a de-legitimisation process of other languages than English in schools which they internalised as a long-lasting disposition to question the educational value of other languages than English. Such experience ultimately shaped their English FLP. This was the case of Jason, the father in the Macedonian-English family:

'When I grew up people were shy to do languages. No one wanted to speak, no one wanted to say things wrong in front of the class. It was kind of, it wasn't taken seriously, the languages were kind of like, yeah, people just laugh in the lesson. It was kind of 'Oh, I've said that wrong'. We weren't shown the other side of it, as a skill.' (Jason, Macedonian-English family, interview)

Jason's early schooling experience with language learning exerted a particularly strong influence on the formation of his linguistic dispositions. As a native speaker of English, one of his earliest socialisation experiences was devaluation of other languages than English with the fact that they had a marginalised position in the school ('wasn't taken seriously'; we weren't shown the other side of it, as a skill'). The way Jason's school socialisation into devaluation of other languages than English shaped his linguistic dispositions and ultimately his English FLP, was that he disregarded the need for his children to learn Macedonian. By contrast, King and Fogle (2006) who studied the language practices of Spanish-English families in the US found that the parents' positive experience of language learning motivated them to achieve the same goal with their children.

Moreover, the schooling experience of parents who were a racial minority was related to their socialisation into a monolingual school culture which structured their linguistic disposition to devalue other languages than English, and this led to their adoption of an English FLP. This was evident in the case of the father in the Macedonian-Chinese family, Chen:

'At my school there were a lot of Bangladeshi people in East London, they were all Bangladeshis and it was only me who was Chinese and a couple of Caribbean. We never knew any sort of Polish people, we never you know, Germans, French. I think I was about 16 before this girl came to our school and her parents were soldiers. Even though she was born in Holland they (the family) were British. So we didn't know any of what we called foreigners. And I was a foreigner and I didn't want to stand out.'



R: Yeah, at that time was there diversity, to celebrate cultures?

C: It wasn't there. I mean the biggest population in... Non-white population in my school was Bangladeshis and that's it. I was the only Chinese kid in my year and in 300 children there was a couple of Chinese people in other years but that was it. That's my experience with languages. We never mixed with other cultures. With our culture.' (Chen, Macedonian-Chinese family, interview)

The above excerpt provides an excellent illustration of the school socialisation process through which Chen, the father in the Macedonian-Chinese family, internalised implicit expectations of monolingualism on the education field when he was a young migrant child in England. Indeed, as a young migrant child in a monolingual English school, Chen had experienced that being a linguistic and racial minority ('it was only me who was Chinese', 'I was the only Chinese kid in my year', 'non-white population') was undesirable ('what we called foreigners'; 'I was a foreigner'). Consequently, Chen's early school socialisation into expectations of monolingualism seemed to have had a critical impact on his valuation of his HL and English and it seemed that Chen developed a durable disposition that he had to 'abandon' his cultural and linguistic heritage and conform to the English monolingual school culture for the sake of being accepted by others (I didn't want to stand out'). In this way, Chen's past experience of monolingual school socialisation led to his perception of English as the only legitimate language which would enable him to integrate into the mainstream school culture. His English FLP was therefore a means to achieve the same for his daughter.

In addition, in cases in which the parents were a racial minority, their English FLP was also related to their schooling experience as migrant children who were unable to speak English. This is illustrated with the comment of the Chinese friend of the Macedonian-Italian family:

There was only one other Chinese family in my school, yeah (...) I couldn't speak any English when I went to school so that was different as well. Whereas back then they didn't encourage you (to speak your HL), they wanted you to speak English, they didn't encourage the home language and you know, I came home and taught it to my siblings cause I am the oldest and that's what's changed. Even now we speak to each other in English. (laughter). (Chinese friend of Macedonian-Italian family, interview)

This reveals that the parents' past experience as racial and linguistic minority migrant children in English schools who had been unable to speak English as the dominant language during their

initial years in England, left a long lasting impact on the way they perceived English and their HLs. As migrant children in English schools, the parents wanted to be able to participate in school activities and to be accepted by others, but their inability to speak English acted as a barrier and that was why they focused on acquiring English ('I came home and taught it to my siblings') because English proficiency was rewarded in the school ('they wanted you to speak English'), whereas their HLs were not ('they didn't encourage the home language'). Hence, the parents' English FLP was shaped by their attempt to avoid similar experience for their own children, and it was an attempt to enable them to be proficient in English so that they could participate and integrate in schools and in the wider society.

To summarise section 6.3, the parents' schooling experience had a fundamental influence on their linguistic dispositions and consequently, on their FLP. In general, the parents' schooling experience instilled in them a permanent disposition to appreciate English and to devalue other languages. Through socialisation on the education field, the parents realised that proficiency in English was a major form of linguistic capital for educational achievement. Some parents were well educated and had benefited a great deal from their own educational success as a result of their English language proficiency, and they wanted the same opportunity for their children through an English FLP. Others had less fortunate schooling experience with English language learning, and such experience served as an impetus to their 'investment' in an English FLP which they hoped would enable their children to develop their English language skills and would serve as a means for their upward social mobility. Finally, parents who were a racial and a linguistic minority in schools were socialised into a monolingual school culture which structured their linguistic disposition to value English as the only legitimate language for their social integration, and this encouraged them to have an English FLP with their own children in order to achieve the same for them.

#### 6.4 'We were completely different': Parents' wider social experience

The parents' wider social experience as migrants in England also had a profound influence on their linguistic dispositions and ultimately their FLP. Parents' racial and ethnic difference made some of them to internalise a sense of inadequacy in a predominantly monocultural and monolingual society which in turn structured their disposition to conform with dominant social monolingual and monocultural norms. This is evident in the following excerpts:

You'd be there walking and (others would be) shouting at you and, I mean I am 45, so I have lived in (the name of the settlement) since I was three so when I arrived there was not, it was predominantly white here, very, not that many Asians and not that many Chinese so it's very very different, it's completely changed now. And so you know we were completely different. (...) So 40 something years ago (it was) completely different, (the name of the settlement) was different and London was completely different and there wasn't that many families (sic.), it was a predominantly white area here. (Chinese friend of Macedonian-Italian family, interview)

I have shown no inclination to learn (Cantonese) because at that time when I came in the 70's was just basically... You didn't want to be different and you just assimilate and there weren't many Chinese people. (Chen, Macedonian-Chinese family, interview)

The crucial feature in the above excerpts is that racial and ethnic minority parents developed a strong desire to fit in the social context ('you didn't want to be different') due to their unpleasant feeling of being different ('it was a predominantly white area here'; there weren't many Chinese people.) As a linguistic, cultural and racial minority, the parents' desire was to avoid isolation by suppressing their difference and by conforming to dominant norms in order to be accepted and to participate as equal members in the host society. Parents' desire to blend in was even greater as they had unpleasant experience of being bullied because of their racial difference ('shouting at you').

In a similar vein, as a result of the parents' migrant status they had experienced unfriendly attitude which instilled in them a deep sense of inferiority, and this shaped their disposition to value English and to have an English FLP as a means for their children's equal participation in education and in society:

'We have a dialect even if you have been here all your life, you have a dialect even if you have been here for 50 years, you are a foreigner for sure and sometimes it's *uncomfortable*. (...) I have felt it personally that there is *discrimination*. Especially after the borders opened there are more Poles and Bulgarians and at work the English people started, even those who were *friendly* now become a bit *unfriendly*. It's very important for the kids not to have an accent to speak perfect English. Just for that. It might not affect but you never know how things might change, right?' (Macedonian friend of Macedonian-Chinese family, interview)

As a result of her migrant position, the Macedonian friend of the Macedonian-Chinese family directly experienced sanctions on the social field in the form of discrimination due to her foreign accent. This was related to wider issues of public perceptions about migration ('you are a foreigner', 'even those who were friendly now become a bit *unfriendly*'). Such awareness of the depreciation of their background at work clearly structured the parents' dispositions to appreciate English. The parents quickly learned that there were sanctions in the social structure for those who did not conform with dominant monolingual norms, and as a result, the parents' adjusted their linguistic dispositions accordingly. Consequently, parents' decision to have an English FLP was a way of overcoming discrimination and creating equal opportunities for their children.

Indeed, any attempt to practice their HLs in public evoked in the parents a sense of inappropriateness:

'When we are outside alone I speak to him (her son) more in English. If we are alone outside in the park I speak to him a little bit of Macedonian so that I see how much... (he understands). But English, because everyone understands English sometimes if the environment isn't... it's very difficult to switch. I would start (speaking) in Macedonian and then I would see some people I know and then I switch back to English and I continue speaking in English. After a while I realise it and I think: 'OK now I will speak a little bit of Macedonian.' So, I need to be more disciplined if I want them (her children) to remember it (Macedonian) (Bisera, Macedonian-English family, interview)

The above excerpt clearly illustrates that some parents were starkly aware of the monolingual norms in the wider society resulting in their internalisation of a strong sense of inappropriateness of practicing their HLs in public to avoid being labelled as different. It demonstrates the parents' English FLP was a result of the negative wider social experience which instilled in them a strong desire to be included and accepted as equal members in society even if it meant that they had to suppress their linguistic background.

## 6.5 Parents' reflection on experience of others

As it was discussed in the sections above, the parents were not merely internalising dominant monolingual norms in an uncritical way. Indeed, some of the parents demonstrated a clear

sense of self-awareness and reflection on experience which prompted them to re-structure or to reinforce their linguistic dispositions. In this section, the discussion revolves around the idea that everyday reflexivity was a fundamental factor which enabled parents to become aware of the cultural and linguistic value of their HLs and to have an HL FLP.

The case of Lepa, the mother in the Macedonian-Serbian family, provides an interesting illustration of the importance of parents' everyday reflection on experience of others, as well as their own experience as a way to have an HL FLP. Interestingly, Lepa was initially concerned with learning and speaking English when she first came to England because she did not speak it: 'I didn't know how to speak English at all. All I knew was, yes, no and keep smiling. I didn't know anything.' (interview). As a result of her limited English language skills, at first she deliberately tried to socialise with English-speaking friends during her initial years in England, and she learnt to speak English very well. Her initial experience of lack of English language skills initially inclined Lepa to speak both Serbian and English to her daughter.

Yet, Lepa's reflection on the positive experience of other migrant families as a former au-pair in a Pakistani family made her re-think her strategies and practice Macedonian with her own daughter:

'She (the Pakistani mother) spoke to them (her children) in Urdu so that they knew it.' (Lepa, Macedonian-Serbian family, fieldnotes)

Similarly, Lepa's ability to reflect on her experience as a baby-sitter in a Macedonian family later prompted her to re-think the importance of practicing Macedonian in the home:

'When I went there as a babysitter during the weekend they (the children) would say: 'Hi Lepa' and their mother would say: 'Haven't I told you that there's no problem to speak English between Sunday evening when you go to bed until Friday when you finish school at 3.30. Until Sunday evening I don't want to hear a word in English, only Macedonian and with me (they spoke Macedonian) (...) But that's it. With children, you get whatever you invest in.' (Lepa, Macedonian-Serbian family, interview)

The above excerpt demonstrates that Lepa's ability for reflection on the positive experience of other migrant families stirred a sense of self-awareness in her and encouraged her to practice Macedonian with her own daughter. Re-structuring of the linguistic dispositions of her habitus

was only possible by conscious everyday reflection on the positive experience of other migrant families.

In addition, parents' reflection on the negative experience of other migrant families was crucial for parents' decision to have an HL FLP. Again, Lepa was a very reflective person who had the opportunity to witness the negative consequences of not practicing an HL, which in turn exerted a strong sense in her to avoid such negative outcomes for her own family:

'I tried to understand people who spoke English to their children, who learnt English through their children, you see, the parents were learning English and the children were only speaking English, not a word in Serbian. And I have always thought: 'I would cut off my tongue if I don't teach my child Macedonian. (...) It's unimaginable for me, my child to go to Macedonia, like the rest of my family who have immigrated to France and Germany and when my cousins' children visit their grandmother they don't know how to ask for bread and water in Macedonian. For me, that is unimaginable. When my daughter is in Macedonia I don't want someone else to translate for her, I want her to be able to be alone with her grandmother and to be able to tell her when she is hungry, when she wants to sleep: 'I am cold, I am hot', and so on. That was the most important thing to me.' (Lepa, Macedonian-Serbian family, interview)

Conscious reflection on experience was the fundamental aspect of Lepa's ability to change her linguistic dispositions. She was able to transform her linguistic dispositions from a young migrant who spoke little English to an outspoken individual, as she jokingly explained, 'a pushy mother' who strongly advocated the importance of practicing HLLs because of her ability to observe and reflect on negative experience of other families including her own relatives. It appears that Lepa was able to reflect on the experience of other migrant families and this is what prompted her to change her practice. Lepa's example suggests that the linguistic habitus is able to transform its dispositions because of everyday reflection. In this sense, Lepa had a 'transformative habitus' (Arnot & Naveed, 2014) because she was able to look into the possibilities within social situations in such a way that invoked her agency to see opportunities for self-improvement. As it is evident from the above excerpt she strongly objected the idea of not practicing Macedonian ('I would cut off my tongue') as she was able to recognise the value of Macedonian as an important form of cultural capital for her daughter which enabled her to communicate with her relatives back in Macedonia. This demonstrates that in the current study parents' cultural identification with their HL background was an integral part of their dispositions which encouraged them to have an HL FLP. In a similar vein, Mu (2014a) who

used the concept of habitus for a quantitative study of the relationship between cultural disposition and HL proficiency of 230 Chinese Australian adolescents, found that the stronger the participants' perception of themselves as Chinese was, the more proficient they tended to be in Chinese.

To summarise section 6.5, reflexivity on experience of others had an important role in the way the parents' linguistic dispositions were structured which ultimately had an impact on their FLP. Parents' ability for critical reflection on the experience of other migrant families, as well as reflection on their own experience, was a powerful factor which evoked their agency. Both positive and negative evidence of HL practice in other migrant families prompted the parents' critical self-examination of their own language practice with their children which ultimately helped them to see the cultural value of their HLs and to have an HL FLP<sup>22</sup>.

## 6.6 Conclusion

This chapter examined parents' past experience which structured their linguistic dispositions (habitus) and shaped their FLP. Formation of the parents' linguistic dispositions was discussed in relation to their early childhood experience within the family setting, their schooling experience, their wider social experience, and their reflection on experience.

In section 6.2, I first discussed the ways in which the parents' linguistic habitus was structured based on their experience and socialisation in their own family. The family served as a social space which inculcated the value of languages in the linguistic dispositions of parents. As a result, some parents internalised a long-lasting disposition to value English and to devalue HLs whereas other parents demonstrated critical evaluation of the conditions of their family upbringing and had the propensity to develop alternative linguistic dispositions due to exposure to subsequent experiences which re-structured the linguistic dispositions acquired in their family. Next, in section 6.3 I discussed the ways in which the parents' schooling experience shaped their linguistic dispositions. Some parents experienced education as a site in which English was the dominant linguistic capital for educational success; other parents experienced education as a site in which other languages than English were devalued and for other parents, education was a site where they had to conform to its monolingual structure in order to be

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<sup>22</sup> Parents' agency is discussed in more detail in Chapter 9.

accepted as an integral part of it. What followed in section 6.4, was a discussion on the ways in which the parents' wider social experience as migrants structured their linguistic dispositions. Some of the parents had experienced a negative attitude towards them and as a result they internalised a long-lasting disposition to blend in and conform to dominant monolingual norms. In the final section 6.5, the parents' ability to reflect on experience was discussed. Parents' ability for reflection on their own experience as well as the experience of other migrant families was shown to be essential for parents' adoption of an HL FLP. The issues raised in this chapter point to a need for examination of how parents' past experience was related to ideas of structure and agency and how it shaped their FLP differently. These issues are discussed in more detail in Chapter 9.

Another factor which shaped the migrant families' FLP was their access to various forms of material and non-material resources (capital) which is discussed in detail in the next chapter.



## **Chapter 7**

### **Capital and migrant families' FLP**

#### 7.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the ways in which the parents' habitus expressed through their past experience structured their linguistic dispositions and the ways in which it shaped their FLP. In this chapter the focus is on capital, that is, on ways of using multiple resources: what material and non-material resources the parents in migrant families had and how they used them to support their languages and how this shaped their FLP. This is related to Bourdieu's argument that individuals' practice depends on 'the resources objectively available' to them (Bourdieu, 1997, p. 46). Therefore, this chapter examines the ways in which the parents' ability or inability to mobilise various forms of symbolic and economic resources structured their linguistic dispositions and their FLP.

This chapter starts with an analysis of the ways in which parents' access to economic capital expressed through availability of financial resources structured their FLP in section 7.2. Next, section 7.3 investigates the ways in which the parents' possession or lack of cultural capital in the form of knowledge about language development of multilingual children, multilingual language practice in the family as well as their attitude towards English and their HLs led to their adoption of a particular FLP. Section 7.4 examines how the migrant families' FLP was structured based on the parents' ability or inability to capitalise on their linguistic capital including their English language skills and their linguistic backgrounds. The next section, 7.5 discusses how support and information provided by extended family, social networks and contact with same ethnic group members as an integral part of parents' social capital affected their FLP. The chapter ends with a conclusion in section 7.6.

#### 7.2 Mobilising economic capital

Availability or lack of financial resources was a form of economic capital (Bourdieu, 1997) that the families could or could not draw on, which in turn structured their FLP differently. With availability of financial resources some parents could afford to send their children to good state schools or to private schools in which their HLs were valued and legitimated and this

acted as encouragement for the parents to set up an HL FLP. The most striking difference in this regard was between the Macedonian-Serbian and the Macedonian-Italian family. The Macedonian-Serbian family was a middle-class family with a single child and they lived in a nice, spacious house in an upmarket area in London; they had financial resources and property assets. Hence the parents in this family could use their economic capital to have an HL FLP because they sent their daughter to a good school which had resources and recognised the family's HLs as legitimate linguistic capital. This is evident in Lepa's comment below:

'It all depends on the *area*, it depends on the schools. Luckily, we are in a good area and there the schools are good. And that's why I am telling you about my experience in those two schools where she (her daughter) went. (Lepa, Macedonian-Serbian family, interview)

Parents' access to financial resources and ability to use them to support their HL FLP was evident in the case of other migrant families such as the friends of the Macedonian-Serbian family:

Having a Macedonian background was appreciated in any school (...) then they went to a private school. But this school is in (the place) and all famous people send their children there. And it was very... yes it depends on the school, my children were able to express themselves, I mean they were appreciated and we were proud to be Macedonians. (...) Maybe it depends on the school, in other schools it might be different but we had a very good *experience*, I mean we couldn't ask for a better one. Maybe we were able to have more *influence* in the school' (Macedonian friend of Macedonian-Serbian family, interview)

It is obvious that some families' availability of economic capital granted access to good schools in which the parents and their children had an opportunity to share their HLs and culture. As a result, they internalised a sense of being valued and accepted by others ('they were appreciated') and became aware of the value of their HLs as part of their cultural identity ('we were proud to be Macedonians'). This in turn, acted as encouragement for them to set an HL FLP. Consequently, the parents could use their financial resources as a form of economic capital to send their children to good schools in which their HLs were legitimised and an HL FLP seemed a natural choice for these families. In this sense, the families which had financial resources could draw on them to set up an HL FLP and create opportunities for their children to learn their HLs. This means that they were able to convert their economic capital into cultural capital which is related to Bourdieu's (1997) argument that one form of capital can be

converted into another form of capital. In this case migrant families with financial resources had an advantage because they could use their economic capital to ‘buy’ cultural capital, that is to set up an HL FLP and transmit their HLs to their children.

By contrast, limited economic capital expressed through lack of financial resources acted as a barrier for other migrant families limiting their choice of schools in which HLs were less valued which in turn encouraged them to have an English FLP. This was the case with the Macedonian-Italian family. This was a working-class family with three children which lived in a small house in a run-down area in London with a predominantly migrant community. The children’s school had limited resources and was primarily focused on teaching the children English, as many of them lacked English language skills. This acted as an encouragement for the parents in this family to establish an English FLP with their children in order to give them better opportunity for educational success. This is evident in the following excerpt:

G: I don’t see them (the school) really encouraging the pupils to learn the language from their parents. I have never seen anything, really...

V: I think the problem is that the kids don’t speak English so that’s why they don’t encourage. Well, they don’t encourage, they don’t really bother about other languages because they need the kids to learn English.

G: They want to teach them English because... I don’t know out of London how is in the schools (sic.) maybe it’s different, but here in London they probably consider more about speaking in English and teaching English because even when you go to the school there are so many kids that don’t speak in English (Giorgio and Vesna, Macedonian-Italian family, field notes)

Insufficient family economic capital prevented the Macedonian-Italian family from sending their children to good schools in which their HLs could have been valued and this could have acted as an encouragement for the parents to have an HL FLP. Instead, this working-class family was constrained by their inferior economic position and lived in an area in which the school had limited resources and in which HLs were seen as a disadvantage for the children’s educational success. The parents’ awareness that the school appreciated English made them invest in an English FLP to give their children opportunity for educational success and a means for upward social mobility. Their aspirations for an English FLP stemmed from lack of economic capital and they hoped that their children would be socially mobile in terms of economic income and social status through an English FLP. Indeed, the parents in this family

had high expectations for social mobility with an English FLP. Their concern was whether the children would earn good income and they wanted them to gain valued English language skills rather than waste time on their HLs which were not valued linguistic capital in their school.

Another way in which availability or lack of financial resources structured migrant families' FLP was by either giving them opportunity for frequent travel to their HL countries as a means for additional support of their HL FLP, or as a constraint which prevented them from traveling to their HL countries as a means for their children's HL learning. For example, under the powerful influence of economic capital the parents in the Macedonian-Serbian family were able to provide regular access to a variety of cultural resources for their daughter's HL learning:

‘She has been flying alone since she was 6, she goes to Macedonia alone for three or four times a year, I send her for Christmas, for Easter and during summers she goes with me. (...) When she met the children from The Golden Nightingale (children's song festival in Macedonia) and she used to go to Ohrid (a tourist city in Macedonia) for ten days with them and when she would come back she would write to them in Macedonian. And she would ask me: ‘Mum, how do you say this in Macedonian?’ She was very funny. (...) With Facebook, she would write to them in Macedonian she would switch it, so she insisted to do it herself because of the children and that's how she learned to write as well. And then she was going out with the children, they were friends.’ (Lepa, Macedonian-Serbian family, interview)

As a result of the privileged familial economic capital, the parents in the Macedonian-Serbian family provided their daughter with access to extracurricular activities such as participation in summer camps and frequent travels to Macedonia and Serbia which facilitated this family's opportunity to set an HL FLP. Indeed, family financial conditions in the Macedonian-Serbian family undoubtedly exerted a powerful influence on their ability to use additional resources as a means to support their HL FLP. It is clear that the parents' economic capital<sup>23</sup> had played a critical part in their ability to strengthen their HL FLP by providing additional opportunity for

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<sup>23</sup> In a similar vein, access to economic capital is what enabled the relatives and friends of the Macedonian-Italian family to practise Macedonian. Vesna's sister went to Macedonia often and that is how her children learnt Macedonian by having the opportunity to practise it with family and friends: ‘we were there (Macedonia) for three months last summer and he (her son) realised that no one understood his English and he learnt Macedonian very quickly.’ (Vesna's sister, Macedonian-Italian family). Another example of the opportunity to practise Macedonian with availability of economic resources was the Macedonian friend of the Macedonian-Italian family: ‘We were going to Italy more often and his Italian improved (...) It all depends on where we go on holiday, the language of that country is more dominant in, let's say, two or three months after the holiday.’ (Macedonian friend, Macedonian-Italian family, interview)

their daughter to learn Macedonian and Serbian in an interesting and engaging way, as well as by providing an opportunity for her to develop a sense of closeness and identification with her cultural and linguistic background. In this sense, the family's possession of economic capital had a positive impact on their successful HL FLP.

Conversely, due to lack of financial resources the Macedonian-Italian family rarely travelled Macedonia and Italy, and this had a negative effect on their opportunity to have an HL FLP. Indeed, the children in this family had only been there for a few times because 'it was very expensive', and this constrained the opportunities for the children to practise and learn Macedonian and Italian. During one of visits to the home in this family the parents told me:

V: When the two of us were working, you can afford...

G: Now with the kids it needs to be arranged, you know, it takes a bit of... Either for dates because kids go to school and everything...

V: And the price is as well...

G: And the prices are high... The peak of the season I mean the prices are... Wow, for five people is like going in, I don't know, in America. (Vesna and Giorgio, Macedonian-Italian family, field notes)

Evidently, the differential access to economic resources structured the parents' FLP in different ways. The difference in availability of financial resources between the Macedonian-Serbian and Macedonian-Italian families is a telling example of how economic capital acted either as an advantage in providing opportunity to set up an HL FLP, or as a formidable barrier which prevented them from setting up an HL FLP. On the one hand, availability of economic resources provided the parents in the Macedonian-Serbian family with more opportunity to use complementary strategies to support their HL FLP. On the other hand, lack of economic resources seemed to limit the ability of the parents in the Macedonian-Italian family to support an HL FLP by travelling to Macedonia and Italy as a means for their children to practise their HLs.

Yet, availability of economic capital was not always used as an advantage by parents to adopt an HL FLP. Financial constraints might have provided a direct and overt effect on the parents' willingness to invest in an HL FLP. This however, cannot explain why some parents were more

supportive of an HL FLP with their children when they were in a similar economic condition. This justifies the need to turn to the more hidden cultural capital in the next section.

### 7.3 Mobilising cultural capital

Cultural capital refers to knowledge, attitude, taste and educational qualifications (Bourdieu, 1997). In this study, the parents' cultural capital was expressed by their knowledge about multilingual language development and multilingual language practice in the family, as well as their attitudes to their HLs and English. All these were forms of cultural capital that structured the parents' linguistic dispositions and determined their FLP differently. This is discussed in the following sub-sections.

#### *7.3.1 Parents' possession of knowledge and a positive attitude towards their HLs*

Parents who possessed knowledge about multilingual children's language development, multilingual language practice in the family, and had a positive attitude towards their HLs were able to use them to their advantage to have an HL FLP. Some parents demonstrated a layperson's practical knowledge about the language development of multilingual children which in turn positively influenced their decision to have an HL FLP. The case of the Macedonian-Serbian family is the most revealing example of this:

'I have been told: 'Don't speak two languages to the child, you are confusing her' but she didn't have any problems. She would say: 'Sakam da jedem ice-cream'<sup>24</sup> (I would like to have an ice-cream) in Serbia. I mean, she would use the three languages in one sentence and get what she wanted. People would smile at her and find that cute.' (Lepa, Macedonian-Serbian family, interview)

The Macedonian-Serbian family's possession of a high level of cultural capital in the form of layperson's practical knowledge about multilingual children's language development enhanced their HL FLP by allowing them to be aware of their daughter's initial language mixing as a natural and a passing phase of multilingual children's language development. This knowledge helped them to be patient and not to worry needlessly about their daughter's multilingual language development. The parents' layperson's knowledge about multilingual

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<sup>24</sup> Sakam da = I would like to (Macedonian); jedem = have (Serbian); an ice-cream (English)

language development also helped them to take advice about multilingual language practice and development in a critical way which acted as their defence against negative views of others about children's multilingual language development ('I have been told: 'Don't speak two languages to the child, you are confusing her'). Obviously, the possession of such knowledge allowed the parents to make an informed decision and to translate it into a successful HL FLP.

In a similar vein, other parents demonstrated a layperson's knowledge about the nature of multilingual children's language development which encouraged them to have an HL FLP:

'we laughed so much because in the same sentence in the conversation he would make a hybrid language and it would be all three languages in the same sentence which was funny for us to listen to. So it took him quite a while I think 3 going into 4 when he actually could put them in sort of a boxes, oh, yeah, this is Croatian, this is my father's language, this is Macedonian, this is mum's and English is kind of when I socialise and go to nursery when I go to school I speak that language so that happened later on. (Croatian friend of Macedonian-Scottish family, interview)

F: I never spoke to him in English, never, because I knew that he would learn it at school, so no.

R: And did you decide on this alone, did any one give advice or?

F: No. Well, I knew that all children, those who were born here, they start speaking English by themselves, without a problem. And I see that all of our friends' children start speaking English by themselves.' (Macedonian friend of Macedonian-Scottish family, interview)

The excerpts above illustrate that some parents were able to use their practical knowledge and internal instinct about the language development of multilingual children which helped them appreciate the value of multilingualism and that empowered them to practice their HLs. Their layperson's knowledge was possibly due to their everyday observation of other migrant families' language practice and reflection on it. This finding provides strong evidence that even though parents who do not have professional knowledge may possess a kind of a practical sense which may serve as their cultural capital that underpins their HL practice.

In addition, other parents' possession of a more professional knowledge about the language development of multilingual children as a result of their teaching background raised their

awareness about the importance of practising their HLs with their children as a means of transmitting them, and this helped them to set up an HL FLP:

‘I was learning professionally and I told myself, I understood that the mother tongue should come from one’s home (Macedonian friend of Macedonian-Scottish family, interview)

‘Maybe my profession helped me a bit and when we came here with the children we used to have a Macedonian lesson for example on a Sunday evening. I used to tell them: ‘I’ve been a teacher and I will teach you.’ And we had lessons every Sunday.’ (Macedonian friend of Macedonian-Serbian family, interview)

In the first excerpt above, the Macedonian friend of the Macedonian-Scottish family used to be a teacher in Macedonia before she immigrated to England and that was clearly a form of cultural capital which empowered her ability to have an HL FLP. In the second quote, the Macedonian friend of the Macedonian-Serbian family had trained to become a kindergarten teacher in England and she was able to use that knowledge as her cultural capital to inform her decision to have an HL FLP. Evidently, a teaching background served as a form of cultural capital which enabled some parents to see the value of their HLs and to set up an HL FLP.

Furthermore, parents’ access to information about multilingual language development from relevant literature as well as information on the internet increased some parents’ appreciation of the value of multilingualism, and this helped them set up an HL FLP. This information served as their cultural capital which appeared to be of great benefit to their ability to practise their HLs:

‘I didn’t know many things as he is our first child, you know and in all those little booklets or on the internet I heard, saw and read that it is good to speak several languages with children because children who speak several languages are smarter, they have more flexible ways of thinking and all that.’ (Macedonian friend of Macedonian-Italian family)

Parents’ knowledge about age and HL learning was also a form of cultural capital that helped them to have an HL FLP. Parents who possessed either a layperson’s or more professional knowledge about multilingual children’s language development also demonstrated awareness of the importance of children’s early exposure to HL learning which contributed to their decision for an HL FLP:



‘If she doesn’t get to like it (Macedonian) and start learning it now when she’s 13, 14 before she becomes a teenager after that it gets even harder she will forget what she already knows’ (Lepa, Macedonian-Serbian family, interview)

‘When they are young they are like sponges, so you will get the bases and sort the brain gets wired up in a certain wire that allows him to pick up languages easier. (...) And that's the time really to do it because it's kind of effortless for the kids than to...it's not a conscious thought: ‘Oh I have to learn Croatian or I have to learn Macedonian’, but they just go along and just pick up as they go along really.’ (Croatian friend of Macedonian-Scottish family, interview)

‘But the age, I mean I was able to teach them (Macedonian) until they were seven or eight and as they grow up they start to have more activities with their friends and we started losing those Sunday lessons but you can’t keep them because they grow up you can’t have such an influence because they have other obligations.’ (Macedonian friend of Macedonian Serbian family)

The crucial feature of the excerpts above is that the parents were self-aware of the importance of age and HL learning and they invested their efforts accordingly. Indeed, the parents’ knowledge and valuation of multilingualism prompted them to invest in strategies to translate their knowledge into practice. Some parents’ high level of cultural capital in the form of possession of a layperson’s practical sense or a more professional knowledge about multilingual language development was translated into a high expectation in relation to HL learning and successful strategies to transmit them. Knowledge about multilingual language development, awareness about age and HL learning, and appreciation of multilingualism were powerful forms of cultural capital which gave some parents with an advantage to set up an HL FLP.

Also, parents who possessed knowledge about multilingual development and multilingual language practice, had invested in cultural exposure for their children such as books, and had spent time doing literacy practices with their children:

I had brought (Macedonian) textbooks and we used to write for half an hour to an hour. (...) I used to buy textbooks and Aesop fables from Macedonia and we used to read them in the evening, we used to do reading in Macedonian before they went to bed. We were lucky that I was at home I could dedicate myself to them and I could organise the time. (...) I had that

privilege to be with them and to teach them. (Macedonian friend of Macedonian Serbian family, interview)

I bought Macedonian textbooks for her when she was three or four. (Lepa, Macedonian- Serbian family)

He has many Macedonian children's books (...) When he was younger I read to him (...) also we have Italian children's books and they helped us a lot until he was three. (Macedonian friend of Macedonian-Italian family, interview)

These parents also made extraordinary efforts to send their children to HL schools:

She went to a Serbian school on a Saturday and to a Macedonian school on a Sunday, you can achieve everything when you want to.' (Lepa, Macedonian-Serbian family)

Evidently, the more cultural capital parents possessed, the more they invested in an HL FLP and in additional time and effort for their children's HL learning. Family investment in an HL FLP was supported by extra effort for their children's HL learning which included extra courses, tuition, home learning and family transmission of HL.

Finally, parents' positive attitude towards their HLs was another form of cultural capital that helped them have an HL FLP. For example, the parents in the Macedonian-Serbian family possessed a high level of cultural capital expressed in their positive attitude to their HLs. The parents' positive attitude towards their HLs was a result of their expectation that their HLs were valuable form of cultural capital that would enable their daughter to communicate with relatives, friends, neighbours in Macedonia and Serbia:

'It is important to me that she feels competent, *confident* when she goes there (Macedonia and Serbia). (...) I don't want her to feel in any way disadvantaged or incompetent (...) Everything that will help her to make friends and not to be as *odd one out*. That's why her father and I invested so much in her.' (Lepa, Macedonian-Serbian family, interview)

In the Macedonian-Serbian family, the parents' positive attitude towards their HLs was translated into high expectations in relation to their daughter's HL learning. This family was a typical example of a migrant family which was very successful in their efforts to set up an HL

FLP as a result of their high level of cultural capital and ability to capitalise on their knowledge about multilingual development and their positive attitude towards their HLs. From the five focal families in this study, only the Macedonian-Serbian family demonstrated a high level of cultural capital which helped them navigate the complexities of language choice and manage their HL FLP. This finding suggests that parental information about multilingual language development as well as parents' positive attitude towards their HLs has a powerful impact on parents' decision to practice a language other than the dominant one (King and Fogle, 2006; Curdt-Christiansen, 2009).

### *7.3.2 Parents' lack of knowledge and a negative attitude towards their HLs*

Parents' insufficient knowledge about multilingual language development and multilingual language practice in the family served as a handicap for them to have an HL FLP. This was evident in the Macedonian-Italian family. In this family, the parents lacked knowledge about multilingual language practice in the family which led them to adopt an English FLP. This is best illustrated in the conversation between Vesna and her Chinese friend during one of my visits to the home of the Macedonian-Italian family:

V: I mean that's (English) the only language that you can speak. It's different for people who come from the same country I think they speak you know most of them they speak home their own language so the kids pick up even if they you know...

FR: But May, who's Chinese, but she's from mainland China, her sister-in-law who's like me, born here and everything, she speaks Cantonese to her two daughters, her husband speaks French to them and they answer to him, right and they go to a French school and they learn English, they are fine. But you have to make a conscious effort and I think that's the difference. If you could both speak English you have to make a conscious effort if you're gonna do it, that's what all my friends have done.' (Vesna and her Chinese friend, field notes)

The above excerpt is a powerful example which demonstrates the opposite ways in which knowledge about multilingual language practice in the family and conscious decision structures the FLP of migrant families. It is evident that Vesna's lack of knowledge about multilingual language practice in the family seriously constrained her ability to set up an HL FLP with her children. Instead of providing an opportunity for her children to become multilingual by practicing Macedonian and Italian with them, Vesna suggests that speaking English is normal

in families in which parents have different language backgrounds. In this way, she unconsciously accepted English as the dominant form of cultural capital whereas her Chinese friend asserted the importance of parents' self-awareness and conscious decision to speak their HLs to their children as a necessary form of cultural capital for a successful HL FLP in migrant families.

Consequently, parents who lacked knowledge about multilingual language development and multilingual language practice in the family perceived their HLs as obstacles to educational achievement. This is evident in the case of the Macedonian-Italian family and Macedonian-English family whose insufficient knowledge about the language development of multilingual children led them to view their HLs as deficit that may negatively affect the development of their children's English:

‘As much as it is good to have *diversity* it might be her obstacle if she speaks two languages. I thought it might be an obstacle for her to speak English well.’ (...) I see that those children who live in our street, those who speak several languages, let's say the child who lived next to us he spoke English, Arabic, French, but he didn't have interest in any of the languages and his English was poor. He spoke all three languages but he didn't speak them well, let's say on a level that he could do something with them. And that's how I felt. I said to myself: Is this good or bad? And I made a decision somehow. I thought: ‘OK, let her (daughter) learn English but we will learn an additional language as well.’ (Bisera, Macedonian-English family, interview)

‘the oldest son, he did not speak until he was two and a half years old and then you think not to confuse the children and you start (speaking English) and you don't think about that, it comes to you automatically in a way, you don't think, you say to yourself: ‘He had a problem, let's speak in one language to him so that we don't have a problem again’ (Vesna, Macedonian-Italian family, interview)

It is evident that Bisera and Vesna were unable to recognise the value of Macedonian due to lack of knowledge about the language development of multilingual children. Instead, they thought that practising Macedonian was a potential problem for their children's success with learning English. Indeed, parents who lacked knowledge about the language development of multilingual children were worried about their children's language mixing which led them to think that having an HL FLP was going to leave a permanent negative effect with devastating

consequences for their children's English language development and that it would seriously limit their opportunity for socio-educational success.

In addition, parents who lacked knowledge about multilingual development and multilingual language practice demonstrated insufficient knowledge about the importance of age and HL learning. This led to their laissez-faire attitude towards their children's HL learning and to an English FLP:

‘As they get older they will pick it themselves and I think you know this better than we would. Six months in Macedonia and they will be fluent, you know so...’ (English friend of Macedonian-English family, interview)

‘I feel like when they are maybe 20 or older when they will be able to travel to Macedonia without me I would like them just to understand even if it's just basic, I feel fine because I feel like they learn more if they are interested in and they'll... but yeah, as long as they know the basic I am fine with that. (Macedonian friend of Macedonian-English family, interview)

The above excerpts demonstrate that migrant families' insufficient knowledge about age and multilingual language development seriously disempowered their ability to adopt and HL FLP. This is in accordance with findings in some FLP studies which illustrate that parents' insufficient knowledge and fear of educational failure makes them postpone or completely abandon their HL practice (Chatzidaki and Maligkoudi, 2013; Pérez-Báez, 2013; Ferguson, 2015).

Indeed, parents' lack of knowledge about multilingual development and multilingual language practice led to some parents' unrealistic expectations about the way in which their children would learn their HLs. This was particularly evident in the case of the Macedonian-Italian, Macedonian-English and Macedonian-Scottish families in which the parents expected that their children would learn Macedonian by going to the Macedonian heritage language school twice a month, by teaching them some Macedonian vocabulary or expecting that they would ‘pick it up’ by themselves when they got older. In such circumstances parents found it more pertinent to prioritise English:

‘I am waiting for her to get a bit older so that she learns (English) the way she should so that we don't make a mix of languages. Now it's a bit early (to start going to a Macedonian heritage

language school) in my opinion because she is still learning *the alphabet* (in English) and things like that, I would like her to know it (English) so then when she's six or seven it is OK for her to start (going to the Macedonian heritage language school), when she has mastered this (English) the way she should (...) Not to make *a confusion* in her head, how can I know, you know. And it is better not to experiment, to wait one more year because it is not something urgent right, a year or two doesn't make any difference.' (Vesna's sister, Macedonian-Italian family, interview).

Furthermore, parents' negative attitude towards their HLs was acting as lack of cultural capital which constrained their ability to see the value of their HLs, and this was a barrier for them to have an HL FLP. The majority of migrant families (four out of five) had a negative attitude towards their HLs as a result of their expectations that they had low symbolic value, and this led to their adoption of an English FLP. All parents' HLs including Macedonian, Hakka, Italian and Scottish Gaelic were considered low-status, minority languages which were not worth investing in. This is evident in the parents' comments below:

C: Why would she want to learn Macedonian when Macedonian is spoken by what? Four million people?

R: Two million (laughter)

C: Two million people (laughter) in the world. I mean she could learn Serbian or Croatian, I know it is almost the same language but at least she would have more opportunity if you speak Serbian and it is a very close language so that is the other side of me when it comes to language.' (Chen, Macedonian-Italian family, interview)

'I don't see the point in teaching Ann Hakka (..) If she speaks Hakka it will be me and her.' (Chen, Macedonian-Italian family, interview)

'Nobody apart from in remote areas of Scotland speaks the Scottish language, Gaelic, any more.' (Ian, Macedonian-Scottish family, interview)

Parents' limited cultural capital evident in their negative attitude towards their HLs was generated by their expectation that their HLs had little social and educational value and this prompted them to adopt an English FLP. The parents' low value of their HLs was a result of their life experience as migrants who were ambitious to improve their situation and migrant status and insufficient cultural capital expressed through their negative attitude towards their

HLs was acting as a barrier for them to see the value of their HLs. For example, as a result of inferior cultural capital Vesna, the mother in the Macedonian-Italian family, lacked confidence and a sense of entitlement to move beyond the constraints of her situation and realise how important it was for her to have an HL FLP in order to transmit Macedonian to her own children. The following excerpt is a powerful illustration of this:

V: To be honest, I think people should learn to speak English more, rather than where they come from.

R: Why do you think so?

V: Many parents don't know... They use where you come from but I think it is more important to teach them how to behave in this country. So, I don't mind... (...) But I think that parents should be educated more than the children. We, who have come here, because we don't know how to accept the English culture. So, it hasn't bothered me. I have never had to say: Hey, I come from there (Macedonia) because I haven't had anything good to bring from there when it comes to culture, I mean you see like behaviour or you know... There is nothing I can do to make it better here... to add to this... *society*, you see. I mean it is nice to know where people come from and it would be nice if they (their children) know another language for them personally, not because we come from there'. (Vesna, Macedonian-Italian family, interview)

The excerpt above illustrates some parents' deep lack of cultural capital expressed by lack of appreciation for her own HL led to her misrecognition of English as the only legitimate language for integration and success in England. Misrecognition was a process in which Vesna elevated English way higher above Macedonian, completely rejecting her Macedonian background culture and language in exchange for English. Vesna assessed the value of Macedonian in relation to its objective value on the field and the benefits with an English FLP seemed to be way more profitable and as a result, Vesna and the majority of the parents in this study decided to have an English FLP. This finding is in sharp contrast with other studies of migrants whose positive attitude towards their HLs acts as a form of cultural capital which in turn encourages them to maintain their HLs (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; Mu, 2014b). For instance, Mu (2014b) who studied the relationship between family investment and Chinese Australians proficiency in Chinese found that his participants' high level of Chinese proficiency was related to their perceived valuation of Chinese for strengthening family ties with family members back in China, building friendship networks with same ethnic members, being praised for Chinese proficiency at school and being able to use Chinese for economic progress in the future. The findings in this section suggest that parents' lack of cultural capital

in the form of insufficient knowledge about multilingual language development and lack of appreciation of their HLs handicapped their ability to see the value of their HLs which led to a rejection of their HLs and adoption of an English FLP. This finding highlights that there are serious consequences for migrant families who lack information about multilingual language development which leads to their perception of their HLs as deficit evident in other FLP studies (Yamamoto, 1995; Ferguson, 2015).

Regarding parents' educational level as a form of cultural capital and its relationship to their FLP, the findings suggest that it was not always a good marker for the way in which migrant families established their FLP. In some cases, a higher parental educational level was related to a higher level of knowledge about multilingual language development and a positive attitude towards their HLs (Macedonian-Serbian family). Conversely, in other cases, a lower level of parental education was related to a lower level of knowledge about multilingual language development and a negative attitude towards their HLs (Macedonian-Italian family). However, this was not the case in the Macedonian-Serbian and in the Macedonian-English families in which the mothers had similar educational levels (Master's degree) but they had different knowledge about multilingual language development and had completely different FLPs. Also, Bisera and Vesna, the mothers in the Macedonian-English and Macedonian-Italian families, had different educational levels as a form of cultural capital<sup>25</sup> and yet they had similar knowledge about multilingual language development which led to their adoption of an English FLP. These findings suggest that the relationship between parents' educational level and their FLP is a complex one, and that parents' educational level needs to be related to other factors when analysing migrant families' FLP.

## 7.4 Mobilising linguistic capital

### 7.4.1 Parents' English language skills

Linguistic capital refers to language skills and mastery of the dominant language in a particular field (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991). The findings in this study suggest that parents' English

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<sup>25</sup>Bisera was educated to a Master's level and Vesna's possession of cultural capital in terms of educational qualifications was constrained by the objective condition of having a secondary education but both had an English FLP.



language skills were a form of linguistic capital which exerted powerful influence on the structure of their linguistic dispositions which in turn shaped their FLP.

Lack of English language skills instilled in some parents a sense of linguistic inadequacy and feelings of incompetence which in turn shaped their disposition to value English, and this led to their adoption of an English FLP. This is the case in the Macedonian-Italian family in which both parents still felt insecure with their English language skills. For example, Vesna still felt incompetent to get involved in her children's education due to her lack of English linguistic capital:

'I can't teach them English as much as they can learn at school because I don't... I mean, I don't know how to teach them. I am terrible at spelling, too.' (Vesna, Macedonian-Italian family)

In addition, Giorgio, the father in the Macedonian-Italian family, spoke mostly Italian at his job, and as a result, his English was still developing and he was making grammar mistakes in his English. Giorgio regretted that he had missed some opportunities in the past to acquire English, and these feelings of regret and a sense of a missed opportunity instilled in him a long-lasting disposition to value English which ultimately structured this family's English FLP:

'It was very difficult to understand (English) but you know, that's how you learn. I think if you don't wanna study. It wasn't that I didn't wanna study but it was very difficult to find time to study and they tend to ...where are you gonna to study? (sic.) Cause you don't know... I didn't know how to ask, who to ask and I just learnt I went to the pub and 90 per cent of what I learnt was in the pub in the first couple of years.' (Giorgio, Macedonian-Italian family, interview)

It is evident that in his first years as a migrant in England Giorgio struggled to fit in with expectations of possession of English language skills. Lack of English dominant capital handicapped his opportunity for social mobility and accumulation of academic capital and he embodied a sense of helplessness (where are you gonna to study?). His lack of English language skills and the resulting limited opportunities for success contributed to his unconscious internalisation of high valuation of English as the language of upward social mobility. Indeed, parents' valuation of English was imminent as they became determined to avoid the fate of migrants for their children:

‘When I first came here I was 23 years old and I didn’t know a word in English, so I started from zero, everything was unfamiliar to me and it was really hard for me. And I told myself when I have children I will speak to them in English from childhood so that they understand that they will live here and it will be their mother tongue in a way.’ (Macedonian friend of Macedonian-Scottish family)

It is evident that parents’ lack of English language skill motivated the Macedonian friend to reflect on it and make a conscious decision to practise English which resulted in her English FLP. Unlike Giorgio who demonstrated a more unconscious internalisation of a disposition to appreciate English for social success, the Macedonian friend of the Scottish family developed a more conscious self-awareness of the need to acquire English in order to fit in the new field, and a determination for her child’s success in it. When the parents emigrated to England they encountered a field in which the implicit rule was that English was the only legitimate language for access to participation in different social spaces and chances for equal opportunity. Therefore, the parents developed a disposition that their children had to be proficient in English as the ‘right’ form of linguistic capital in different social spaces in England.

Moreover, parents’ lack of English language skills functioned as a selection tool creating a formidable barrier for them on the job market in England which further encouraged them to ‘invest’ in an English FLP. This was evident in the comments of Mira, the mother in the Macedonian-Chinese family:

*I tried to get a few jobs but you know...they wouldn’t take me on because yeah...my English was limited so...yeah.’* (Mira, Macedonian-Chinese family, interview)

Mira’s limited English language skills as a newly arrived migrant in England resulted in a lack of opportunity to secure employment. The job market was a site in which the social structure sanctioned Mira’s opportunities for equal participation on it during her initial years as a low skilled migrant in London. When she first came to England she was an au pair and did not speak English well; in this sense she was sanctioned from equal opportunities for social participation (‘I tried to get a few jobs...they wouldn’t take me on’) because she did not possess the required linguistic capital (‘I spoke very, very little English’). Only by investing in developing her English language skills through further education did Mira manage to overcome the initial linguistic sanction and eventually secure economic integration; she trained as an

occupational therapist in England; her English gradually developed and she had a responsible role in training others at her work. However, as a result of the powerful linguistic sanctions she had experienced earlier, Mira's English FLP clearly expressed her concern about a potential failure on the job market for her daughter. Therefore, her English FLP was a means for her daughter to accumulate English as the valued linguistic capital for future employment opportunities.

In a similar vein, Giorgio, the father in the Macedonian-Italian family, lacked English language skills which made him attach a high value to English as a language of better job opportunities:

I left the other job and went to the other, you know, I was scared because my friend was off on my first day so I went there the only speaking Italian there and that was when I spoke to them everyone used to say 'Uh?' (I said) 'Can I have a cigar?' 'No, no, go have a break.' (Giorgio, Macedonian-Italian family, interview)

As a low skilled migrant who worked in a restaurant, Giorgio had experienced that proficiency in English was related to better paid jobs rather than Italian; indeed, he realised that by speaking Italian he would get low paid jobs whereas by speaking English he would receive a higher wage; in this sense English, not Italian, was the language able to function as symbolic capital on the job market which would enable him to accumulate more economic capital. Indeed, as Bourdieu explains, 'speakers who lack the legitimate competence are excluded from the social domains in which this competence is required' (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991, p. 51). Giorgio took into consideration what Curdt-Christiansen (2009, p. 256) calls 'economic forces that a particular language evokes'; his struggle to find a well paid job as a result of his English language skills shaped his disposition to prefer English as a language related to a powerful economy that would give his children an imagined advantage in the form of job opportunities in the future and eventually economic benefits. Giorgio's decision to practise English with his children to increase their chances for job opportunities and economic success seemed even more important to him because he had the same position as a low skilled migrant who was still working in the same restaurant where he started working at when he first arrived in England.

Although the majority of the parents who initially lacked English language skills when they first arrived in England, had acquired them over time, some of them still had internalised a deep hidden feeling of inferiority which structured their disposition to appreciate English as a

form of valuable linguistic capital which led them to adopt an English FLP. This is because their initial lack of English language skills was still visible at times and was acting as their limited linguistic capital. For example, even though Mira was proficient in English there were still traces of lack of English language skills as it is evident in the family self-audio recording with her daughter, Ann:

A: And we saw a crow.

M: Crow? What's a crow?

A: A black bird.

M: How do you know?

A: I study. (Ann and Mira, Macedonian-Chinese family self-audio recording, April 2015)

In the above excerpt Mira and Ann were talking about the family's visit to the zoo, and Mira did not know what a crow meant, but Ann knew because she had learnt it at school. In this sense, Mira was aware that English functioned as legitimate linguistic capital on the education field and although she had developed proficiency in English, the fact that she was not proficient to a native-like level, made her aspiration to transmit it to her daughter even greater, as she hoped that an English FLP would equip Ann with a valuable English linguistic capital. Consequently, parents who had internalised a sense of inferiority due to their initial lack of English language skills as newly migrants in England or those who were still lacking English language skills, were inclined to reject their HLs and instead value English as a more valuable capital worth investing in. Due to the parents' own lack of linguistic capital related to their lack of English language skills, they aspired for their children's acquisition of it through an English FLP which would give them access to other valued capitals on different social fields in England.

#### *7.4.2 'Our languages are similar': parents' linguistic background*

The parents' language background was another form of linguistic capital that structured their FLP in different ways.

Some parents who had the same HLs were able to use their HLs as linguistic capital and set up an HL FLP. Parents who had the same HL thought they had an advantage because it was easier

for the parents to understand each other in family communication, and this acted as their linguistic capital which gave them an advantage to adopt an HL FLP:

‘My marriage wasn’t mixed for example, we were both Macedonian and when we came here Macedonian was the language that was spoken in the home and English outside.’ (Macedonian friend of Macedonian-Serbian family, interview)

Similarly, migrant families in which the parents had similar HLs in terms of similar linguistic features, thought that their similar HLs were a form of linguistic capital which gave them an advantage to have an HL FLP. This was most evident in families in which both parents came from former Yugoslavian states. For example, the parents in the Macedonian-Serbian family spoke Macedonian and Serbian, two languages which share many linguistic features evident in Lepa’s claim: ‘our languages are similar’. This was the case in other families in which the parents had similar linguistic backgrounds, and this was a form of linguistic capital which the parents were able to take advantage of in setting up an HL FLP:

‘The communication was always bilingual cause I would speak Croatian and she would speak Macedonian. Because I did my army in Kumanovo (a city in Macedonia) so I had a reasonable knowledge of Macedonian so that was a communication... it was bilingual between the two of us. Sort of each would speak their language and that's it.. We sort of continued that sort of habits when our son was born. That was it.’ (Croatian friend of Macedonian-Scottish family, interview).

Linguistic similarity in relation to parents coming from countries with similar languages and close cultural, social and historical links was indeed a powerful form of linguistic capital that could be used to their advantage. This is especially evident in cases when parents were from Macedonia, Serbia and Croatia. These three countries are situated in the Balkan peninsula and they have close historical, linguistic, political and cultural links and they used to be member states of the Former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The parents’ languages, Macedonian, Serbian and Croatian belong to the same language group of South Slavic languages which share some lexical and grammatical features. However, it was not only the similarity of parents’ HLs per se that gave them an advantage, it was parents’ perception of the role of their HLs, that is whether they appreciated their HLs as valuable linguistic capital, and

whether they saw their HLs as an opportunity to raise multilingual children<sup>26</sup>. Parents who valued their HLs and had similar HLs saw an opportunity to raise multilingual children and this acted as their linguistic capital which allowed them to set up an HL FLP.

Conversely, parents who had different HLs tended to perceive their HLs as obstacles for communication between family members and this appeared to have worked as discouragement which acted as lack of linguistic capital and led to their adoption of an English FLP:

‘So how did we decide which language? Because we understand only English together, I don't speak Dutch, he doesn't speak Macedonian so English is the language.’ (Macedonian friend of Macedonian-English family, interview)

‘If you are together with someone who doesn't speak Macedonian it's difficult (to speak Macedonian). Because my husband doesn't speak Macedonian and he doesn't understand.’ (Violeta, Macedonian-Scottish family, interview)

Evidently, for some migrant families the different languages they spoke was interpreted as a linguistic barrier instead of an opportunity to raise multilingual children, and this parental interpretation made it natural for them to adopt an English FLP. Indeed, linguistic difference seemed to work as lack of linguistic capital by structuring the parents' perception of it as a huge barrier for mutual communication. Under such circumstances, the parents were unable to see alternatives, and this perceived lack of linguistic capital made them adopt an English FLP.

## 7.5 Mobilising social capital

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<sup>26</sup> In some cases even migrant families with the same HL or with similar HLs had an English FLP as a result of their internalisation of the greater linguistic value of English on the linguistic market. Indeed, many migrant families in which the parents shared the same HLs consciously or unconsciously chose to practise English as a result of their perception of it as a more valuable form of linguistic capital. The quote from the priest of Macedonian Orthodox church in London provides a powerful illustration of Macedonian-only migrant families speaking English to their children: ‘She spoke to her child in English in front of me. I said to her: ‘Why aren't you speaking to him in Macedonian?’ (She replied) ‘Well, we teach him English and French, it is enough for now, when he goes to Macedonia to visit his grandmother in summer she will teach him. (The priest thought) ‘But you are wrong, you are wrong. He is a sponge. Even if you speak ten languages to him he will learn them.’ But that is a question of their perception. *Being English, being civilised*, and a sense of inferiority.’ (priest of Macedonian Orthodox church in London)

Parents' ability or inability to mobilise support from their extended family and their social networks (members of the same ethnic group and close friends) played a pivotal role in structuring their FLP. As Bourdieu (1997) argues, 'the volume of the social capital possessed by a given agent depends on the size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilize and on the volume of capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected' (ibid, p. 51). In this sense, the parents' contact with and exchange of information and advice with their extended family and social networks shaped their FLP in different ways. This is discussed in the following sections.

#### *7.5.1 'I don't see my side of the family': support from extended family*

Higher level of social capital in the form of kinship relations or the family group (Bourdieu, 1997, p. 52) exerted a positive impact on migrant families' ability to set up an HL FLP. Support from extended family was a fundamental form of social capital that the parents could or could not draw on, and this had a different effect on their FLP. In some families, the support that the parents received from the grandparents proved to be essential for their ability to have an HL FLP:

'His grandparents are Serbian and they spoke only Serbian to him all the time, they were taking care of him and he knew it (Serbian)' (Macedonian friend of Macedonian-Scottish family, interview)

Grandparent support was obviously a powerful form of social capital for some migrant families in which the parents could use the grandparents as invaluable social capital to their advantage in setting up an HL FLP. Parents' ability to translate the presence of grandparents to a high level of social capital seemed to be related to grandparents' availability to spend time with their grandchildren, and indeed their willingness to get involved into various activities with them in order to support the parents' HL FLP. This was the case in the Macedonian-Chinese family. In the case of the Macedonian-Chinese family, the Macedonian grandmother had a crucial role as a form of social capital for the family, even though the parents did not actively seek that support. Although she lived in Macedonia, the Macedonian grandmother was able to teach the girl in the Macedonian-Chinese family Macedonian by practising it with her when she visited the family which is how the girl learnt Macedonian. She explained:

‘We speak in Macedonian all the time. If I don’t understand something she shows me an object and that’s how we understand each other. (...) She translates for me in the shop, I tell her: ‘Ann ask them to give us two or three bagels and she translates it into English and tells them that her grandmother is from Macedonia and she doesn’t speak English, she is great, she knows everything.’ (Macedonian grandmother, Macedonian-Chinese family, interview)

Although the parents in the Macedonian-Chinese family did not overtly try to mobilise the support of the Macedonian grandmother, her presence was translated into a high level of social capital which enabled their daughter to learn to speak conversational Macedonian. This was related to the grandmother’s positive attitude towards Macedonian and her valuation of it as an important form of cultural capital that the family needed to transmit, as well as her willingness to get involved into everyday activities with the granddaughter such as going shopping, paying games, engaging her in conversations about life and family in Macedonia. In this sense, although the Macedonian-Chinese family had an English FLP, their daughter was able to learn conversational Macedonian as a result of the support of the Macedonian grandmother who acted as their social capital.

Yet, grandparent presence was not always translated into social capital which resulted in an English FLP for other migrant families. A clear example of this was the Macedonian grandmother in the Macedonian-Italian family did not fulfil a role of familial social capital. Although she lived with the family, she implicitly supported an English FLP thus reinforcing English rather than Macedonian. Even though she explicitly stated her support for the importance of speaking Macedonian and Italian, she implicitly supported the English FLP of the parents by speaking mostly English to the children implicitly supporting the parents’ aspirations for upward social mobility with English. This was evident in her reluctance to get involved into activities to engage the children:

‘Well to be honest, we don’t do much because they don’t... They prefer to watch some cartoons or (play) on the ipod or something like that, or to play with each other, so we rarely speak with each other. They don’t pay much attention to me now (laughter). They have grown up now. That’s it.’ (Macedonian grandmother, Macedonian-Italian family, interview)

Obviously, the Macedonian-Italian family could not capitalise on the support from the Macedonian grandmother, and use her as their social capital even though she lived with them because she did not value Macedonian and was implicitly supporting the family’s English FLP.



Paradoxically, even though the Macedonian grandmother took the girl in the family to a Macedonian heritage language school in London she did that because she was a member of the Macedonian church committee which organised it and had to save her face in the Macedonian community. This demonstrates that the role of grandparents who have been traditionally conceptualised as HL transmitters (Ruby, 2012) does not always play out in the same ways for migrant families, and that grandparents' traditional role as HL FLP supporters can indeed be negatively affected by domination of English and its symbolic value in wider society (Fillmore, 2000; Canagarajah, 2008).

Limited social capital was also expressed in lack of contact with extended family for the majority of the migrant families in this study. The families in this study were mostly nuclear with the majority of their extended family members living back in their HL countries which seriously constrained some parents' ability to practise their HLs. Lack of contact with extended family and their support was a major drawback evident in the case of the mothers in the Macedonian-Scottish and Macedonian-English family and Giorgio, the father in the Macedonian-Italian family:

V: They (her parents) have come here twice and stayed for a month each time.

R: When Tom was younger right?

V: Yes, the last time they came was when he was three years old. My mother came when he was born. (Violeta, Macedonian-Scottish family, interview)

'You know when you don't have a family to meet (regularly), Violeta was alone here just like me.' (Macedonian friend of Macedonian-Scottish family, interview)

'when she (Scarlett) was seven months old my father and my mother came and stayed for a month. She started speaking a bit (in Macedonian) but you know when you don't have everyday contact with the language it starts to fade away.' (Bisera, Macedonian-English family, interview)

'all my family is there (in Italy)' (Giorgio, Macedonian-Italian family, interview)

This lack of social capital related to lack of contact with extended family was a result of the physical distance between England and their HL countries, and the inability of their extended families for frequent travel to England. In this sense the migrant position had a serious

constraining effect on migrant families' ability to set up an HL FLP because they lacked everyday contact with family members which could have talked to the children in their HLs and supported the family's HL FLP; however, the physical separation of the nuclear and extended family acted as a serious lack of social capital. Also, limited social capital was due to the fact that the grandparents in some migrant families had passed away many years ago and the children did not have the chance to socialise with their grandparents. This was the case in the Chen's parents in the Macedonian-Chinese family and in the case of Ian, the father in the Macedonian-Scottish family.

By contrast, frequent contact with English-speaking relatives reinforced the English FLP in the family which was most evident in the case of the Macedonian-English family:

'The children have (English) relatives and cousins. When they were present I spoke to them in English and you know little by little you start speaking in English and in the end you don't speak Macedonian at all. (...) Their (English) aunts, grandmother and cousins would come to our house and all of the conversation would be in English.' (Bisera, Macedonian-English family, interview)

Yet, presence of extended family members in England was not readily translated into high level of social capital and it could not always be translated into support for an HL FLP. Even in some cases when the parents' extended family lived in England, some parents had rare contact with them thus constraining their children's opportunity to practice and learn their HLs. For example, Chen was not close to his relatives even though they were living in England. He explained:

'I mean she (his daughter, Ann) is not very close to... Well I am not... I don't see my side of the family that often.' (Chen, Macedonian-Chinese family, interview)

Evidently, Chen's lack of contact with his family limited the opportunity for his daughter, Ann to practise and learn Hakka or Cantonese. Chen's lack of contact with his family was a result of his sense of superiority over his extended family members because the majority of them did not speak English despite living in England for many years, and he wanted to distance from them as a result of his preferred taste for Western language and culture.

Additionally, the negative attitude towards an HL FLP by extended family members acted as a negative form of social capital which constrained the parents' ability to set up an HL FLP and instead it reinforced the English FLP in the family. This was obvious in the case in the Macedonian-Italian family. Vesna's sister who lived in England, supported an English FLP rather than an HL FLP:

‘It is not a big deal if the children make a grammar mistake in Macedonian because they live here, right, and I am not planning to go back there (Macedonia), so our future is here, and (the children should) learn this (English) first and then everything else which is extra is different.’  
(Vesna's sister, Macedonian-Italian family, interview)

Vesna's sister had similar expectations and views of English as a more valued form of linguistic capital as Vesna did, and in this way she was unable to act as the family's social capital to transmit Macedonian.

#### *7.5.2 'There weren't any other Macedonians': support from social networks*

The parents' social networks in this study are conceptualised as a form of social capital including support from members of the same ethnic group and close friends. The findings in this study suggest that lack or availability of support from social networks as a form of social capital structured the FLP in the migrant families in different ways.

##### *Contact with members from the same ethnic group*

Contact with members from the same ethnic groups is considered to be an important factor for some migrant families' ability to practice their HLs as it provides them with collective support of their ethnic community (Hulsen et al., 2002). The findings in this study suggest that lack of contact with members of the same ethnic group, and inability to draw on their support was a serious lack of social capital which worked as a disadvantage for some parents in this study. This is most striking in the case of the mothers in the Macedonian-Scottish and Macedonian-English family:

‘There weren’t any other Macedonians who could speak Macedonian to Tom, for example. Most of the people in our company, almost 90 per cent were English, so he was more exposed to that language’ (Violeta, Macedonian-Scottish family, interview)

‘We had a couple of Macedonian friends years ago but that was before we had children and they moved, one moved to America one moved to Oxford or Cambridge and that as well it was kind of... that was it.’ (Jason, Macedonian-English family, interview)

The above excerpts reveal that lack of contact with members from the same ethnic community was a serious disadvantage, and lack of social capital for some parents which created in them a sense of isolation and helplessness, leading to their acceptance of English as a dominant linguistic capital and an English FLP. This is especially relevant for small migrant communities which are scattered throughout the host country such as the Macedonian migrant community in England. The parents did not have the necessary social connection and support and in an English-dominated environment. As a result, the parents submitted to the situation, and for them it became ‘natural’ to adopt an English FLP with their children. Also, Violeta’s case demonstrates that right timing for support from members of the same ethnic group is crucial. While during the study Violeta had many Macedonian friends who practiced Macedonian with their own children, she was unable to draw on their support because she had become friends with them long after she had decided to practice English with her son who was now 14, and at that time, he refused to learn and speak Macedonian.

Nonetheless, lack of social capital expressed through support from members of the same ethnic group was also due to some parents’ perceived prestige of socialising with English friends. This was most evident in the case of the Macedonian-Chinese and Macedonian-Italian family. In the Macedonian-Chinese family the parents demonstrated an implicit choice not to socialise with same ethnic members due to their sense of detachment and superiority over their ethnic members. The parents’ sense of detachment from their respective cultural and linguistic backgrounds therefore constrained the opportunity for their daughter to practice Macedonian, Hakka or Cantonese. For example, Chen did not have contact with other Chinese people: ‘I have a very few Chinese friends, not many so I always spoke in English.’ (interview). Indeed, he admitted that: ‘It would probably be easy to learn if I actually mix with Chinese people more.’ (interview). In a similar vein, Mira the mother in the Macedonian-Chinese family, refused to have contact with other Macedonians. She explained:

‘Culturally, I think we are isolated for both cultures, so you know, we don’t build friendships around the cultural. I don’t belong to any Macedonian organisation and Chen doesn’t belong to a Chinese organisation. We socialise with the people that are similar to us, I suppose.’ (Mira, Macedonian-Chinese family, interview)

Conversely, the Macedonian-Italian family demonstrated a more conscious choice not to socialise with same ethnic members as a result of the symbolic value and the prestige of socialising with English-speaking friends. For instance, Vesna could not use support and advice from other Macedonians because of her deliberate choice not to do so. In one occasion she admitted: ‘I only make friends with English people, I don’t socialise with others’ (Vesna, Macedonian-Italian family, field notes).

### *Support from close friends*

Support from close friends acted as a form of social capital for some parents. Some parents had support from close friends which was translated into their high level of social capital, and this empowered them to establish an HL FLP. On the one hand, some close friends provided parents with explicit encouragement to practise their HLs, and the parents’ conscious reflection on it proved to be crucial for their decision to practise them. This is evident in the case of the Macedonian friend of the Macedonian-Serbian family:

‘I was criticised by someone...because I didn’t speak English much, I wanted to learn it from my children and I started speaking (English) and somebody (a Greek friend) saw me and told me: ‘But you should speak more in Macedonian with them, not in English’, and then I thought about it and said to myself: ‘It’s true, I want to learn from them (the children) but I am doing it in a wrong way. (...) She was a good friend, very *observant*’. (Macedonian friend of Macedonian-Serbian family, interview)

The above excerpt illustrates that powerful and effective social networks expressed through close friends’ advice was sometimes a decisive factor for some parents’ exercise of agency and empowerment to have an HL FLP. This also suggests that, to be able to capitalise on the information and advice from social networks as a form of social capital, parents’ everyday reflexivity is important because it serves an essential role of transforming their linguistic dispositions which enables them to see the value of their HLs and this is necessary for them to

have an HL FLP. The support which the Macedonian friend of the Macedonian-Serbian family had from her own network of friends was extended to Lepa, albeit more implicitly. In other words, Lepa was able to observe how her Macedonian friend spoke Macedonian with her children and this enabled her to reflect on the cultural and linguistic benefits of speaking Macedonian. This in turn encouraged her to decide to practise Macedonian with her daughter, Anastasija.<sup>27</sup>

However, in other cases, family friends' HL practices were not translated into support for the focal families' HL practise. The case of the Croatian friend of the Macedonian-Scottish family is interesting here. Although the Croatian friend spoke Croatian to his own son, the parents in the Macedonian-Scottish family (Ian and Violeta) spoke English to their son. There were two reasons for this. Firstly, it was because they had become friends long after Ian and Violeta had decided to speak English to their son and it seemed that because of this their Croatian friend could not influence their linguistic practices to a large extent. Secondly, Violeta seemed to have more contact with the wife of the Croatian friend rather than with him and Ian did not appear interested in discussing linguistic practices with the Croatian friend during the study. As a result of this, it is possible to suggest that in the case of the Macedonian-Scottish family, the parents were unable to use their friends as their social capital.

On the other hand, close friends' negative attitude towards an HL FLP only reinforced the English FLP in other migrant families. This is the case in the Macedonian-English family whose close English friend devalued Macedonian:

'I don't think if there are two mothers who speak the same language in the school yard they should actually be speaking in English because the school are there trying to encourage, trying to educate in English and the parents are there in the corner in their own little pleak because they are speaking you know largely Polish or some other language. (...) I think it's nice to have the second language as a sort of you know yeah, talk about it but not talk with it.' (English friend of Macedonian-English family, interview)

The comment of the English friend of the Macedonian-English family reveals the extent to which close friends' negative attitudes to languages other than English may have worked as an encouragement for some migrant families to adopt an English FLP. Sharing information and

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<sup>27</sup> This was related to the notion of reflexivity and was discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

advice with close friends who had a negative attitude towards an HL FLP was working against some migrant families' ability to have an HL FLP. This appeared to be the case of the father in the Macedonian-English family and his friend because they both shared the view that English had a more important role than Macedonian, and in this way the friend's support for English was only encouraging this family's English FLP.

## 7.6 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the ways in which capital, expressed through various forms of material and non-material resources structured migrant families' FLP. The various forms of capitals that structured migrant families' FLP included economic, cultural, linguistic and social capital.

Overall, the findings in this chapter suggest that capital and its availability was complex and worked to structure the FLP of migrant families in multiple ways. There were different material and non-material forms of capitals which impacted on parents' dispositions and structured their FLP. Some families had these capitals while others did not; the pattern varied from family to family. The variations of capitals in each migrant family affected the parents' dispositions which affected their FLP. On the one hand, it appears that there was a relationship between availability of cultural capital and parents' ability to practise their HLs. In other words, the more the parents knew about multilingual language development and multilingual language practice, the more able they were to see the value of their HLs and practice them. On the other hand, the less they knew about multilingual language development and multilingual language practice, the more inclined they were to adopt an English FLP.

Yet, the findings were more complex with regard to linguistic, social and economic capitals. While in some cases there was a relationship between availability of linguistic, social and economic capital and the parents' ability to practise their HLs there were exceptions to this. Even in cases when the parents had linguistic capital (English language skills), social capital (grandparents living with the family) and economic capital (availability of financial resources) they consciously or unconsciously chose not to invest in having an HL FLP. Such decision was closely linked to the parents' anticipations of the low symbolic value of their HLs and the high symbolic value of English on the linguistic market in England. Indeed, parents' understanding of expectations in terms of language use in different social fields exerted a powerful influence

on the families' FLP. This is related to Bourdieu's concept of field and this is discussed in detail in the next chapter.



## **Chapter 8**

### **Field and migrant families' FLP**

#### 8.1 Introduction

This study adopts a Bourdieuan perspective to understand the FLP of migrant families in England. The previous finding chapters showed that the parents in four out of five focal migrant families chose to have an English FLP with their children as a result of their past experience (*habitus*) as well as the ways they used multiple resources (*capital*). This chapter aims to discuss a third important aspect which impacted on migrant families' FLP which is related to how parents understood what was expected of them in terms of language use in different places. This is related to Bourdieu's concept of a (linguistic) field which is a social space defined by one legitimate form of language which is established as legitimate through implicit linguistic norms which validate some forms of language and invalidate others (Bourdieu, 1977a; Bourdieu and Thompson, 1991). Such implicit legitimation of one language is a form of symbolic domination which is adopted in different institutional spaces (fields). For example, for Bourdieu the field of education and the field of the family are 'two principal factors for the production of legitimate language' (Bourdieu and Thompson, 1991, p. 62). Schools are institutional spaces which have a particularly important role in reproducing the idea of a single legitimate language as a dominant one (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). According to Bourdieu (1977a), individuals have practical sense of the dominant language in a particular field because competence in it is related to acquisition of various forms of material and symbolic resources such as acquisition of material wealth, knowledge, educational credentials, prestige, recognition. Hence the dominant language can only exist through a process of misrecognition by individuals who do not possess the legitimate form of language and who come to believe that the dominant language is the only legitimate language (Bourdieu and Thompson, 1991). Consequently, individuals who do not possess the dominant form of language come to reproduce the dominant language and to participate in their own domination, exclusion and marginalisation by a process of symbolic violence. However, the field is always a site for struggles and individuals are sometimes able to question dominant linguistic norms and monolingual expectations and through their agency to transform the structure of the field (Bourdieu and Thompson, 1991).

This chapter discusses how migrant families' FLP was structured in relation to parents' understanding of other people's expectations in terms of language use in three fields including the field of health visitors' network (section 8.2), the field of schools (section 8.3) and the family field (section 8.4). In particular, the findings in these sections exemplify how the legitimation of English and the devaluation of parents' HLs in the three fields produced and reproduced knowledge and practice in the field which resulted in four out of five migrant families' conformation to expectations of monolingualism and adoption of an English FLP. However, dominant monolingual norms could be challenged by some parents who had a transformative propensity which enabled them to be the ultimate decision-makers of their FLP and to have an HL FLP. In the following sections I present examples to illustrate this argument.

## 8.2 The field of health visitors' network and migrant families' FLP

The findings in this study suggest that the field of health visitors' network was constituted by a discourse of monolingualism which had strong symbolic power on migrant families' FLP. This was evident in health visitors' advice to parents to speak English to their children which in turn had a profound negative impact on migrant families' FLP, leading to their adoption of an English-only FLP. This was the case in the Macedonian-Scottish family in which the mother Violeta was 'advised' by a health visitor to abandon a Macedonian FLP with her son to adopt an English FLP. This had extremely negative consequences for this family's FLP acting as a serious constraint for their choice of an HL FLP. This case was presented in Chapter 5. In this chapter, migrant families' English FLP as a result of parents' conformation to health visitors' advice based on expectations of monolingualism is further illustrated with the quote below. The quote is a conversation between Vesna, the mother in the Macedonian-Italian family, and her Chinese friend which was recorded during one of my visits to this family' home:

FR: My friend who is an Italian girl when she had her first child she spoke to her son in Italian

V: I tried with S. (oldest child) and he didn't speak.

FR: That was the problem. Because her son didn't speak as fast as single language children, I don't know. The health visitors said: 'Don't speak to him in Italian!' This is like fifteen years ago, this is how things have changed here.

V: But even now they say that, even now.

FR: Because Jack he's fifteen, sixteen now so, she because he wasn't speaking at an age where they think he should be speaking I think he wasn't delayed that much it scared her so she didn't speak to him in Italian and sometimes now he remembers Italian but with her other two children

which are much younger like nine years younger she didn't speak Italian to those two because of what happened with Jack. But they go to Italian classes now and she says 'I feel really bad because now I can't really help them.' (...) If you speak bilingually to a child there is a slight delay but not a significant delay because their brain is still processing and I wish they didn't say that cause my friend she says Jack now can't speak Italian.' (Vesna and her Chinese friend, field notes)

The crucial feature of the excerpt above is that a health visitor's expectations of monolingualism evident in their monolingual language development criteria and implicit view of HLs as 'deficit' and parents' conformation to it had a profound effect on the migrant families' decision to adopt an English FLP. This appeared to be a result of some health visitors' fundamental lack of knowledge about the developmental language trajectory of multilingual children incorrectly equating it with language development criteria for monolingual children. Health visitors' authority as experts in the field and the parents' migrant background, as well as parental lack of knowledge about multilingual children's language development, put the parents in a vulnerable position leading them to conform to health visitors' de-legitimation of their HLs seeing them as 'deficit'. As a result of the health visitors' explicit de-legitimation of their HLs, parents viewed investment in an HL FLP as unrewarding leading to their conformation to monolingual linguistic norms by accepting health visitors' advice as valid. The parents' decision to adopt an English FLP as a result of health visitors' advice seemed to be guided by the parents' concern that an HL FLP may jeopardise their children's language development. Paradoxically, health visitors' intention to 'help' migrant parents with their children's language development led to imposition of English as the only legitimate language and the parents' submission to it and reproducing the symbolic domination of English.

Parents seemed to have accepted health visitors' advice in an uncritical way because they had tacit understanding and recognition of English as the only legitimate language for their children's learning, and as migrants, they tried to improve their migrant position and to acquire valued material and symbolic resources in order to be accepted as equals and to participate on equal terms in the host society. Bourdieu (1984) argues that individuals who are dominated assess the value of their position which is constituted in society as objective and they 'tend to attribute to themselves what the distribution attributes to them, refusing what they are refused' (ibid, p. 471). In other words, individuals who possess a minority language 'stigmatise their own language; they often condemn themselves' (Corson, 1991, p. 239) and this is because of

the efficacy of symbolic power of the dominant language which is invisible and misrecognised as legitimate (Bourdieu and Thompson, 1991). In the case of the migrant families in this study who accepted health visitors' advice to speak English to their children this is related to the status of English as having symbolic power and their inability to see the arbitrariness of the dominance of English and instead the parents experienced the legitimation of English as natural and normal (Bourdieu and Thompson, 1991). This is symbolic violence which is exercised upon individuals with their own complicity (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992).

### 8.3 The field of schools and migrant families' FLP

When parents enrolled their children to English schools they encountered a field in which there was implicit domination of English. In this section I discuss how parents' understanding of expectations of monolingualism in schools influenced their FLP in two ways: they either conformed to expectations of monolingualism and had an English FLP, or they challenged them and had an HL FLP.

Implicit expectations of monolingualism in the field of schools and parents' tacit understanding of it contributed to migrant families' adoption of an English FLP. Schools were monolingual spaces built on the idea of English as the only legitimate language for all children's educational success including children from migrant families:

'we are teaching the children to read and write in English because they are here (...) Our responsibility is to help them learn our language because they are in England and it will help them with their you know, progressing.' (interview with teacher, Macedonian-Chinese family)

Teachers' expectations of children from migrant families were based on monolingualism in schools in which English was the only legitimate language by using it as the only legitimate resource for all children's learning. Hence with the exclusive use of English in schools, English became an institutionalised form of linguistic capital and with that it had symbolic power which was related to achievement and success. This is related to Bourdieu's argument that the education field has the power to define the social and educational value of languages because 'this institution has the monopoly in the large-scale production of producers/consumers, and therefore in the reproduction of the market without which the social value of the linguistic

competence, its capacity to function as linguistic capital, would cease to exist' (Bourdieu and Thompson, 1991, p. 57).

Moreover, some families' English FLP was a result of the parents' tacit understanding of teachers' implicit expectations that there were educational advantages for children who practised English with their parents at home. The quotes below provide an excellent illustration of this:

'It does appear that the children that have more exposure to English I think pick it up better. I mean, I would've thought that was logic really, you know, if they are being exposed to it more at home as well they can cope better at school.' (interview with teacher, Macedonian-English family)

'it's funny I know Scarlett's mum is Macedonian but it's really sort of from the dad's side that you know, that's how I really sort of see Scarlett, I see Scarlett as being a completely English kid. You know she writes beautifully, she speaks you know, I don't whether she speaks Macedonian at home. (interview with teacher, Macedonian-English family)

'For somebody like Giulia, Giulia is doing brilliantly. And I think it's got a lot to do with her speaking English at home. (...) she's progressed you know, immensely since she's come in year two her levels have gone up you know, wonderfully and it's really great and I think that has quite a lot to do with the fact that she speaks English at home.' (interview with teacher, Macedonian-Italian family)

The teachers' comments show that not only they implicitly supported monolingualism in schools in which English was the only legitimate language, but they also legitimated an English FLP in migrant families' homes justifying it as an advantage for their children which provided them with greater chances for educational achievement ('they can cope better at school'; she writes beautifully'; 'her levels have gone up'). Parents in migrant families had tacit understanding of teachers' expectation for their children's proficiency in English, and this understanding contributed to their decision to have an English FLP because they wanted to create opportunities for educational success for their children. The teacher's preference for children who spoke English at home had an implicit effect on the English FLP of the Macedonian-English family, especially because the parents' aspiration in this family was to take advantage of English for educational success and social advancement. In a similar vein,

for the Macedonian-Italian family the teacher's belief that speaking English at home was an advantage had an important implication for their decision to have an English FLP. The parents in this family had an English FLP thus conforming to the teacher's legitimation of English because they were guided by their aspiration to capitalise on English for their children's success at school which would ultimately be used for the family's upward social mobility in the future. The teachers' influence on migrant families' FLP could be explained by what Bourdieu calls tacit influence of the school, invisible symbolic power that the teachers have to set up a legitimate language which defines children's educational success (Bourdieu and Thompson, 1991). This kind of power was efficient because parents had tacit understanding of the teachers' implicit expectation of monolingualism and were therefore investing in an English FLP to give their children an advantage for educational achievement.

Other migrant families' English FLP was a result of interaction between parents and teachers in which parents became explicitly aware of teachers' expectations of monolingualism in schools. This was reflected in school teachers' advice to parents to speak English to their children justifying it as a means for the children's educational achievement. This in turn contributed to parents' feelings of ambivalence and uncertainty towards their HL practice and an adoption of an English FLP:

FR As a suggestion to improve reading only one of the teachers told me as a suggestion to have a good reading is good to talk in English at home (sic.).

R The teacher told you that it's good to talk in English?

FR Yes, yes, one of the teachers.

R And what do you think about that?

FR I don't mind. Half, half, is my opinion. I think it's good and no. I don't want my daughter to lose Romanian language, it's good for her to have a, I don't know, a good result at school, talking in English. I am half, half, I think it's good and no. (Romanian friend of Macedonian-Chinese family, interview)

School teachers' explicit advice to parents that speaking English at home was working to improve their children's chances for educational success ('to have a good reading is good to talk in English at home') was evidently a powerful factor that led to migrant families' adoption of an English FLP. Evidently, English was the dominant language in schools and its practice was rewarded in the education system and migrant families and their children developed a desire to acquire English as the dominant legitimate language which would help them develop

a sense of belonging in the host society. This was because as migrants the parents and their children wanted to occupy a position which entitled them to equal access and participation in the field and English language skills acquired through an English FLP were the ticket to equal access and participation. By contrast, the families' HLs were viewed as obstacles to inclusion and opportunity for equal access and they readily rejected them and submitted to pressure and embraced an English FLP.

What is more, parents' tacit understanding that teachers highly valued English for educational achievement appeared to encourage some migrant families' adoption of an English FLP:

'What I tend to find with children who speak English at home is their writing is far more varied, there's far more, their vocabulary is a lot richer. Because what you have there is the parents also they are trying to sort of develop the English at home. When you have the children who don't speak English at home what you tend to get is a lot of tenses the tenses start to get mixed up. (...) I wouldn't say it's a disadvantage (speaking an HL at home) but it does, it does prevent them from being able to express themselves because it's sort of, it's a bit like a lid.' (interview with teacher, Macedonian-Italian family)

'if they are completely immersed into sort of Turkish television for example, you know a completely different world of language everything that they do in school isn't being consolidated so it's like you teach them all this at school and they go home and not only they are not sort of developing that they are developing something else, so you know I know a load of English kids who don't do any English homework but they are talking to their mums and dads in English and watch English TV and they read English magazines and books, the internet is in English, they play in their consoles in English so that's consolidating what you are trying to do at school. So, I think you know, it (speaking English at home) is an advantage.' (interview with teacher, Macedonian-English family)

The teachers' comments above reveal an implicit language hierarchy between English and HLs expressed in their belief that speaking other languages than English at home only caused trouble for migrant children's success at school, and that speaking English with their parents at home helped the children with their educational achievement<sup>28</sup>. Hence, the English FLP in

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<sup>28</sup> The marginalised position of HLs in schools was further evident in teachers', parents' and children's comments that HLs were promoted in schools only during international days which usually happened once a year or on language posters in school corridors. However, this was insufficient for their meaningful inclusion in schools and for migrant families' sense that their HLs were being valued by schools.

some migrant families in this study was related to school teachers' devaluation of migrant families' HLs built on the idea of a language hierarchy in which English was the only legitimate language in the school and in the family home. In this sense, the teachers' comments reveal a somewhat Anglocentric view. The comment of the teacher who taught the children in the Macedonian-Italian family (first excerpt above) reveals her view of HLs as 'deficit' and implicit support for an English FLP in migrant families justifying it with migrant children's educational success. Interestingly, the teacher in the first excerpt above was of a Somali-Arabic background and she had had experience with learning HLs. Yet, she was a passionate advocate for English as the only legitimate language for educational success as a result of her professional experience. Her view illustrates teachers' tendency to view an HL FLP in the home as undesirable based on their fundamental lack of knowledge about multilingual language development. It is also interesting to note that the teacher in the second excerpt above was a young Englishman who professed himself as a monolingual, and in this sense, he lacked the personal experience or professional training to view HLs as learning resources rather than as 'obstacles' to educational achievement. His view reveals naturalisation of a difference in status between English and HLs with clear advantages in education for children who practiced English with their parents. The teachers' comments above illustrate that the English FLP in migrant families was to a large extent the result of the devaluation of their HLs by teachers. This was because teachers' pedagogic habitus produced by pedagogic training and professional experience generated practices that reproduced dominant monolingual norms in language education policy in England. In doing so, the teachers limited the parents' opportunity to view their HLs as valued linguistic capitals thus contributing to parents' conformation to teachers' expectations of monolingualism, despite teachers' good intentions to give migrant children equal opportunity for educational success. The de-legitimisation process of the migrant families' HLs undermined the educational value of their HLs leading to parents' feelings of uncertainty about the value of practising their HLs and an adoption of an English FLP.

The findings in this section support the views widely spread in the literature that schools are monolingual spaces which legitimise only one language and that a minority language in a monolingual society is often constructed as a 'problem' (Gkaintarzi, Chatzidaki & Tsokalidou, 2014) and parents are often advised by educators to stop speaking HL to their children (Kirsch, 2012; Perez-Baez, 2013; Gkaintartzi, Killari & Tsokalidou, 2015). On the education field in the England 'the maintenance of multilingualism is not recognised as a worthwhile educational aim' (Conteh, et al., 2013, p. 92); instead it is largely considered to be a 'deficit' for the



inclusion of all learners in education (DfE, 2011). Such domination of English in education seriously constrained parents' ability to practise their HLs with their children. Using Bourdieu's (1977b) mode of thinking about the regularity of social practice we could ask: How was the parents' language behavior objectively 'regulated' and 'regular' without an obvious regulation? Here it is useful to use Bourdieu's concept of pedagogic action and symbolic power and how the school as a sub-field of the education field shaped the English FLP of migrant families. Bourdieu and Passeron (1990, p. x) argue that education systems 'only contribute to disguise, and thus legitimize, in a more subtle way, the arbitrariness of the distributions of powers and privileges'. Essentially Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) argue that pedagogic action is the imposition of a cultural arbitrary by an arbitrary power, which in this study means that English was exclusively used for teaching, learning and communication in the children's schools and was therefore misrecognised by their parents as the only legitimate language for learning. Consequently, in the parents' eyes English became the only legitimate language for their children's educational achievement which in turn shaped their English FLP.

Yet, parents in some migrant families were able to challenge expectations of monolingualism in schools and have an HL FLP with the encouragement of individual teachers who had a similar migrant background. This was possible for the Macedonian-Serbian family. Unlike the rest of the four focal families in this study the advice that this family received from mainstream school teachers about their HL practice was supportive, which had a positive impact on their HL FLP. This is evident in the quote below:

'The teachers always supported the idea of speaking your *home language* at home and all that. (...) She was kind of lucky because all of her teachers were from New Zealand, Australia they were all young teachers who had come here for three, four years, you know, those who come on a work visa, who are young and enthusiastic.' (Lepa, Macedonian-Serbian family, interview)

Parents' transformative propensity to have an HL FLP came from support by individual teachers in schools to practise their HLs which encouraged them to establish or maintain their HL FLP. Evidently, teachers' support for an HL FLP in migrant families was related to their background. Teachers who had a migrant background themselves ('her teachers were from New Zealand, Australia'; 'who come on a work visa') appeared to have had the personal experience which led them to support migrant families' efforts to practise their HLs. The quote shows that teachers' own migrant background enabled them to recognise the cultural value

migrant families' HLs and their practice as a worthwhile aim for migrant families. In that way, they contributed to the families' sense of being valued by others in the field of schools. This in turn encouraged some migrant families to have an HL FLP.

Also, migrant families were also able to challenge expectations of monolingualism in the field of schools and have an HL FLP as a result of support from teachers who had knowledge and understanding of multilingual development, appreciation of multilingualism, awareness of linguistic diversity and they offered advice to parents in informal conversations:

'The kindergarten teacher told me: 'Don't worry, continue speaking in your language, you know, your language, that is very important and he will gradually learn which language he should communicate with whom and where. And I said: 'OK' and that's how it was. I started speaking to him more in Macedonian and my husband spoke to him in Serbian, he (the son) was learning English at school and when he was four he knew which language was suitable in different situations and with different speakers.' (Macedonian friend of Macedonian-Scottish family)

'They are open. For example, they don't mind if my son is learning another language. When he was 4 he was in reception and his teacher informed me that it would be nice if he learns another language.' (Macedonian friend of Macedonian-Italian family, interview)

The above excerpts illustrate that some school teachers had the ability to support migrant families' HL FLP depending on the way they mediated national language education policy. Clearly school teachers in the above excerpts valued multilingualism as a worthwhile aim for migrant families and even though they used English in schools they were aware that HLs had a legitimate place in migrant families' homes. Although English remained the only legitimate language for teaching and learning in the school, the teachers in the above excerpts regarded HLs as additional resources that were legitimate linguistic capitals for migrant families. Hence, some teachers' valuation of multilingualism and advice to migrant families acted as an encouragement which empowered migrant families to adopt an HL FLP.

#### 8.4 The family field and migrant families' FLP

##### *8.4.1 'Speak to me in English, please': parents' accommodation to their children's demands for English*

The English FLP in some migrant families was influenced by the parents' accommodation to their children's demands for English due to the children's quick socialisation into English as the only legitimate language in the school:

When he started going to school, to kindergarten, he automatically switched to English.'  
(Macedonian friend of Macedonian-Italian family, interview)

The excerpt illustrates how children in migrant families were able to shape migrant families' FLP as a result of the symbolic power of the school in which English was the dominant language. What is more, the children's quick socialisation into English with the start of school instilled in them a deep sense of inappropriateness to use any other language than English and the parents' accommodated to their children's demands for English. The following two excerpts are an excellent demonstration of this:

'At the beginning when my daughter started going to kindergarten she was shy to tell others that her mum is from abroad. (...) She came home from school one day and I started speaking to her in Macedonian, you know 'How was your day at school', she knows school (in Macedonian) because at that time we spoke more in Macedonian, and she just looked at me and said: 'I don't understand', in English, she said: 'I don't understand, I am from England, speak to me in English, please.'  
(Macedonian friend of Macedonian-Chinese family, interview)

'When I picked up my son from nursery and I was kind of... I said this in Macedonian and he said: 'Oh, don't speak in Macedonian, my teacher and my friends can't understand you, everyone here speaks English' and in some ways for me it's like very understandable and I kind of said: 'Yeah OK, that's, you know, it's fine'.  
(Macedonian friend of Macedonian-English family, interview)

Children came to prefer English over their HLs with their everyday school socialisation and interactions with peers and teachers in which English had a dominant position. Parents were aware of this and their desire to give their children opportunity for success motivated them to set up an English FLP. The parents accommodated to their children's demands for an English FLP as a result of the children's self-awareness of the domination of English in relation to peer relationships at school:

‘When we were alone I would sometimes speak to him in Macedonian but especially when he started kindergarten with the other children he told me to speak to him properly, as they spoke in the kindergarten. He didn’t want me to speak to him (in Macedonian) either because the other children didn’t speak in that language.’ (Violeta, Macedonian-Scottish family, interview)

The above excerpt demonstrates that children’s demands for parents to speak English to them was a result of children’s understanding of the education field which operating with its logic created in migrant children a sense of positioning and preference for English as the only legitimate language for communication in the school and beyond it. It demonstrates that the symbolic domination of English on the education field was extremely powerful by socialising migrant children into monolingual norms which led to parents’ accommodation to their children’s demands for English. This in turn shaped their English FLP.

The English FLP in migrant families became even stronger and the children’s demands for English increased as they became teenagers. Teenagers were becoming more self-aware of peer pressure and the domination of English for peer communication. Any deviation of the general rule and the domination of English was perceived as undesirable by teenagers. For example, the majority of the teachers and pupils in the school where Violeta’s son was studying were of English background and were English monolinguals. In such a monolingual environment the son demanded that Violeta spoke English not Macedonian to him as she explained:

‘When we moved here he told me: ‘Whenever my friends come to visit me, don’t speak Macedonian.’ (Violeta, Macedonian-Scottish family, interview)

Children’s demands for parents to speak English which was the dominant language they used with their peers was a powerful factor that influenced migrant families’ English FLP. Parents’ position as migrants, previous experience of lack of English language skills and struggles on the job market made it difficult for them to resist their children’s demands for English as the parents had internalised a deep sense of inferiority and desire to give their children better chances for success in England. Hence the parents accommodated to their children’s ‘medium requests’ (Gafaranga, 2010) which contributed to their English FLP.

#### *8.4.2 ‘We live in England and this will be the language’: fathers’ support for English and migrant families’ FLP*

The English FLP in some migrant families was related to the symbolic domination of the father and their imposition of English as the only legitimate language in the family. This is related to Bourdieu's notion of masculine domination (1996b; 2011) which means that by a series of oppositions between the sexes men have more power and authority than women. In terms of the gender relations in the family, Bourdieu (1996a, p. 22) explains that 'the family tends to function as a *field*, with its physical, economic and above all symbolic power relations' and that there are struggles for conservation or transformation of the power relations between family members. This was the case in families in which the fathers were British (two out of five focal families: Macedonian-English and Macedonian-Scottish family). The British fathers were members of the dominant social group and felt entitled to impose an English FLP as a result of their misrecognition of English as the only legitimate language in society and in education:

'We live in England and this (English) will be the language that is used in everyday interactions'  
(Ian, Macedonian-Scottish family, interview)

Ian's comment above illustrates that the British fathers' misrecognition of English as the only legitimate language was a result of their internalisation of monolingual linguistic norms in wider society. What is more the British fathers in the migrant families devalued the mothers' HLs:

'I think it's nice to have the second language as a sort of you know yeah, talk about it but not talk with it.' (laughter) (English friend of Macedonian-English family, interview)

The above comment reveals some fathers' depreciation of any other language than English by giving it a less important role than English as the dominant legitimate language. The fathers' devaluation of Macedonian was related to their general perception that HLs were not legitimate capitals on the education field:

'A lot of people where the kids are speaking at home their main language find it hard to speak English in schools, which is kind of the opposite way round you're in England but the kids are held back because the parents don't speak English.' (Jason, Macedonian-English family, interview)

The above excerpt illustrates the de-legitimising process by which Jason perceived Macedonian as a potential threat for their children's educational achievement with an implicit justification and imposition of English as the only legitimate language in the family. The fathers' perception of Macedonian was that it was a low status language in the English society and as such their children would be unable to capitalise on it for educational achievement and social advancement.

As a result of the British fathers' domination in the family, the Macedonian mothers felt obliged to comply with the fathers' symbolic domination and to adopt an English FLP. This is evident in the following excerpts:

‘Very often if we talked and I was trying to explain something in Macedonian (to her son), and he didn't understand. It wasn't interesting. He felt excluded from the conversation.’ (Violeta, Macedonian-Scottish family)

‘it was just kind of hard like let's say if we were sitting at the dinner table, if my mum said something in Macedonian, my dad would be like: ‘What?’ Like he wouldn't understand so... (Anastasija's friend, Macedonian-Serbian family, interview)

The excerpts above demonstrate the process by which the Macedonian mothers were symbolically dominated by the British fathers<sup>29</sup> to adopt an English FLP based on the fathers' symbolic power and authority to make decisions. On the surface, the justification for the fathers' domination was related to their inability to understand Macedonian but it was implicitly related to the hierarchy in status between Macedonian and English in society. The process by which the Macedonian mothers were submitting to the British fathers' symbolic domination is evident in the following excerpt:

F We kind of decided that the UK was gonna be our home and so it's gonna be English that we speak. (...)

M I think it just happened because ... Yeah.

F We didn't discuss it.

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<sup>29</sup> In the Macedonian-Italian and Macedonian-Chinese family the relations between the parents were relatively equal arguably because both parents had similar migrant experience. Both parents seemed to agree that their HLs were less known and less socially valuable than English, and that is how they accepted English as the most desirable linguistic and cultural capital and agreed to have an English FLP.

M No, it just happened, yeah and you know we are surrounded by people that don't really understand Macedonian so when we go to a playgroup or park you kind of ... just being part of life so I don't feel like you know...' (friends of Macedonian-English family)

The most striking feature of the excerpt above is the the father's sense of superiority to impose English justifying it with its dominant position and the mother's acceptance of it as natural. It is interesting to note the father's assertiveness and his sense of entitlement to impose English and the mother's silence and inability to provide a clear explanation of her decision to practise English and not Macedonian. The Macedonian mothers' silence and submission to the British fathers' symbolic domination was due to their migrant background which put them in an inferior position. The mothers' subordination seemed to stem from their experience with lack of English language skills which made them think that practising Macedonian would pose a threat to their children's educational achievement and social success. The British fathers' domination in the migrant families seems to be related to their position as members of the more dominant social group and legitimate speakers of English which gave them the authority to legitimise English with a justification that an English FLP seemed to be in the best interest for the family. This was related to the fathers' tacit understanding of the different social value of Macedonian and English based on the fathers' fundamental belief that their children would not gain any social nor educational advantages for being able to speak Macedonian.

The mothers seemed to accept the fathers' domination as normal; indeed, the mothers' seemed to agree with their husbands' reasoning for an English FLP and did not question it which is how the relation of domination was sustained and English was practised in this family. What is more, the mothers seemed to agree with the fathers' perception of English as symbolic capital in the education field and for Bourdieu (2001) it is exactly through an act of shared knowledge and practical recognition of symbolic capital that symbolic violence in masculine domination takes place. In other words, the mothers in these families took part in their own domination because they misrecognised English as the only legitimate symbolic capital in education and in society, and they unconsciously agreed with the fathers' imposition of English as the only legitimate language in the family. This is because the mothers wanted to increase the chances for their family's symbolic profits through English as a legitimate language. This was a clear evidence that the English FLP in some migrant families was a result of the Macedonian mothers' submission to the symbolic domination of the British fathers by a process of symbolic violence. The mothers were subjected to symbolic violence from both monolingual norms in

society and the fathers' imposition of English and in that situation the mothers' chance to exercise their agency to adopt a Macedonian FLP was largely constrained.

Nonetheless, the findings also suggest that the Macedonian mothers could exercise their agency to some extent evident in their attempts to provide some limited opportunity for their children's exposure to Macedonian. For example, in the current study the mothers in the Macedonian-Scottish and Macedonian-English family felt empowered to take matters in their own hands and resist the fathers' imposition of English on some occasions. Violeta had come to a realisation that there was indeed a possibility for an alternative approach to her English FLP:

'If I had another child I would speak (to him/her) only in Macedonian, I wouldn't be afraid if he or she won't learn English or if my husband would feel neglected or if he would mind it.'  
(Violeta, Macedonian-Scottish family, interview)

Violeta's comment above reveals her sense of empowerment to go against the father's symbolic domination and imposition of an English FLP. After having been subjected to symbolic domination for a long time Violeta could see an alternative approach to her FLP. However, her realisation of a possibility to adopt a Macedonian FLP came too late as the probability of her to have a Macedonian FLP with another child seemed highly unlikely. Yet the mothers seemed determined to provide at least some exposure to Macedonian outside the home and that was an example of their limited ability to exercise their agency. For example, Bisera took her daughter to the Macedonian heritage language school despite the father's negative views about it:

'Jason tells me: Don't you think that she (their daughter) goes to guitar lessons, she has different activities, does she have to attend the lessons in the Macedonian school?' And I tell him: Yes, she has to go, she has to know the culture, she has to know her heritage.' (Bisera, Macedonian-English family, interview)

The mothers' struggle to exercise their agency evident in the two excerpts above illustrates that in relation to masculine domination there were some chances for the dominated mothers to have 'cognitive struggles' (Bourdieu, 1996b) which means that they were not merely submissive and dominated at all times. Yet, the mothers' ability to challenge the English FLP imposed by the fathers was largely constrained because because of the power of English as



symbolic capital. This means that although the mothers had at times limited opportunity to challenge the fathers' imposition of English as the only legitimate language in the family their decision about the FLP was largely determined by the domination of English as symbolic capital in the education field leading to their submission to dominant linguistic norms.

By contrast, migrant families in which there was parental mutual support for an HL FLP and a mutual deep sense of valuation of their cultural and linguistic identification with their HLs had a positive effect on their ability to have an HL FLP. This was the case of the father in the Macedonian Serbian family who provided a great deal of support to Lepa, the mother in this family:

‘Sometimes I couldn’t remember a word in Macedonian and I would say it in English. My husband never agreed with that. He had a saying and he used to say this: ‘People who have learnt their own language well will never forget it regardless if they have been in another country for 20, 30 or 50 years. When you can’t remember a word in your own language it means that you haven’t learnt it in your language. And if you learn it they way you should you will never forget it.’ And he didn’t have that problem with the Serbian language. He never used an English word in his Serbian.’ (Lepa, Macedonian-Serbian family, interview)

The father’s supportive attitude for an HL FLP in the Macedonian-Serbian family was obviously a very powerful influence on the mother’s ability to set up and to maintain her HL FLP with their daughter. The contrasting examples of the relationship between mothers and fathers in this section demonstrate that relations between parents in migrant families are an important factor for their FLP. In some cases, fathers in migrant families, especially fathers who represent the dominant language in the host society, may have the power to be the main decision-makers of the family’s FLP by imposing the dominant language as the only legitimate language in the family. Conversely, migrant families in which both parents have similar appreciation of their HLs have a better chance of having an HL FLP.

## 8.5 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the ways in which Bourdieu’s notion of field structured the FLP of migrant families in this study. It focused on analysing how parents understood what was expected of them in terms of language use in different places (fields) and how such

understanding structured their FLP. Parents' understanding of expectations in terms of language use in three fields was discussed: in the field of health visitors' network (section 8.2), in the field of schools (section 8.3) and in the field of the family (section 8.4). In general, in all three fields there was legitimisation of English and de-legitimation of HLs which resulted in some parents' implicit understanding or explicit awareness of the dominant position of English and the marginalised position of their HLs which led to their adoption of an English FLP. With this, they reproduced the structure of the field.

In the field of health visitors' network, the de-legitimation of migrant families' HLs was evident in health visitors' view of migrant families' HLs as 'deficit', and in their advice to parents to speak English to their children which was based on expectations of monolingualism. Such de-legitimation of HLs by health visitors led parents in migrant families to establish an English FLP as a result of their concerns about their children's language development and educational achievement.

In the field of schools, implicit expectations of monolingualism structured migrant families' FLP in two main ways: with the symbolic domination of English and with the de-legitimisation of HLs. The symbolic domination of English in schools was reflected in teachers' conceptualisation of English as the only legitimate language for migrant children's educational achievement. This in turn had a profound impact on migrant families' decision to adopt an English FLP guided by their aspiration for their children's educational achievement. However, some parents who were supported by individual teachers who had similar migrant background and valuation of multilingualism and linguistic diversity were able to transform expectations of monolingualism in the field of schools and have an HL FLP.

In the family field, parents' interactions with their children and with their spouses mainly led to an English FLP. Firstly, this was a result of children's demands for their parents to speak English to them as a result of their school socialisation into English and parents' accommodation to such demands. Secondly, an English FLP in the family was a result of some (British) fathers' imposition of English as the only legitimate language in the family and mothers' conformation. Conversely, migrant families in which there was mutual parental agreement about the values of their HLs were more likely to have an HL FLP as it was illustrated with the case of the Macedonian-Serbian family.

## **Chapter 9**

### **Discussion**

#### 9.1 Introduction

This dissertation has aimed to address the fundamental question of variation in FLP, that is: Why do some families practise and transmit their HLs to their children while other families do not? (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; 2013a). This study adopted Bourdieu's sociological approach to examine how parents with different linguistic backgrounds in migrant families in England decided to establish a particular FLP depending on how the parents mediated the dynamic interplay of their past experience (*habitus*), access to multiple forms of resources (*capital*) and understanding of expectations in terms of language use in different places (*field*). While the finding chapters discussed *habitus*, *capital* and *field* separately, it is important to note that when a migrant family decided to adopt a particular FLP all of the above factors came into play in different ways to structure their FLP differently. This chapter discusses the findings in this dissertation and puts forward a Bourdieuan theorisation of migrant families' FLP.

#### 9.2 Parents' past experience and migrant families' FLP

This study has shown that parents' past experience shaped migrant families' FLP by structuring the parents' linguistic dispositions. This was related to Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* (Chapter 6) based on the idea that individuals' *habitus* integrates their past experience and acts as 'a matrix of perceptions, appreciations and actions' (Bourdieu, 1977b, pp. 82-83). Parents' past experience structured their dispositions in different ways with different impact on their FLP. It was shown that for the majority of the parents, their past experience appeared to have structured their linguistic dispositions to value English and to devalue their HLs which ultimately shaped their English FLP. This was related to parents' past experience with family upbringing, schooling and wider social experience as migrants. Some parents were socialised to devalue other languages than English within their family setting and within monolingual and monocultural school spaces; such early socialisation had an extremely powerful influence in shaping parents' negative attitude toward other languages than English and they internalised such monolingual expectations into long-lasting dispositions to devalue other languages than

English which ultimately structured their English FLP. Furthermore, parents whose past experience as migrants in England encouraged them to reproduce monolingual expectations and to have an English FLP had experienced negative attitude towards them by others, experience of discrimination on the job market as a result of their lack of English language skills and missed opportunities to improve their education. All of this negative migrant experience had a deep impact on parents' linguistic dispositions which worked to structure them to value English as the only legitimate language for their success in England whereas their HLs were considered as valueless. This parental expectation based on their past experience led the majority of parents to adopt an English FLP. This finding contradicts findings in earlier FLP studies in which parents' past discriminatory immigrant experience and missed opportunities for their own advancement in the host country worked to structure their disposition to value their HLs and to have an HL FLP (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). However, it is important to note that the study of Curdt-Christiansen (2009) took place in Canada in which multilingualism is a common feature and this implies that the context with its language policy in which migrant families function is very closely related to how parents' experience will shape their dispositions and their FLP.<sup>30</sup>

Yet, this study has also shown that parents' past experience and a critical reflection on it had a positive impact on their ability to transform social structures in the form of implicit expectations of monolingualism in different places (schools, communities) and to have an HL FLP. In particular, it was shown that parents who had an HL FLP were those who could reflect critically on their own family upbringing, their subsequent experiences and the experience of other migrant families. For example, parents' critical reflection on other migrant families' negative experience offered parents a chance to realise that not having an HL FLP would negatively affect their children's communication with extended family members back in their HL country. This served as an impetus for raising parents' self-awareness about the cultural and linguistic value of their HLs which ultimately shaped their HL FLP. Although Bourdieu (1990a) argues that reflexivity emerges only 'in situations of crisis which disrupt the immediate adjustment of the habitus to a field' (ibid, p. 108) it appears that in the present study everyday reflection has a role for the formation of linguistic dispositions. This dissertation therefore argues that everyday, mundane reflexivity also has a role in enabling individuals to exercise their agency. In addition, parents' different past experiences and their effect on migrant

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<sup>30</sup> This is related to the notion of field which is discussed in more detail in the sections below.

families' FLP can be related to what Arnot and Naveed (2014) call a reproductive and a transformative habitus. Parents who had a reproductive habitus were inclined to have an English FLP because their past experiences in the family, in the school and in the wider social space were acting as a barrier, limiting their ability to see other opportunities outside their immediate negative experience. Instead, such past experience structured parents' disposition to perceive their HLs as obstacles to their success in England which ultimately led to their adoption of an English FLP. In contrast, parents who had a transformative habitus saw an opportunity for self-improvement in social situations and this enabled them to recognise the value of their HLs which ultimately helped them to have an HL FLP.

### *9.2.2 Parents' access to multiple forms of resources and migrant families' FLP*

This study has also shown that parents' access to multiple resources (capital) and the way they used them shaped their FLP in different ways (Chapter 7). These included parents' financial resources (economic capital); parents' knowledge about multilingual development and multilingual practice in the family and their attitude to their HLs and English (cultural capital); parents' English language skills and language background (linguistic capital); and parents' support from extended family, same-ethnic community and close friends (social capital). The findings demonstrate that in general, possession of multiple resources was crucial for parents to be able to have an HL FLP. Conversely, the less resources the parents had, the more inclined they were to have an English FLP. For example, the Macedonian-Serbian family was the only family in the study to recognise the 'merits' of practising their HLs and to have an HL FLP as a result of their access to various forms of capitals and ability to mobilise them which were unparalleled by the other families. Indeed, the majority of migrant families in this study were seriously constrained by lack of various forms of capitals (cultural, economic, linguistic and social) which resulted in four out of five migrant families' adoption of an English FLP.

This study showed that parents' cultural capital had a fundamental impact on migrant families' FLP because the knowledge the parents had and their attitude towards their HLs and English were a decisive factor in the way they set up their FLP. This study showed that parents' serious lack of knowledge about multilingual language development and multilingual language practice in the family led the majority of migrant families to believe that speaking their HLs with their children would negatively affect their children's English language learning and their chances for educational achievement, and this in turn, shaped their English FLP. In this sense,

the parents lacked a fundamental form of cultural capital which prevented them from seeing the value of their HLs which was necessary for them to have an HL FLP. This echoes some findings in the FLP literature that parents who do not know about multilingual language development are inclined to devalue their HLs as a problem and an obstacle to their children's educational success (Pérez-Báez, 2013; Ferguson, 2015). In contrast, this study showed that parents' possession of a layperson's or a professional knowledge about multilingual language development enabled them to appreciate multilingualism and with that to have an HL FLP. Furthermore, it was shown that another important form of cultural capital which had a decisive role in the way migrant families set up their FLP were parents' attitudes towards English and their HLs which were generated by the parents' expectations of the social value of their HLs and English. The majority of the parents had a negative attitude towards their HLs as a result of their expectations that their HLs had little economic and educational value and this resulted in an English FLP. Conversely, parents who had a positive attitude towards their HL and were self-aware of its cultural value were more likely to set up an HL FLP. This finding evoked the image of parents in other FLP studies whose positive expectation of the economic, cultural and educational value of their HLs results in an HL FLP (Curd-Christiansen, 2009; Ren & Xu, 2013; Mu, 2014b; Zhu Hua & Li Wei, 2016). Furthermore, the finding that parents' cultural capital expressed through their attitude to their HLs and English as well as their expectation of their social value was a decisive factor for the way in which migrant families decided on their FLP seems to support previous FLP studies which claim that parents' ideology is of essential importance for the way families set up their FLP. For example, Curdt-Christiansen and Sun (2016) argue that parents' language ideology is the critical element in FLP because it is directly related to the power, value, status and utility of that language. For the parents in the four focal families in this study who mainly adopted an English FLP, English had a pivotal role for their social mobility, educational and economic success and social status. The parents believed that English was the 'right' form of cultural and linguistic capital for their children's success in the future for education, work and social status.

Next, this study has shown that economic capital in the form of financial resources may influence migrant families' FLP. The influence of economic capital and migrant families' FLP was different and it was related to cultural capital. On the one hand, parents who had economic capital in the form of financial resources were able to use it to send their children to good schools in which their HLs were valued as legitimate cultural capital which in turn helped them to feel valued and to be proud of their HLs which in turn enabled them to have an HL FLP.

Furthermore, parents' access to financial resources provided extra opportunities for them to send their children to their HL countries for additional activities with peers in summer camps as a means for them to learn their HLs. The availability of economic capital coupled with parental positive attitude to their HLs (cultural capital) was therefore an advantage for some parents which helped them to have an HL FLP. On the other hand, parents' lack of economic capital was acting as a barrier for some migrant families because they sent their children to schools in which their HLs were not valued as legitimate cultural capital, and they could not travel to their HL countries to provide extra opportunities for their children to learn their HLs. Therefore, lack of economic capital coupled with lack of cultural capital resulted in an English FLP.

These findings suggest that parents who have access to economic capital (financial resources) and have a positive attitude toward their HLs (cultural capital) may have an advantage in setting up an HL FLP because they can capitalise on their economic and cultural capitals. The parents who had economic and cultural capital were aware of the importance of creating opportunities for extracurricular activities to facilitate their children's HL practice and learning whereas parents who lacked economic and cultural capital tended to regard investment in an HL FLP as a waste of time and as bad taste. This finding echoes Stavans' (2012) study of the FLP of Ethiopian migrant families in Israel and his argument that migrant families with higher socio-economic status may have an advantage over migrant families of lower socio-economic status. However, it was shown that possession of economic capital but lack of cultural capital led migrant families to adopt an English FLP. In particular, even migrant families which had financial resources but had a negative attitude to their HLs, had an English FLP because the lack of cultural capital was acting as a serious barrier, constraining their ability to see the value of their HLs. For example, the Macedonian-English and the Macedonian-Serbian family had relatively similar positions in the social structure - they were both middle-class families with similar volumes of economic capital but their cultural capital in the form of knowledge about multilingual development and their attitude to their HLs and English were quite different which resulted in different FLPs. While the Macedonian-Serbian family possessed knowledge about multilingual language development, had a positive attitude towards their HLs and practised Macedonian and Serbian with their daughter, the Macedonian-English family lacked knowledge about multilingual language development, they had a negative attitude towards Macedonian and therefore they had an English FLP. These findings have important implications for migrant families' FLP and suggest that parents' positive attitude towards their

HLs is one of the main forms of cultural capital which is needed for them to establish an HL FLP.

Also, this study has shown that parents' language background and English language skills were forms of linguistic capital that structured migrant families differently. On the one hand, parents with similar language backgrounds or the same HLs could use them as their linguistic capital because they could understand each other even if both parents spoke their HLs to their children and this helped them have an HL FLP. On the other hand, parents with different language backgrounds held a belief that the different language background was a serious barrier for them to have an HL FLP. However, this was more related to their lack of cultural capital in the form of negative attitude to their HLs rather than as an objective barrier because they did not value multilingualism as a worthwhile goal, and instead of seeing an opportunity to raise multilingual children they were focused on acquisition of English as the only legitimate language for success in England. Additionally, parents who lacked English language skills were more inclined to invest in their children's acquisition of English as a result of their own lack of English as a form of linguistic capital.

Finally, this study has demonstrated that social capital in the form of support from close friends, extended family and members from the same ethnic community influence migrant families' FLP. It was shown that different levels of social capital possessed by the parents in the migrant families were differently effective. On the one hand, parents who possessed lower level of social capital were constrained in their ability to use them as resources for their children to practice their HLs. On the other hand, parents who had support from their social networks were able to use them as their social capital and have an HL FLP. Support for an HL FLP by close friends was in some cases essential for parents to become aware of the importance of their HLs and to have an HL FLP. Also, parents who had close contact with and support from members of the same ethnic community were seemed empowered to have an HL FLP. This finding supports some previous studies that claim that close contact with and support from same ethnic networks helps migrant families to maintain their HLs (Li Wei, 1994, Hulsen et al. 2002). In contrast, lack of social capital in the form of contact with extended family, same-ethnic contacts and close friends had serious negative impact on parents' ability to have an HL FLP. The majority of migrant families were nuclear and their extended family and grandparents lived in their HL countries which acted as a serious barrier for them to be able to support their HL FLP. Even though some extended family members lived in England they were not acting as familial



social capital because they were implicitly or explicitly supporting the family's English FLP. This finding contradicts some earlier FLP studies about the supportive role of grandparents and extended family on parents' ability to have an HL FLP (Ruby, 2012). Rather it shows that in an era of globalisation and domination of English as a global lingua franca language the role of grandparents is complex and changing (Fillmore, 2000; Canagarajah, 2008). The findings about social capital in this study have important implications for migrant families' FLP. They show that migrant families who are nuclear are seriously constrained to have an HL FLP because of lack of support from extended family, close friends and members from the same ethnic community.

### *9.2.3 Parents' understanding of expectations in terms of language use in different places and migrant families' FLP*

This study discussed the ways in which parents' understanding of what was expected of them in terms of language use in different places (fields) structured their FLP differently. Parents' understanding of expectations in terms of language use in three fields was discussed: in the field of health visitors' network, in the field of schools and in the field of the family. In general, in all three fields there was legitimisation of English and de-legitimation of HLs which structured the parents' disposition to value English as the only legitimate language for upward social mobility, educational success, social advancement, social inclusion and social status and this in turn led them to establish an English FLP. The most powerful example of the way expectations of monolingualism by health workers in the community structured migrant families' English FLP was the case of the Macedonian-Scottish family in which a health visitor's advice to speak English to their son had serious consequences for the way the parents perceived their HLs leading them to believe that English was the only legitimate language for their son's proper language development and educational achievement. This resulted in their decision to have an English FLP. In a similar vein, implicit expectations of monolingualism in schools evident in teachers' preference for migrant children who spoke English with their parents at home was acting as an encouragement for the parents to have an English FLP to give their children a better chance for educational success. This was a result of a language policy context in England in which there is 'a universal model of language development and assessment' (Safford, 2003, p. 8) and an implicit expectation of monolingualism with a focus on English in education for the inclusion of all learners together with conceptualisation of HLs as a 'deficit' which needs to be overcome (DfE, 2011). It was shown that parents'

internalisation of the ‘deficit’ view of their HLs in relation to the dominant language (English) resulted in their self-stigmatisation and rejection of use of their HL (McNamara, 2011; Chatzidaki & Maligkoudi, 2013) and an adoption of an English FLP. This finding illustrates that political decisions at a national level about the social status and social functions of languages have a fundamental influence on migrant families’ FLP (Lane, 2010; Seloni and Sarfati, 2013; Curdt-Christiansen, 2014, 2016; King, 2016). Also, it reflects that monolingual attitudes in the immediate surroundings such as schools and communities and lack of support for migrant families’ attempts to raise multilingual children results in their adoption of the dominant language in the host country (Okita, 2002; Kirsch, 2012). Yet, the findings in this study also showed that some parents were able to transform implicit expectations for monolingualism in schools and have an HL FLP with the support of some teachers who had a migrant background and who supported multilingualism as a legitimate resource for migrant families.

This study has also shown that parents’ understanding of expectations of language use in the family field by different family members was also an important factor which structured migrant families’ FLP. Children’s agency expressed in their demands for the parents to speak English to them as a result of their school socialisation into English led to parents’ accommodation to their children’s requests which resulted in their adoption of an English FLP. This finding echoes similar findings in previous studies in the FLP literature (Gafaranga, 2010; Revis, 2016). Another factor within the field of the migrant family which was shown to structure their FLP was the domination of British fathers and their sense of entitlement to impose English as the only legitimate language in the family and the mothers’ submission to such domination. This finding has important implications for migrant families’ FLP because it provides a new perspective in FLP research by showing for the first time in FLP research that migrant families’ decision to practise the dominant language in the host country may be related to masculine domination (Bourdieu 1996a, b; 2001).

### 9.3 Structure and agency: a Bourdieuan theorisation of migrant families’ FLP

The findings in this study revealed that the majority of migrant families (four out of five) adopted an English FLP as a result of the symbolic domination of English in different social spaces in England and the parents’ misrecognition of English as the only legitimate language for their children’s educational and social success; yet it also has shown that a minority of

migrant families (one out of five) were able to transform the symbolic domination of English and have an HL FLP by a process of critical reflection and self-awareness of the cultural value of their HLs. This means that migrant families' FLP was related to processes of structure and agency based on the idea that individuals' habitus is a structured and a structuring structure which mediates between structure and agency (Bourdieu, 1977b; 1984, 1990b). The parents' habitus clearly mediated between structure and agency in everyday life situations and therefore this study proposes a Bourdieuan perspective on migrant families' FLP.

On the one hand, the parents in this study were confined by structures that shaped their linguistic dispositions and their habitus to value English and devalue HLs. This is related to Bourdieu's argument that social structures constrain individuals' choice and chances of success. Parents who decided to have an English FLP were confined by structures including their past experience, lack of resources and by expectations of monolingualism in different places which shaped their linguistic dispositions to value English and not their HLs and this ultimately influenced their decision to have an English FLP. Firstly, parents' past experience with family upbringing, schooling and wider social experience as migrants acted as a confining structure which shaped their disposition to value English and to devalue other languages including their HLs. They were socialised to value English as the only legitimate language for education, employment, social inclusion and social status. Secondly, another boundary which constrained migrant families from having an HL FLP was parents' lack of multiple forms of capital. In migrant families which had an English FLP, the parents had a serious lack of cultural capital such as knowledge about multilingual language development and lack of appreciation of their HLs which limited their ability to recognise the value of their HLs as an opportunity to raise multilingual children. Instead, they adopted a view that speaking their HLs was a 'problem' which could negatively affect their children's English language development. Furthermore, parents' lack of social capital meant that they did not have the necessary support from extended family members and social network of friends who could provide useful advice or to speak their HLs to their children. Also, parents' lack of linguistic capital was acting as a structure constraining their choice of an FLP. In particular, some parents were still lacking or had lacked English language skills and this was related to difficulties for them to continue their education or to find employment in England. This contributed to parents' decision to have an English FLP with the hope to avoid such fate for their children. Similarly, parents' different linguistic backgrounds were acting as a structure inclining them to think that having different linguistic backgrounds was difficult for them to speak their HLs to their children. Another form

of capital which contributed towards migrant families' adoption of an English FLP was lack of economic capital. Lack of financial resources limited the parents' opportunities of sending their children to schools which could appreciate their HLs and to travel to their HL countries all of which could have helped them to see the value of their HLs and have an HL FLP. Indeed, English was perceived as the language needed for acquisition of economic capital through education and employment and therefore an English FLP seemed to be a 'natural' choice for the migrant families who lacked economic capital. Thirdly, parents' conformation to expectations of monolingualism by teachers in schools, health visitors in communities, and spouses and children in families was also acting as a structure which confined parents' choice of an English FLP. The parents embodied social structures because they had tacit understanding that English was the dominant linguistic capital in different social fields in England which could be transformed into other types of capital; indeed, the parents believed that an English FLP would enable their children to acquire English which was perceived as the necessary linguistic capital needed for the families' upward social mobility, educational achievement, social advancement, social inclusion and social status. In this sense, the parents' choice of an English FLP was guided by their aspiration to occupy a legitimate position in different social fields in England by building up their linguistic capital which in turn led to a misrecognition of English as the only legitimate language for success which ultimately resulted in their decision to adopt an English FLP. This is related to Bourdieu's idea that individuals have tacit understanding of which languages are recognised as linguistic capital in a specific field and they strive to acquire them because they entitle them to various symbolic profits (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991).

On the other hand, parents in migrant families were agents of transformation of social structures. This is related to Bourdieu's argument that in certain circumstances individuals are able to see alternatives and transform existing structures. Parents in migrant families who had an HL FLP had the extraordinary ability to transform social structures in the form of expectations of monolingualism as a result of their ability for reflexivity, critical self-awareness and access to multiple forms of capitals. Firstly, in families which had an HL FLP the parents' past experience was related to their ability for critical reflection on their own upbringing or on the positive or negative experience of other migrant families which enabled them to become agents of transformation of dominant expectations of monolingualism. In particular, the parents' ability to exercise agency came with their propensity for critical reflection on experience which provided a new perspective for some of the parents to see the cultural value

of their HLs. Parents realised that an HL FLP was necessary for them to continue their cultural links with family back in their HL countries. Secondly, this study has shown that access to multiple forms of capitals was crucial for migrant families' empowerment to transform social structures and to have an HL FLP. The parents were able to transform social structures and exercise their agency with their access to multiple forms of capitals such as cultural capital expressed through their understanding of their children's multilingual language development and appreciation of their HLs; possession of social capital such as support from their social network of friends. However, parents' possession of cultural capital expressed as a positive attitude toward their HLs was an important form of capital which was above all forms of capitals necessary for the families to have an HL FLP. This is because even though some families had other forms of capitals such as economic and linguistic, they had an English FLP because they lacked cultural capital, in the form of a negative attitude towards their HLs, and a lack of knowledge about multilingual language development.

However, it is important to note that this study does not aim to be representative of all migrant families in England. It recognises that parents' past experience, available resources and understanding of expectations of language use in different places may vary from family to family, and that these factors may interact in different ways to shape their FLP differently. The study recognises that the parents in the five focal families perceived their HLs as low-status and as having a low social value; however other migrant families may have a positive attitude towards their HLs which makes them adopt an HL FLP, as the case of the Macedonian-Serbian family clearly showed. Furthermore, this study recognises that other languages which have been traditionally related to prestige and have a longer tradition of being taught in schools in England such as French and Spanish may have a different outcome for migrant families' FLP because of their expectation of the higher social value of those languages. The next, final Chapter 10 discusses contributions and the implications of this study in more detail.

## **Chapter 10**

### **Conclusion**

This study has shown that the way migrant families establish their FLP depends on how parents mediate their past experience, access to multiple forms of resources and their understanding of expectations in terms of language use in different places. This final chapter discusses the theoretical, conceptual and methodological contributions of this dissertation and implications for policy, practice and research.

#### 10.1 Contributions of the dissertation

The findings in this study have several contributions. One of the main theoretical contributions of this dissertation has been the use of a sociological approach and the development of a theoretical framework based on the work of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu with his concepts of habitus, capital, field, symbolic violence, legitimation, misrecognition (Bourdieu, 1977b; Bourdieu & Thomson, 1991). This theoretical approach allows for examination of how migrant families' FLP is related to structural constraints but also how it is related to agency through parents' ability for critical reflection. This dissertation has shown the potential of drawing on Bourdieu's theory to examine how migrant families' FLP is shaped by forms of power and inequality in societies by grasping the specific social and political conditions at a macro-level such as the national language education policy context in England (Chapter 2) and at a micro-level such as parents' past experience (Chapter 6), parents' access to multiple forms of resources (Chapter 7) and parents' understanding of expectations in terms of language use in different places (Chapter 8). The theoretical and conceptual contribution of this dissertation is that it provides novel insights and a holistic understanding of migrant families' FLP in the field of Family Language Policy (FLP) as a sociological study which focuses on issues of language. As it was discussed in Chapter 3, other FLP studies have used language socialisation, literacy studies and child language acquisition whereas this study with its sociological focus is among the first ones in the field of FLP to combine a sociological approach with FLP, and to broaden the field of FLP. Therefore, this study has shown that adopting a sociological approach can help gain more holistic understanding of migrant families' FLP. Also, this study has contributed to the field of FLP by its focus on migrant families in which parents have different linguistic backgrounds. While traditionally, FLP studies have focused on bilingual families,

this study has taken into consideration that globalisation and migration worldwide changes the types of families, and it aimed to examine the challenges that migrant families face in practicing and maintaining their HLs in host societies. Also, this study is situated within a larger turn in the field of FLP which moves away from outcomes and examines how family members' everyday experiences and identities shape their FLP (King, 2016; King & Lanza, 2017). This study has illustrated that power relations are at play in FLP of migrant families and that examining migrant families' FLP in relation to power relations between minority and majority languages may explain why many migrant families decide to adopt the dominant language in the host country.

Methodologically, this dissertation has contributed with its focus on how the interplay of both wider macro- and micro-level factors shape migrant families' FLP. This is related to Bourdieu's argument that in order to overcome the dichotomies of macro and micro, structure and agency, it is necessary to bring them together at the epistemological level to reveal the dynamics of the logics of practice which generate perceptions and action, and which are at the same time structured and structuring (Grenfell, 2008). This study has shown that in order to understand how migrant families establish their FLP we need to examine both parents' lived experience (family upbringing, schooling, wider social experience, reflexivity) and the objective structures that surround them (expectations of monolingualism in national language education policy, schools, communities and families). In this sense, it can be argued that parents in migrant families embody macro-level expectations of monolingualism when they make decisions about their FLP, the social becomes individual (Bourdieu, 1977b). In addition, this study has demonstrated how migrant families' FLP is shaped at micro-level through the parents' past experience and differential access to multiple forms of resources. This was possible with the use of Bourdieu's analytical tools of habitus, capital, field, symbolic violence, misrecognition and legitimation to understand how migrant families' FLP is shaped by relations of power and an implicit hierarchy between English and HLs. However, this study acknowledges potential limitations of investigating migrant families in which the parents have different linguistic backgrounds and a focus on parents' languages which are perceived as having a low socio-educational value in the context of England. As it was discussed in Chapter 9, other migrant families in which parents have other linguistic backgrounds, especially languages which have a higher social status in England (such as French, Spanish, German) may have different experience, resources and understanding of expectations in terms of language use in different places, and therefore have different FLP. However, this study has demonstrated

the challenges that migrant families face when they decide on their FLP especially from monolingual national language education policy contexts. This study was new in the fact that it included less known migrant communities such as the Macedonian ethnic community including other less socially promoted languages such as Scottish Gaelic, Hakka, Italian, Sardinian. Also, the Macedonian community compared to other migrant communities in England is relatively new and a minor migrant community. This has contributed to a better understanding of how small migrant communities appear to be in danger of perceiving their HLs as low status which has serious consequences for their HL transmission and maintenance. This study has raised the need for further studies to examine how languages which are perceived as low-status are maintained and transmitted in migrant families, especially in those in which parents have different linguistic backgrounds.

## 10.2 Implications for policy and practice

The findings in this study raise important issues and implications for policy and practice. This study has contributed to critiques of views that migrant families are able to resist external pressures and practise their HLs by themselves (e.g. Fishman, 1991). It has shown that migrant families' decision which languages to speak to their children is related to the social status of migrant families' HLs that is, whether their HLs are recognised as legitimate linguistic capital in different social spaces such as schools and communities. This raises questions with regard to the conceptualisation of the role of migrant families' HLs in language education policy in England. Currently, in England there is no long-term language education policy with focus on the role of migrant families' HLs in education. As it was discussed in Chapter 2, the current approach to language provision for children from migrant families in England is 'mainstreaming' which is underpinned by focus on acquisition of English for learning, achievement and assessment for all children (Costley, 2014). Under such circumstances, all children irrespective of their linguistic background are tested and assessed in the same way meaning that the implicit expectation is that all children have the same language development irrespective whether they are multilingual or monolingual. This reveals that currently in language education policy in England there is 'a universal model of language development and assessment' (Safford, 2003, p. 8) and an implicit expectation of monolingualism with a focus on English in education for inclusion of all learners together with conceptualisation of HLs as a 'deficit' which needs to be overcome (DfE, 2011). Such conceptualisation of migrant



families' HLs at policy level may be translated into practice by teachers and health visitors. This study has shown that implicit expectations of monolingualism in schools and in communities expressed through teachers' and health visitors' views of English as the only legitimate language for all children's educational success, has a negative effect on migrant families' ability to practise their HLs leading to their adoption of an English FLP. However, this study also showed that some teachers have a positive view of multilingualism as a worthwhile educational aim for migrant families and this promises that teachers can help migrant families to maintain their HLs and have an HL FLP, only if they are aware of the benefits of multilingualism and have the necessary knowledge about multilingual children's language development. This raises the need for language education policy in England to provide clear definitions, guidance and long-term planning for the role of migrant families' HLs in education and in society. If the current language education policy is going to move towards recognition of migrant families' HLs in education, there needs to be a permanent policy on the role of languages in education which aims for a meaningful inclusion of migrant families' HLs in the curriculum. This also has implications for future training and professional development of teachers and health visitors. They need to be informed about the multilingual language development of children and the benefits of multilingualism for individuals and for society (Baker, 2011). There could be clear recommendations on how to approach the teaching, assessment and language development of multilingual children. Teachers and health visitors could apply such training in their professional practice. Also, in order to encourage migrant families to practise and maintain their HLs, they could be taught as subjects in primary and secondary schools during school hours or after school. They can even be used for a development of a multilingual curriculum in which children can draw on all of their existing languages for their learning and assessment. Additionally, there could be differentiated assessment criteria for children from migrant families in terms of their different stages of language development so that parents in migrant families have the assurance that speaking their HLs to their children at home would not pose a threat to their children's English language development at school. Integrating migrant families' HLs in language education policy in England could help address the tensions between English and migrant families' HLs, and help migrant families to have an HL FLP and maintain their HLs.

At a more grassroots level, this means that there should be collaboration among families, schools and communities to support migrant families in terms of their family language policy and practice, and to raise awareness of the value of migrant families' HLs. The findings in this

study suggest that parents' lack of knowledge about multilingual development and children and fathers' demands for mothers to speak the dominant language raises the need for informing parents and children in multilingual migrant families about the language development of multilingual children. It highlights the need to raise parents' awareness of the individual and social benefits of multilingualism. This could be done by teachers and health visitors who would provide advice and support to parents and children in multilingual migrant families about the benefits of speaking their HLs. Indeed, this study has shown that in some cases, successful communication between parents and teachers has positive implications on migrant families' ability to have an HL FLP and for their children's overall educational progress (Macedonian-Serbian family). However, this study has also shown that lack of teacher knowledge about the language practice in the migrant family results in lack of teacher valuation of migrant families' HLs which has negative effects on migrant families' ability to have an HL FLP (Macedonian-English and Macedonian-Italian families). Therefore, successful communication between parents in migrant families and schools seems to be of pivotal importance for the way migrant families set up their FLP and for their children's chances of educational success. Hence, schools, communities and migrant families need to find effective ways how to improve communication and work together on finding ways of recognition and meaningful inclusion of migrant families' HLs as valued learning resources. Effective communication between migrant families, communities and schools will in turn help migrant families feel valued which will contribute to their valuation of their HLs and to have an HL FLP which will also have benefits for their social inclusion.

Furthermore, the finding that in migrant families, parents' past experience shapes the way they set up their FLP has implications for supporting parents to understand how their past experience with language learning, education, migration and employment impacts the way they decide to establish a particular FLP. Importantly, it stresses the importance of making parents' past experiences explicit and the need to critically examine them to better understand how and why a migrant family sets up a particular FLP. Parents' self-critical examination of how their past experience shapes their choice of a particular FLP may be an important step for them to increase their self-awareness of the choices they make in terms of their FLP. This could be included as information in bi/multilingual textbooks for parents in multilingual migrant families as well as support in migrant centres for migrant families offering support and information to migrant families. Increasing parents' self-awareness of how their past experience shapes their FLP may result in a FLP which is better informed and one which will

increase migrant parents' awareness of the value of their HLs which in turn will empower them to establish an HL FLP. Linguistic diversity is becoming a common feature of contemporary educational systems and societies. With that, they need to meet the cultural and linguistic needs of migrant families by supporting them to become more aware of the benefits of multilingualism and their opportunity to raise multilingual children, on the condition that they have an HL FLP. In an era in which hostility towards migrants is present worldwide (King & Lanza, 2017) attention to the social inclusion of migrant families and recognition of their languages and culture is needed more than ever. If educational systems and societies want to be inclusive of all children and all families, they need to find ways of making migrant children and migrant families valued by recognising their HLs as valued resources for learning as well as for enriching all children's understanding and awareness of the positive effects of linguistic and cultural diversity. The findings in this study raise the need for migrant families' HLs to be recognised in a meaningful way as valued resources in language education policy and in schools so that they 'gain' social value and recognition which are needed for migrant families to have an HL FLP.

Building on the findings in this dissertation, future studies may examine how migrant families in which parents have other language backgrounds decide on their FLP. One interesting direction for future research would be to examine how families in which parents have more prestigious HLs or languages which have been traditionally taught in schools in England such as French, German and Spanish decide on their FLP. Other studies may compare if there is difference in the way migrant families set up their FLP in families in which parents have more socially prestigious HLs than parents who have less socially prestigious HLs. Also, other studies may develop an interdisciplinary approach drawing on sociology, psychology or other disciplines to investigate the complexities of migrant families' decisions to adopt a particular FLP. Future studies may also examine how the development in language education policy in England after Brexit will shape the FLP of migrant families. Future studies may include observations in mainstream schools and actual interactions between parents and teachers to document how the practices in schools and the communication of teachers and parents shape migrant families' FLP. Future research may focus more closely on how children's agency and relations between spouses in the migrant family shape their FLP. Finally, other studies may examine how the presence of extended family members and their practice and beliefs shapes FLP of migrant families.

In conclusion, this study has shown that migrant families will be able to have an HL FLP and to maintain their HLs only when they gain value and recognition in education and in society. Societies are becoming more diverse than ever, globalisation and transnational migration bring together parents with different language backgrounds (Lanza & Li Wei, 2016; King & Lanza, 2017). Hence, attention to valuation and inclusion of migrant families' HLs seems an inevitable step for more inclusive educational systems and societies. In England, Brexit in the next few years opens up an opportunity for new developments in language education policy and establishment of a long-term language education policy which builds on recognition of migrant families' HLs and strives for their meaningful inclusion in the curriculum. In this way, migrant families may have a better chance to have an HL FLP and to maintain their HLs.

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## **Appendix A: Families' informed consent to participate in research**

First, let me introduce myself. I am Biljana Savikj, a PhD student at the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge. My research explores how multilingual children in mixed-marriage families (in which one or both parents have immigrated to England) learn the languages (e.g. English, Macedonian, Italian, Chinese, Croatian, Serbian) and their respective cultures. I was inspired to do this study because I used to be an English language teacher and a Grade teacher in an international school in Macedonia where I taught many multilingual children in mixed-marriage families.

For my PhD project, I would like to look at the ways in which multilingual children in mixed-marriage families in England learn and use the languages/cultures and the social factors involved in this learning process. Specifically, I would like to find out multilingual children's attitudes towards the languages/cultures and the ways they accept or reject to learn the languages and cultures. In order to investigate this, I will conduct interviews with the child and his/her parents as well as some other people with whom the child is in regular contact. These may be cousins, grandparents, teachers, friends, neighbours, aunts and uncles. Also, I will observe the lessons in the Macedonian heritage language school in London where I will try to understand the child's affiliation with the Macedonian language and culture. For this reason, during the lessons I will audio record the child's responses.

In order to understand how the child reacts to the learning of the languages/cultures at home and in the regular school, families will be asked to self-audio record several interactions with the child during mealtimes (e.g. dinnertime when all the family gathers and talks about school and other activities that happened during the day). After that, I will discuss the self-audio recordings with the family so that I find out more about the child's attitude towards the languages/cultures. The research is expected to last for about a year (September 2014 – August 2015).

All of the information I collect will be confidential and it will be used only for the purpose of this research. The identities of all participants will be anonymous and no one besides me as a researcher will know their names. Your participation in this study is voluntary and it will not

affect you in any negative way. If you have any questions about the study you can contact me by telephone at 07932527093 or by email [bs475@cam.ac.uk](mailto:bs475@cam.ac.uk). I hope you will take part in this study and consider me as your friend.

#### Parents and children's consent

I have read the information in this consent form. All my questions were answered to my satisfaction. My child and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Signature:

Date

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## **Appendix B: Teachers' informed consent to participate in research**

Dear teacher,

Invitation to participate in an interview for a study entitled: An ethnographic case-study of multilingual children's learning of English and heritage languages in their social networks in England

First, let me introduce myself. I am Biljana Savikj, a PhD student at the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge. Having taught multilingual children with various backgrounds in an international school in Macedonia, I was inspired to do a study on how multilingual children in mixed-marriage families in England (in which one or both parents have immigrated to England) learn and use the languages, the children's attitudes towards the languages and the social factors involved in the language learning process.

The study involves conducting interviews with the people who are in regular contact with the participating children including their families and teachers. For me, the teachers' views on how multilingual children learn the languages are very important because I believe that teachers spend a considerable amount of time with the children and as such, their views add a valuable perspective in my study.

Therefore, I would like to kindly invite you to take part in a short interview with me during which we will discuss your reflections on the child's language learning. All of the information that I will collect will be confidential and it will be used only for the purpose of this research. The identities of all participants will be anonymous and no one besides me will know your name, the child's name or the name of the school. Your participation in this study is voluntary and it will not affect you in any negative way.



If you have any questions about the study you can contact me by telephone at 07932527093 or by email [bs475@cam.ac.uk](mailto:bs475@cam.ac.uk). I very much hope that I will have a chance to meet you and talk to you. I would be grateful if you could reply as soon as possible. Thank you.

Parent's consent

My child and I have been informed about this study and all of our questions were answered to our satisfaction. My child and I voluntarily agree for the school to share information about the child's language learning.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C: Stages of the study

Phase	Date	Activities
Phase 1	September - December 2014	<p>Interviews with children, parents and social network members;</p> <p>Observations in homes, the heritage language school, the church;</p> <p>Transcriptions and preliminary data analysis</p>
Phase 2	January – June 2015	<p>Families’ self-audio recordings</p> <p>Observations in families’ homes, the Macedonian heritage language school and the Macedonian Orthodox church in London.</p> <p>Transcriptions and preliminary data analysis</p>
Phase 3	July 2015 - December 2015	Data analysis
Phase 4	January 2016 - September 2017	Writing-up and submission

## **Appendix D: Semi-structured interview protocol with parents, extended family members and social network of friends**

The questions below are illustrative examples. The wording and the order of the questions was adjusted to the context and there were sub-questions if further clarification was required.

1. Tell me about yourself. How old are you? What do you do? Where were you born? How long have you been living in England for?
2. Which language(s) do you speak with your children/your spouse/your extended family?
3. How did you decide which language(s) to speak to your child(ren)?
4. What do you think you have contributed towards the (English and HL) language learning of your child?
5. What is your child(ren)'s attitude towards speaking English/HL?
6. How often do you see your extended family?
7. How often do you travel to your home country?
8. Do you think that your child's school values your child's ability to speak a language / languages other than English?
9. What opportunities you are aware of within the school which encourage your child/children to speak their other language(s) and share their culture?
10. Has anyone given you any advice on your child's language learning and language development?
11. Do(es) your child(ren) go to a heritage language school? Why/why not?
12. How important do you think it is for your child to be able to communicate effectively in your HL and in English? Why?
13. What support is available for the development of the heritage language(s)/ English in your home?

## **Appendix E: Semi-structured interview protocol with children**

1. How old are you?
2. Which language(s) do you speak with your parents/extended family members/friends? How did you learn the language(s) you speak?
3. Which language(s) do you feel most comfortable to speak? Why?
4. How do you feel about speaking English/your HL? Who do you speak the language(s) with?
5. Do you think you will use your HL/English in the future? Why?
6. Do your teachers know that you have/speak a language other than English?
7. Have you had an opportunity to share your HL in the mainstream school with teachers and other students? If yes, when and what did you do?
8. Do you think teachers and schools appreciate students' ability to speak other languages than English? Why? Why not?
9. Do you go to an HL school? Why/why not? How do you feel about that?
10. How important is English/ HL to you?

## **Appendix F: Elicitation of families' close network of friends**

This elicitation procedure of the families' social network of friends is based on the social network interview protocol used by Cochran et al. (1990).

General introduction: I would like to know which people you and your child spend time with and communicate frequently in several areas of your life – people like your friends, neighbours and relatives. I want to learn a little about the people who matter to you and your child, people your family really cares about, or that you see at least a couple of times a month. For the people you mention, I will be interested in what you do together, how often you see each other, how long you have known each other and things like that. As we go along if you have a question, please do not hesitate to ask.

1. Who are the adults that you are close to or spend quite a bit of time with?

(Record name of adult, write how affiliated with parents and children, e.g.: grandmother, teacher, neighbour)

2. How often do you and your close contact spend time together?

3. How about the children? Which children does your child feel close to or spends a lot of time with?

Probe: Are there any others: neighbours, relatives, or school friends?

(Record name, write how affiliated)

4. Now I'd like you to think about each person (adults and children) on this list and tell me what you, your child and the people do together or talk about? (Record activity)

## **Appendix G: Semi-structured interview protocol with teachers**

1. What do you think about multilingual children?
2. How many languages do your pupils speak?
3. What happens when a multilingual child comes to the school?
4. What role do you think your school has in promoting/supporting migrant children's heritage languages? If yes, in what way? If no, why not?
5. Can you think of any instances when the pupils' home languages were used/talked about/promoted in your school?
6. Have pupils in your class had an opportunity to speak about/share their home languages?
7. What, if any, activities have you tried to include migrant children's languages/cultures in your classroom? What do you think about that?
8. Do you know if your pupils speak English or another language at home? What do you think of that?
9. Have you given advice to parents in migrant families about their children's language development/English language skills? If yes, what kind of advice?
10. What is (focal child's name) progress with English? Does he/she mention that he/she can speak other languages than English? What is her/his attitude towards speaking English/HLs?

## Appendix H: Translation excerpts

1. А јас гледам со повеќето дечиња што се на нашата улица што зборуваат неколку јазици да речеме детето до нас англиски, арапски, француски, али немаше интерес во ниеден јазик да речеме англискиот слабо...ги зборува сите три јазици али не ги зборува толку добро, на тоа ниво да речеме каде што може нешто да направи со нив. И така некако ми беше. Си викам дали е добро дало не е. Па се одлучив некако. Викам ајде, добро нека тера англиски али ќе учиме и спореден јазик.

I see that those children who live in our street, those who speak several languages, let's say the child who lived next to us he spoke English, Arabic, French, but he didn't have interest in any of the languages and his English was poor. He spoke all three languages but he didn't speak them well, let's say on a level that he could do something with them. And that's how I felt. I said to myself: Is this good or bad? And I made a decision somehow. I thought: 'OK, let her (daughter) learn English but we will learn an additional language as well.

2. На три години она почна *nursery* англискиот го совлада иако не се збореше во куќата еден збор англиски, брзо го совлада и сега кога ќе дојдеше од школо она не можеше нормално да се сети на македонски зборче и ќе го каже на англиски и јас ќе и го одговорев. Меѓутоа татко и не одговараше, татко и ја полудуваше. Она ќе плачеше, 'I hate you', а татко и вика 'Ако и ако ме мразиш кажи ми го на српски'. И она ќе кажеше: 'Не знам, не можам'. Кажи ми вика тоа што знаеш како знаеш, не знам еднаш беше за патлицан на македонски не можеше да се сети како се вика на македонски за патлицан и вика татко и ајде ОК не можеш да се сетиш вика она: 'Мум знам парадајз, што сега ти си Србин што се буниш'. И вика: 'Ама сега си во Македонија, значи треба да се сетиш. Ајде опиши го со зборови вика ама на македонски да ми го опишеш'. Па вика: 'Ти не знаеш македонски', и он вика: 'Мајка ти е тука'. Значи она од мала наоѓаше отпор и тоа све. Меѓутоа он беше истраен, не и дозволи еден збор да каже затоа што тогаш се само учи.

She (the daughter) started *nursery* when she was three and even though we didn't speak a single word in English in the house she learnt it very quickly and then when she would come back from school she couldn't remember how to say a word in Macedonian and she would say it in English and I used to answer it. But her father didn't answer it. He was driving her crazy. She

would cry, she would say: 'I hate you, and he would say: 'OK, even if you hate me, say it in Serbian.' She would say: 'I can't, I don't know how.' He would say: 'Tell me what you already know.' Once it was about a tomato, we were in Macedonia and she couldn't remember how to say tomato in Macedonian, and her father said: OK, you can't remember'. She remembered it in Serbian, she said: 'I know *mum*, it's paradajz (tomato)' and she told him: 'I know it in Serbian, you are Serbian, why are you protesting?' And he said: 'But you are in Macedonia now, and you should remember. Come on, describe it with words, but I would like you to describe it in Macedonian.' She said: 'But you don't speak Macedonian' and he told her: 'Yes but your mother is here.' So she was showing resistance even though she was young. But he was very persistent, he didn't let her say a word in English because you learn only then.'

3. M За развојот на детето имат како здравствен посетител. И спрема нивната мерка јазикот на Т. Не беше на ниво на тоа што треба.

И Уште на две?

M На две или две и пол. И тогаш ми рече да му читам повеќе на англиски, на еден јазик затоа што нема...мислам тие зборој што треба во тоа време. Таа ми покажа книга на пример на таа возраст да ги има тие 40 зборови, фонд на зборови.

И И тогаш како одлучи?

M Како нова мајка веруваш во се што ќе ти кажат.

M: There is a health visitor for the child's development. And according to their measurement, T.'s (her son's) language wasn't at the required level.

R: When he was two?

M: Two or two and a half. And then she told me to read to him more in English, in one language because he did not have...I mean those words that at that age.. she showed me a book for example that at that age the child should have those 40 words, that range of vocabulary.

R: And then you decided ...?

M: As a new mother you believe in everything they tell you.

4. M Искрено кажано јас мислам дека луѓето прво треба англиски да се научат да зборат повише него од кај доаѓаат.

И Зашто мислиш така?

M Многу родители не знаат... Се користи од кај доаѓаш, јас мислам побитно е да ги научат како да се понашаат во оваа држава. Така да не ми смета...мислам ми смета



некогаш кога се оди евиденција само за тие што се повише (групи на мигранти) него тие што се помалце. Иначе мислам дека родителите треба да се едуцираат повеќе него децата. Тие што сме дојдени, затоа што не знаеме да ја прифатиме англиската култура. Така не ми сметало никогаш не сум имала потреба да кажам: ‘Еј јас сум од таму’ пошто сум немала нешто добро да донесам од таму културно мислам ме разбираш како понашање или знаеш... Нема нешто да направам за да биде овде подобро... да додадам на ова... *society*, разбираш. Мислам убаво е да се знае кој од каде доаѓа и би било убаво они (децата) да знаат друг јазик за нив лично, а не дека ние сме од таму.

M: To be honest, I think people should learn to speak English more, rather than where they come from.

R: Why do you think so?

M: Many parents don't know... They use where you come from but I think it is more important to teach them how to behave in this country. So, I don't mind... I mean, I do mind when sometimes there is evidence for those who are the majority (of immigrant groups) than those who are the minority. But I think that parents should be educated more than the children. We, who have come here, because we don't know how to accept the English culture. So, it hasn't bothered me. I have never had to say: Hey, I come from there (Macedonia) because I haven't had anything good to bring from there when it comes to culture, I mean you see like behaviour or you know... There is nothing I can do to make it better here... to add to this... *society*, you see. I mean it is nice to know where people come from and it would be nice if they (their children) know another language for them personally, not because we come from there'.

5. Ние имаме дијалект и да си тука цел живот, пеесет години да си тука ако имаш дијалект секако си странец и некој пат е *uncomfortable*. Ама за децата, имаат перфект *dialect*, они не се разликува дека се од мешан брак така да ќе и даде *different opportunities when they apply for jobs, they're not gonna be discriminated*. Исто и за на школо не знам дали ти оде на интервју ја оди на интервју пред да се запиша на *Southampton University*, значи за се за колеџ за university за работа мислам дека ќе има *it will influence their opportunity*. Ако зборат со акцент или..може нема да има ама јас го имам осетено лично дека има *discrimination*. Особено откако Полјациите кога дојдеа кога се отворија границите повише Полјаци дојдеа Бугарите така да почнаа на работа Англичаните и тие што беа *friendly* стануват малце *unfriendly*. Затоа што има повише странци за работа. It's

very important for the kids not to have an accent to speak *perfect English*. *Just for that. It might not affect*, ама не знаеш колку работите се менат, нели.

‘We have a dialect even if you have been here all of your life, you have a dialect even if you have been here for 50 years, you are a foreigner for sure and sometimes it’s *uncomfortable*. But for the children, they have a perfect *dialect* you can’t tell that they are from a mixed marriage so they will have *different opportunities* when they apply for jobs, *they’re not gonna be discriminated*. Also, I don’t know if you had an interview...I had an interview before I enrolled at university, before I enrolled at *Southampton University*, so for everything, for college, for work I think it will influence their opportunity. If they speak with an accent...maybe they won’t...but I have felt it personally that there is *discrimination*. Especially after the borders opened there are more Poles and Bulgarians and at work the English people started, even those who were *friendly* now become a bit *unfriendly*. *It’s very important for the kids not to have an accent to speak perfect English. Just for that. It might not affect* but you never know how things might change, right?’

## Appendix I: Sample of fieldnotes

16 November 2014

Today I went to visit the Macedonian-Chinese family. They live in a terraced house. Chen, the father is Chinese from Hong Kong but he speaks a dialect called Hakka and he said that he understood Cantonese but the majority of the people in Hong Kong don't understand a word in Hakka because it's a minority language. He does not speak Hakka to their daughter, Ann at home. He wanted to take her to a Mandarin school but the school's policy was to take children who speak Mandarin at home and because this family did not speak it, they couldn't take her. Chen said that he had tried to learn Macedonian when Mira and he got married and he showed me a dictionary and a book with grammar exercises in Macedonian. But he said he quit it after a while because he found it too hard and he lost interest. Mira, the mother is Macedonian, and does not speak Chinese, she only knows how to address her husband's relatives properly. Now both Mira and Chen speak in English to Ann and between themselves. Ann only speaks Macedonian with her Macedonian grandmother when the grandmother visits the family from time to time, usually during summer holidays to take care of Ann. Both parents, Mira and Chen do not seem to have regular contact with their families, even though Chen's family lives in the UK, they don't see each other often. He does not stay in regular touch with his family and more often he speaks to the nephews because they are closer to his age (when he was born his sister was married). Mira's family is in Macedonia and she only sees her mother regularly. Mira and Chen explained that they did not talk a lot with Ann whereas the Macedonian grandmother and Ann talked a lot to each other. Ann tended to talk to her Macedonian grandmother more than with her parents because she was very close with her grandmother. Ann seemed to like her grandmother a lot because they did different things together like going shopping, playing, going to the park, etc. Ann said she also liked Chinese and Macedonian food. She liked noodles, rice and simit (a Macedonian kind of pastry). I noticed a photo of Ann and her friends on the wall and asked Ann about it. She explained that it was a school photo and told me about her friends. She had four best friends with different backgrounds: Romanian, Polish, Turkish and Chinese English. Ann seemed a bit confused about the last girl. She thought the girl was English and her dad said she was not English, she was Chinese. But then Ann said: 'No, she is English.' Then her dad asked her: 'What are you? Are you English or Chinese/Macedonian?' She said: 'I am English' Then I asked her: 'What about when you go in Macedonia?' She said:

‘English.’ I asked if she had been to China and she hasn’t. When I talked to Mira alone she explained that some of her husband’s sisters and other family did not speak English at all even though they were in the UK for many years. She did not seem to approve this and she also thought that her husband did not understand the majority language in Hong Kong and that they did not understand him so she found this unacceptable. She also talked to me mostly in English the first time I met her and this time as well and she said she thought in English and it was easier for her to express herself in English. She also seemed to be a little ashamed of her Macedonian dialect (She said: ‘We speak in kumanovski’ – a dialect in Macedonia). In order to avoid making her feel embarrassed I reassured her that I also come from a city in Macedonia where they speak a dialect and that I speak in that dialect with my own family. Both parents seemed to convey a sense of shame from their backgrounds and had decided to make their lives in England and to speak in English to their daughter.