

Polish Complementary Schools in Ireland: Language, Heritage, Capital

Agnieszka Kamila Pedrak

Thesis submitted for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy

Volume I: Thesis

Supervisors:

Prof. Lorraine Leeson

Dr. Breffni O'Rourke

Dr. Sarah Sheridan

School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences
Trinity College, Dublin

2024

Declaration

I declare that this thesis has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this or any other university and it is entirely my own work.

I agree to deposit this thesis in the University's open access institutional repository or allow the Library to do so on my behalf, subject to Irish Copyright Legislation and Trinity College Library conditions of use and acknowledgement.

I consent to the examiner retaining a copy of the thesis beyond the examining period, should they so wish (EU GDPR May 2018).

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Agnieszka Pedrak", is displayed within a light gray rectangular box.

Agnieszka Pedrak

Dublin, 30.04.2024

Summary

This research project explores the role of Polish complementary schools in Ireland in maintaining the linguistic and cultural heritage of Polish migrant children and their families. The primary focus of this research is to understand how these schools may influence the transmission of HL and culture to the young Polish migrant generation, as well as contribute to the (re)negotiation of identities and a sense of belonging in Polish migrant families.

The mixed-method design applied in this study incorporates both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The quantitative methods included an online questionnaire distributed to principals of Polish complementary schools and desk research that delved into national statistics overviewing Polish language provision in Irish mainstream schools and its uptake at the Leaving Certificate examination. Qualitative methods included language portraits created by children and semi-structured interviews conducted with migrant children, parents, and teachers who participated in Polish complementary schools in Ireland.

Through the theoretical lens of Family Language Policy, Cultural Capital and Investment in HL learning, this study seeks to uncover the reasons behind Polish transnational families' participation in these schools and their perceptions of the advantages and challenges of this form of education. Moreover, this research also aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how Polish complementary schools operate in Ireland, including their response to the COVID-19 pandemic and national lockdowns in 2020-2021. By achieving the above objectives, it offers unique insights into complementary HL education that have not been widely explored in previous research on migrant communities in Ireland, and that can contribute to the debate on policy and practice in national language education in Ireland and globally.

Acknowledgements



“Which is more important,” asked Big Panda, “the journey or the destination?”

“The company.” said Tiny Dragon.

James Norbury, *“Big Panda and Tiny Dragon”*, p. 12

I am eternally thankful to those who supported me throughout my PhD journey. My deepest appreciation goes to my supervisors, family, and friends for their constant companionship, understanding, encouragement, wisdom, and support. I am also grateful to the participants of my study - the children, families, teachers, and principals of Polish complementary schools - for their valuable insights, openness, and kindness. Additionally, I would like to express my thanks to the School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences at Trinity College Dublin for granting me a studentship and providing an environment for personal and academic growth.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Background, Context and Rationale.....	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Researcher Positionality Statement.....	2
1.3 Phenomenon of Polish complementary schools around the world	6
1.4 The Irish Context.....	13
1.4.1 Societal Bilingualism in Ireland.....	13
1.4.2 Past attempts at foreign language teaching in Ireland’s primary schools	17
1.4.3 Linguistic and cultural diversity in today’s Ireland.....	20
1.5 Polish migration to Ireland.....	25
1.5.1 Demographic overview	25
1.5.2 Polish Complementary Schools in Ireland.....	28
1.5.3 Previous Research on Polish Complementary Schools in Ireland	30
1.6 Aims of the Study.....	32
1.7 Rationale of the Research.....	33
1.8 Thesis Outline.....	34
1.9 Summary	36
Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework.....	38
2.1 Introduction	38
2.2 Past and Present Research on Childhood Bilingualism.....	39
2.2.1 Historical and Current Definition Attempts	39
2.2.2 Simultaneous and Sequential Bilinguals	43
2.2.3 Individual and societal multilingualism	44
2.2.4 Additive and Subtractive Bilingualism	46
2.3 Heritage Languages and Heritage Language Education	47

2.3.1 Heritage, community or minority language? An overview of terminology in use ...	47
2.3.2 Research on Heritage Language Education	51
2.3.3 Research on Translanguaging and Cross-Language Transfer.....	58
2.4 Linguistic Human Rights and Language Planning	60
2.4.1 Linguistic Human Rights in Global Perspective.....	60
2.4.2 Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education	68
2.5 Theoretical Framework.....	71
2.5.1 Habitus, Capital and Misrecognition in the Context of Migration	73
2.5.2 Identity and Investment in the Context of Language Education	77
2.5.3 Transnationalism and Belonging	81
2.5.4 Complementary School's Relevance to Language Policy and Family	83
2.6 Summary	87
Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology	89
3.1 Introduction.....	89
3.2 Focus of the Study and Research Questions	89
3.3 Research Design and Methodology	91
3.4 Research Paradigm and Philosophical Stance	94
3.5 Ethical Considerations	96
3.5.1 The Gatekeeper	98
3.5.2 Participant Information Leaflets and Informed Consent	98
3.5.3 Data Storage and Access.....	100
3.5.4 Data Transcription and Pseudonymisation	101
3.5.5 Potential Risks and Benefits of Participation	101
3.6 Research Methods.....	102
3.6.1 Desk Research.....	104

3.6.2 Anonymous Online Questionnaire	106
3.6.3 Semi-guided Individual Interviews	109
3.6.4 Language Portraits.....	119
3.7 Data Analysis Approaches.....	122
3.7.1 Descriptive Analysis of Quantitative Data	122
3.7.2 Reflexive Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Data	122
3.7.3 Data Translation	126
3.8 Limitations of the Methodology Used	126
3.9 Summary	129
Chapter 4: Polish among languages in Irish education	130
4.1 Introduction	130
4.2 MFLs and HLs in Irelands' Primary Schools.....	132
4.2.1 Primary Language Curriculum.....	132
4.2.2 Primary Curriculum Framework	136
4.2.3 Say 'Yes' to Languages Primary Sampler Module.....	140
4.3 Polish among Foreign and HLs in post-primary schools	143
4.3.1 Junior and Senior Cycles.....	143
4.3.2 Polish among Leaving Certificate Language Subjects.....	148
4.3.3 Linguistic requirements and opportunities at Ireland's Higher Education.....	154
4.4 Languages in Irish education in the eyes of migrant pupils, parents, and teachers ..	154
4.4.1 'So, there is really a lot to learn': Pupils' interest in learning languages	154
4.4.2 'My child was so (un)lucky': Irish schools' responses to linguistic diversity	160
4.4.3 'To make them aware': Polish migrants' involvement in promoting HL.....	167
4.5 Summary	176
Chapter 5: 'Miles apart but close at heart': Language, identity and belonging in the context of migration	180

5.1 Introduction.....	180
5.2 Language and Identity	181
5.2.1 Migrant children adapting language use across contexts.....	181
5.2.2 Knowledge of English and Irish as forms of cultural capital	191
5.3 ‘Home’ and Belonging.....	196
5.3.1 ‘I often think about what I could call my home’: Children’s views on home	196
5.3.2 ‘How much time does a person need to settle in?’ Parental perspectives on home	199
5.3.3 Parental ‘desire’ to keep children connected to the Polish heritage.....	209
5.4 Polish complementary school as a response to Polish migrants’ needs.....	215
5.4.1 Reasons for participating in Polish complementary schooling.....	215
5.4.2 Internalisation of Polishness through celebrating traditions and ‘togetherness’	221
5.4.3 Implications of Covid-19 on the social components of complementary schooling	228
5.5 Summary	230
Chapter 6: Polish complementary schools as educational settings.....	233
6.1 Introduction.....	233
6.2 Results of the Online Questionnaire	233
6.2.1 Polish complementary schools’ ways of operating.....	233
6.2.2 Goals of Polish Complementary Schools	238
6.2.3 Admission and Polish language entry requirements	240
6.2.4 Curriculum and Subjects Taught.....	241
6.2.5 Levels of education covered and grading system	242
6.2.6 Pupils and teachers in Polish schools	245
6.3 Findings of Semi-Guided Interviews.....	248
6.3.1 Variations in children’s and parents’ expectations towards Polish schools	248
6.3.2 Learning in Polish school perceived as beneficial but demanding.....	251

6.3.3 Children juggling Polish school commitments and personal priorities.....	254
6.3.4 Parental involvement and support	258
6.3.5 Teachers tailoring their educational approaches	262
6.4 Covid-19 implications on teaching and learning.....	267
6.5 Summary	270
Chapter 7: Discussion, Conclusions & Recommendations	275
7.1 Introduction	275
7.2 Discussion of Findings	276
7.2.1 Negotiation of belonging and identity in Polish migrant families in Ireland.....	276
7.2.2 Immigrants' HL and bi/multilingualism as (mis) recognised capital	282
7.2.3 Polish complementary schools catering for the needs of Polish migrants	286
7.2.4 Implications of Covid-19 on teaching and learning in Polish HL schools.....	290
7.3 Conclusions	294
7.4 Research Questions Revisited	304
7.4.1 Research Question 1	304
7.4.2 Research Question 2.....	306
7.4.3 Research Question 3.....	307
7.4.4 Research Question 4.....	309
7.5 Limitations of the Study	310
7.6 Implications and Recommendations for Policy and Practice	311
7.7 Dissemination of Findings and Future Research Directions.....	314
List of References.....	316

List of Tables

Table 1: Polish complementary schools in the USA between 1870 and 1933	9
Table 2: Polish complementary schools in the UK between 1950-1977	11
Table 3: Most commonly spoken foreign languages in Ireland (CSO, 2023)	23
Table 4: National background of primary school pupils in Ireland in 2022	24
Table 5: Polish nationals and Polish language speakers in Ireland between 2002-2022	27
Table 6: An overview of research methods and their rationale.....	103
Table 7: Online Questionnaire Layout and Rationale.....	107
Table 8: Examples of core interview questions for each group of participants	111
Table 9: Children participants	115
Table 10: Adult participants	117
Table 11: List of grey literature consulted for Desk Research.....	131
Table 12: Children’s attitudes towards MFL in primary school	139
Table 13: Participation in the Say ‘Yes’ to Languages Module in 2021-2024.....	140
Table 14: Say ‘Yes’ to Languages: Languages chosen in 2021-2024	142
Table 15: Number of post-primary schools teaching MFL between 2012 and 2022.....	144
Table 16: Curricular and non-curricular MFLs at LC Examinations in 2017-2023	149
Table 17: Leaving Certificate Higher Level Results. Polish 2006-2016	150
Table 18: Results of Polish Leaving Certificate Higher Level: 2017-2023	152
Table 19: Holidays celebrated in Polish complementary schools.....	221
Table 20: Characteristics of Polish complementary schools participating in this study.....	234
Table 21: Goals of Polish complementary schools in Ireland.....	239
Table 22: Levels of education covered in Polish complementary schools in Ireland.....	243
Table 23: Grading System in Polish Schools.....	244
Table 24: Numbers of pupils, teachers and volunteers participating in Polish schools	246
Table 25: Potential reasons for difficulties with hiring new teachers at HL school	247
Table 26: Implications of COVID-19 on Polish schools’ functioning in 2020-2021	268

List of Figures

Figure 1: National background of migrants in Ireland (CSO, 2023)	21
Figure 2: Number of Polish complementary schools in Ireland per county in 2023	29
Figure 3: A Continuum of L1/L2 Users by G. Valdes (2005)	41
Figure 4: Sample language repertoires of migrant bilinguals	42
Figure 5: Multidimensional model for researching HL schools by Liu and Hoare (2023)..	57
Figure 6: The Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP) Model by Cummins (2005)	59
Figure 7: Recent Changes in Ireland's Foreign Language Education	70
Figure 8: Interconnectedness of theoretical framework applied	72
Figure 9: Darvin and Norton's 2015 Model of Investment.....	80
Figure 10: Integrated Language Planning Model by Lo Bianco (2023)	85
Figure 11: Position of complementary schooling towards FLP	87
Figure 12: Language Portrait Template (A4 size)	121
Figure 13: Phases of Thematic Analysis by Braun and Clarke (2022)	123
Figure 14: Map of theme <i>Implications of Covid-19 on Polish schools</i>	125
Figure 15: Attitudes towards MFLs in the primary (NCCA, 2022b).....	138
Figure 16: Language Portrait by Aine (6 years old, 2nd generation).....	181
Figure 17: Language Portrait by Ada (9 years old, 2nd generation).....	182
Figure 18: Language Portrait by Izabela (10 years old, 2nd generation).....	186
Figure 19: Language Portrait by Damian (16 years old, gen. 1.5).....	188
Figure 20: Language Portrait by Weronika (10 years old, 2nd generation).....	190
Figure 21: Child-Centred Collaboration for Language Education Model	298

List of Abbreviations

CoE – Council of Europe

CSO – Central Statistics Office

DE – Department of Education (formerly DES – Department of Education and Skills)

ECML – European Centre for Modern Languages

EU – European Union

FLP – Family Language Policy

HL – Heritage Language

JC – Junior Cycle

LC – Leaving Certificate

LP – Language Portrait

MFL – Modern Foreign Language

MLPSI – Modern Languages in the Primary Schools Initiative

NCCA – National Centre for Curriculum and Assessment

ORPEG – Ośrodek Rozwoju Polskiej Edukacji za Granicą [Centre for Development of Polish Education Abroad]

PPLI – Post-Primary Languages Ireland

SC – Senior Cycle

UN – United Nations

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Chapter 1: Background, Context and Rationale

1.1 Introduction

In the past few decades, Ireland has experienced a significant increase in inward migration, leading to the emergence of various grassroots initiatives established by newcomers to preserve and pass down their linguistic and cultural heritage. An example of such an initiative is the Polish complementary schooling in Ireland, which has provided Polish language education outside the regular school hours to thousands of Polish migrant children at both primary and post-primary levels since 2005. However, despite their valuable contribution, complementary schools remain ‘invisible’ in both Irish society and the education system, and their role in fostering individual and societal multilingualism remains largely unexplored.

The recent Irish studies on language socialisation among Polish-Irish adolescents (Machowska-Kosciak, 2020) and family language policy in Polish transnational families in Ireland (Connaughton-Crean, 2020) have provided valuable insights into Polish complementary schooling. Nevertheless, our current understanding of this phenomenon in Ireland remains fragmented due to limited research and the lack of a comprehensive perspective. Therefore, I believe this research project represents the first study in Ireland to focus solely on Polish complementary schools at this scale and depth. It offers a holistic inquiry into these schools’ provision and goals and explores their perceptions among Polish families, such as the reasons behind Polish complementary schooling, the benefits that these settings offer to individuals and society at large, and the challenges that their communities face in today’s Ireland. Furthermore, this research is the first study in Ireland to provide insights into how Polish complementary schools responded to the Covid-19 pandemic and national lockdowns in 2020-2021.

The primary focus of this study is to investigate the role of Polish schools in HL maintenance and development, as well as in the (re)negotiation of identities and a sense of belonging in Polish migrant children, their families, and the wider Polish migrant community in Ireland. Moreover, this study offers a detailed contextual background that enriches the understanding of complementary education in Ireland and situates complementary schooling in a broader national context by considering recent changes in Ireland's foreign language

education, like the incorporation of immigrant languages into the Irish post-primary curriculum and the introduction of foreign languages into Irish primary schools.

Notably, this study is led by a researcher with firsthand experience as a complementary school teacher and a bilingual migrant mother in Ireland (see Section 1.2). This unique position as a researcher-practitioner has the potential to bridge the gap between research and the community and enhance awareness about community schooling by providing novel insights on HL education in Polish migrant communities in Ireland.

Finally, by delving into the experiences of Polish migrant families and their children, this project will also shed light on the role of complementary schools in fostering cultural and linguistic diversity, promoting social justice, and facilitating integration on both national and global scales within Ireland.

To enhance understanding of Polish complementary schooling in Ireland, this chapter sets up the stage for this study by providing contextual information, as well as outlining the aims and rationale of this research project. The chapter begins with the Researcher's Positionality Statement (Section 1.2). Section 1.3 provides an overview of Polish complementary schools globally. Section 1.4 introduces the Irish linguistic landscape in society and the classrooms. Demographical characteristics of the Polish migrant community in Ireland are presented in Section 1.5, along with general information on Polish complementary schools in Ireland and a summary of up-to-date research concerning schools conducted recently in Ireland. Sections 1.6 and 1.7 outline the aims and rationale of the present study.

1.2 Researcher Positionality Statement

Positionality refers to the researcher's worldview and the position adopted in a research study that may directly or indirectly influence each stage of the research process and their interpretation of data findings. It usually considers the researcher's position regarding three areas: the subject of the study, the research participants, and the research process and context (Darwin Holmes, 2020). Who the researcher is and how they perceive themselves, including their race, class, gender, ethnicity, educational background, faith/religion, and professional

and personal life experience, shape the researcher's identity and worldview and, hence, influence their multifaceted positionality in a research study (Bukamal, 2022). Although some of these factors are claimed to be more fluid than others, they all contribute to the researcher's worldview and their positionality within a research study to varying extents at different stages of the research process (ibid.). Any assumptions about a researcher's knowledge and identity based on misperceptions of their positionality may lead to misleading research projects (Darwin Holmes, 2020). Therefore, it seems crucial to start with a self-reflection on my background and beliefs as a researcher to "identify, construct, critique, and articulate their positionality" (Darwin Holmes, 2020, p. 2). In the following paragraphs, I attempt to reflect on my positionality within this research study through a self-reflection on my pre-existing beliefs, and both personal and professional experiences brought to the study, my motivation for conducting this research project, as well as my reflection on the implications of my positionality on various stages of the research process.

In this research study, I acknowledge my position as 'an insider', a researcher studying a topic I am familiar with and sharing some attributes with the researched community members, like culture or ethnic background (Hockey, 1993), as opposed to 'an outsider', which would be a researcher conducting a study outside of their background, about a topic they are not familiar with (Merton, 1972). Yet, the so called 'insider-outsider dichotomy' is seen here as rather of a fluid nature as these two opposite researcher's perceptions are not always easily separated (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Mercer, 2007), especially in the case of researchers of migrant background conducting their research in the context of migration (Bukamal, 2022), like in the case of this study. Being a Polish complementary school teacher with over 7 years of experience in the field and a Polish migrant mother to a primary school aged child in attendance at a Polish complementary school in Ireland has certainly positioned me in a unique role as a researcher, and reflected on each stage of the study conducted: my motivation for this research project, designing research questions, choosing methodological approach, creating research design, collecting data, interpreting the results, and composing final conclusions and recommendations.

Collaboration with complementary schools in Ireland and the UK for my Master's degree in Polish Philology, completed in 2015, allowed me to gain an initial insight into

complementary schooling and childhood bilingualism in the context of migration. It enhanced my keen interest in this area and forged my willingness to undertake PhD research to investigate it thoroughly. As a result of this collaboration, one of the complementary schools in Ireland offered me a teaching position upon completing my degree. In early 2016, I began to work as a Polish complementary school teacher, which led me to complete my post-graduate teaching qualifications later on. Initially, my motivation was to gain a better understanding of this type of school environment and build my experience as a practitioner in the field before deciding on a particular research problem to investigate. As I had a chance to work with various types of Polish complementary schools in Ireland, large and small, located in urban and rural areas, community (non-for-profit) and the so called ‘Embassy schools’ funded by the Polish government, I was able to see some differences and similarities among them in terms of the way they operate and provide their services to the local Polish community in Ireland. I have also been engaged in voluntary work with migrant families and teachers as part of the Mother Tongues organisation that emerged in 2017, and since then, I have continued to support and promote bilingualism in Ireland. Being a practitioner with a strong interest in research, opened the door for me to participate in and co-organise various development and networking opportunities, like educational projects, conferences, festivals and cultural events, which enhanced my insight into the collaboration between complementary schools, cultural institutions/organisations and migrant communities. The experience of being a migrant parent supporting HL in my child further enriched my perspective and strengthened my decision to undertake a research project focused on exploring the role of Polish complementary schools in Polish language and culture maintenance and development among Polish migrant families in Ireland.

Soon after starting this PhD journey in 2019, I realised that “Practitioners who undertake doctoral study find themselves entering a new world, the world of research” (Lotty, 2021, p. 851). Since the very start of my PhD project, I have been aware of my unique position as a researcher-practitioner who can bridge the gap between these “two worlds”, and I have acknowledged both the responsibility and risks that come with it through investing a lot of thought and self-reflection into my position at all stages of this project (Blythe et al., 2013; Kara, 2023; Lotty, 2021). Identifying myself as a student and practitioner (Kara, 2023) enhanced my awareness of the necessity of applying appropriate reflexivity practices and

strategies to mitigate a research bias risk and inform my practice performance (Martyn, 2000; Olmos-Vega et al., 2022). Therefore, I undertook a research journal to inform my reflexive process throughout the entire study (Bassot, 2020; Brown, 2021). It also allowed me to understand better how my subjectivity, based on my experience and familiarity with the context of Polish complementary schooling as a practitioner, can influence this research project (Kara, 2023; Mercer, 2007; Olmos-Vega et al., 2022).

From the very beginning, it was of great importance to me that this research project was an opportunity to bring the voice of the under-researched complementary schools' communities, especially attending children, as well as inform policy and practice in the field of HL education in Ireland and beyond. Therefore, the main reflection that accompanied me from the start, and strengthened my position as the insider researcher, was that of the purpose of this study: to explore the researched phenomena and show it from multiple rich perspectives, rather than to prove any hypothesis posited beforehand. This idea is reflected in the study design in two ways. Firstly, through the choice of methodological approach that mixes qualitative and quantitative paradigms in order to explore the research problem from different perspectives. Secondly, through designing research questions that allow for bringing different perspectives as they remain explorative in nature and reflect richness of narratives collected. Particular attention was given to ethical considerations (see section 3.5) to avoid the risk of research bias and allow the participant to feel safe and comfortable during the interview process.

As the success of data collection might be influenced by what the participants know and believe about the researcher and the study (Drever, 1995; Powney, 1987), I have always approached the study participants with a proper introduction of myself as a researcher-practitioner, and explanation of the research project aims, data collection process and the risk and benefits associated with their participation. It seemed to me that such an introduction, followed by answering their questions, helped them to feel relaxed and safe, which enhanced their willingness to share their opinions during the interview. An insider researcher may be perceived as, under some circumstances, more likely to find themselves in an advantageous position when researching the group they are part of, as they may relate to the participants' experiences and viewpoints better because of shared characteristics, similar experiences and

familiar sets of values, especially when many participants were female, and where the researcher is also female, like in case of this study, it potentially enhances the likelihood of high rapport, communication and honesty due to sharing the same ethnic background and the same gender (Oakley, 1981). Indeed, most adult participants (both teachers and parents, male and female) in my study seemed to perceive my experience as a migrant mother and teacher as a positive factor which encouraged their participation in the interviews. Sharing a Polish migrant background, although it is understood, experienced, and valorised differently by each individual, might have been another helpful factor in developing a trusted relationship with the study participants and, thus, enabled a deeper insight into the researched community. Yet, as different topics arose during interviews, I often found myself on a different point of the ‘insider/outsider continuum’ (Hockey, 1993; Mercer, 2007; Merton, 1972). When interviewing males and children, on many occasions, I felt like ‘an outsider’ or ‘an in-between’ due to the different nature of their positions, roles, and experiences within the Polish complementary schools’ communities and/or Polish migrant families compared to those of Polish migrant mothers and teachers that I could relate to more. Having insight into these different perspectives has made my research even more interesting and worthwhile.

In conclusion, it should be said that through this research study, I was offered various opportunities for self-reflection, leading to my development in both areas: as a researcher and as a practitioner (Kara, 2023). Therefore, I believe that as much as being a practitioner influenced my positionality within this research project, being a researcher has also reshaped my practice as a complementary school teacher and influenced my understanding of being a Polish migrant mother in modern-day Ireland.

1.3 Phenomenon of Polish complementary schools around the world

Community-based linguistic, cultural, religious, and educational initiatives have been established by migrants and ethnic minorities for a long time, even before the global migration policies eased the movement of groups and individuals across the world (Fishman, 2001; Gołębiowski, 2021; Koprukowniak, 1995; Li Wei, 2006; Miodunka, 2003; Steenwegen et al., 2022a). These initiatives include complementary schools, also known as ‘HL schools’, ‘Saturday schools’, or ‘supplementary schools’, which are set up by members of migrant or

ethnic minority groups, such as migrant parents or teachers, to meet the linguistic, cultural, social and educational needs of ethnic minority children, their families, and wider communities (Creese, 2009; Creese et al., 2006; Cruickshank et al., 2023; Kagan et al., 2017; Koprukowniak, 1995; Lamb, 2020; Li Wei, 2006; Liu & Hoare, 2023; Maylor et al., 2010; Nordstrom, 2016, 2019; Steenwegen et al., 2022b). Complementary schools operate outside of the mainstream educational system and, hence, often remain unnoticed or marginalised in the countries where they are located. Some of these schools aim to supplement migrant children's education by providing additional instruction in mainstream curriculum subjects, while others focus on religious education (Maylor et al., 2010). However, this study specifically focuses on Polish complementary schools that offer opportunities for HL learning and exploration of cultural, historical, and geographical knowledge about migrants' country of origin. With such objectives, these schools aim to support the development of migrant children's language skills and provide them with opportunities to build multicultural identities (Creese et al., 2006; Lamb, 2020; Li Wei, 2006; Liu & Hoare, 2023; Maylor et al., 2010).

Polish complementary schooling worldwide has a rich historical context, dating back to the 19th century when thousands of Polish people sought new homes after the failure of the November Uprising (1839-1831) and January Uprising (1863-1864). The first Polish complementary school in France was established in 1842 by Polish migrants who settled there as part of the 'Great Emigration' wave. Similarly, in other countries that received Polish migrants, the first Polish complementary schools were established between the 1850s and 1880s, such as in England (1854), the USA (1854), Brazil (1876), and Australia (1884) (Koprukowniak, 1995). Over the years, Polish migration history has shown that Polish complementary schools around the world have served not only to teach the HL but also as hubs that bring together local Polish migrant communities, cultivate Polish cultural and religious traditions, and offer opportunities for developing the sense of Polish identity to the youngest Polish generations growing up abroad. This is evident in the words of Father Wacław Kruszka, the author of *Historia polska w Ameryce* [Polish history in America] published in 1905:

Polish schools are the best sources and seeds of Polishness and patriotism on foreign American soil. In these [Polish] parish schools, Polish children not only learn what

they learn in [American] public schools, i.e., read, write, and count, but they also learn their faith in God and love for our homeland – Poland. (Kruszka, 1905, p. 84 cited in Gołębiowski, 2021, p. 439).

Polish complementary schools have traditionally been closely associated with migration patterns of the Polish diaspora in their location (see: Fajkowski, 1999; Radzik, 1992; Kopruckowniak, 1999; Szydłowska-Ceglowska, 1992). These schools have also relied on the opportunities and challenges that exist within the frameworks of their host countries, including their economies, political systems, education, and societal attitudes towards immigration and the linguistic and cultural heritage of newcomers present in both the host society as well as within the Polish migrant community.

Over the decades, the number of Polish complementary schools around the world has been greatly influenced by the influx and outflow of Polish migrants due to the political and economic situation in both home and host countries (see: Radzik, 1992; Gołębiowski, 2021; Kopruckowniak, 1995). For instance, the establishment of Polish complementary schools in the United States remains linked to the economic migration of Poles to North America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Notably, the growth of Polish complementary schools in the United States from 1890 to 1920 remains closely associated with the establishment of the Polish Roman Catholic parishes in the US, besides which Polish complementary schools operated (Gołębiowski, 2021). Immigrants from Poland residing in the United States were keen to preserve and pass down both, their language and culture. Therefore, upon settlement, they typically founded a parish, built a church, and established a school to educate their children in the Polish language and ensure the continuity of Polish Catholic traditions (Gołębiowski, 2021).

Table 1 illustrates the establishment of Polish parishes and complementary schools between the 1870s and 1930s in relation to the number of Polish nationals living in the USA at the time.

Table 1: Polish complementary schools in the USA between 1870 and 1933

Year	Number of Polish migrants	Number of Polish Parishes	Number of Polish complementary schools	Total number of pupils attending these schools
1870	40,000	17	6	No data
1880	260,000	75	35	No data
1887	No data	No data	75	14,000
1890	800,000	170	100	No data
1900	1,500,000	390	150	70,000
1910	2,800,000	512	330	No data
1914	No data	No data	395	No data
1920	3,400,000	760	511	260,000
1933	4,000,000	830	560	300,000

Note. Adapted from “Szkolnictwo polskie w Stanach Zjednoczonych” [Polish Education in the United States] by J. Gołębiowski, 2021, *Studia polonijne*, 42, 439-458.

After 1930, interest in Polish complementary education began to decline due to the economic crisis in the USA, which made it difficult for many Poles to provide their children with complementary education (Gołębiowski, 2021). This was followed by a growing trend towards assimilation among Polish immigrants in the USA since the 1940s, resulting in an increased diversity within the Polish community, due to the influx of migrants from other countries settling in their neighbourhood and an increase in mixed marriages, which also contributed to the decrease in the number of Polish complementary schools operating across the country (Gołębiowski, 2021).

Polish community efforts to support the Polish language and culture through complementary schools in the UK can also be traced back to the 19th century (Paradowska, 1992). However, it was only during World War II (WWII) that these initiatives became highly organized and widespread (Radzik, 1992). In the late 19th and early 20th century, the Polish Society in London established in 1886, played a key role in providing assistance to Polish immigrants. Meanwhile, the Polish Catholic Mission, founded in 1894, offered pastoral care and established the first Polish nursery in the UK (Paradowska, 1992). With time, Polish migrants formed numerous associations and organisations throughout the host country, creating a supportive network for the cultural and social wellbeing of their community. A few of these associations established Polish complementary schools (Paradowska, 1992). Over time, the size of the Polish community in the UK has changed noticeably. During WWII,

thousands of Polish soldiers from various countries arrived in the UK from different fronts, as well as members of the Polish government-in-exile and civilians. The nature of Polish emigration in the UK shifted from economic to political. Between 1945 and 1946, approximately 250,000 Poles lived in Great Britain, of which 60-70,000 were Polish soldiers (Serwański, 1992). From 1946 to 1978, 55,784 Poles naturalized in Britain (ibid.). A significant portion of the Polish community resided in London, which was also the centre of Polish political and cultural life (Habielski, 2000). Already during WWII, Polish complementary schools emerged to provide Polish education to Polish children and youth learning in the British education system.

After WWII, the Polish Resettlement Act (1947) mandated the British Ministry of Education to oversee and finance Polish education in the UK. As a result, the Committee for the Education of Poles in Great Britain was established in 1947 (Radzik, 1992). This led to the creation of various types of Polish education in the UK, including Polish kindergartens and primary and post-primary schools which Polish children attended as their regular (weekdays) schools. Nevertheless, in these schools, over time, Polish started to be replaced with English. Polish branches at UK universities were also established at the time; for instance, a Polish pedagogical course was opened in Edinburgh, and the Polish Pedagogical Centre was established at the University of Edinburgh (Chmielewski, 2021; Sulimirski, 1955). Graduates of these courses played a crucial role in building Polish complementary schools between the 1950s and 1970s. In 1954, when this committee dissolved, Polish schools founded by the British government were closing, and Polish students were integrated into the British mainstream schooling system. As a response, Polish migrant parents across the UK established multiple Polish Saturday schools to provide children with opportunities to learn the Polish language and culture outside of the British mainstream school hours (Radzik, 1986). These schools rented rooms in parishes or mainstream schools and taught Polish language, history, geography, and religion.

As Table 2 illustrates, the 1960s and 1970s saw the greatest activity and development of Polish complementary schools nationwide.

Table 2: Polish complementary schools in the UK between 1950-1977

Year	Number of Polish complementary schools	Total number of pupils attending these schools
1950	10	250
1952	68	1224
1954	128	3930
1960	150	5000
1965	110	7000
1970	95	6992
1975	93	6962
1977	81	5053
1989	56	2600

Note. Based on: “Społeczność polska w Wielkiej Brytanii w latach 1945-1990” [Polish community in Great Britain between 1945-1990] by T. Radzik, (in) *Polonia w Europie* [Polish diaspora in Europe], B. Szydłowska-Ceglowska (Ed.), Poznań 1992, p. 460.

To support these schools, in 1952, the Association of Polish Teachers Residing in Great Britain (later the Association of Polish Teachers Abroad) authored the first curriculum for Polish complementary schools in the UK. Polska Macierz Szkolna (Polish Educational Association) resumed its activities in 1953 and until today, it keeps serving as an umbrella organisation to Polish complementary schools in the UK, offering, among others, training and conferences for teachers. Nevertheless, there was a marked decline in the 1980s and 1990s interest in the educational offer of Polish schools in the UK. In 1981, there were 68 Polish schools in Great Britain; in 1983, there were 64 schools; and in 1989, there were 56 schools with a total number of approximately 2,600 students (Radzik, 1992). At the time, second and third-generation Polish migrants in the UK (the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Poles who arrived in the 1940s and 1950s) often faced linguistic challenges of limited exposure to the Polish language. Textbooks from Poland and an outdated Polish complementary school curriculum made it even harder for them. Therefore, many Polish complementary schools in the UK closed by the 1990s (Radzik, 1992).

It is also notably that in some Polish communities around the world, such as in the US, Brazil and Ireland, the election of Cardinal Karol Wojtyła as Pope John Paul II in 1978 and the rise of Poland’s Solidarity Movement that took leadership in the Central and Eastern Europe in the fight for freedom from the communistic regime in the late 1980s, inspired and renewed interest in preserving Polishness among Polish migrant communities globally

(Gołębiowski, 2021; Orzeł-Dereń & Sufa, 2021). For example, despite not being a popular destination for Polish migrants before 2004, the visit of newly elected Pope John Paul II in 1979 to Ireland presented a unique opportunity for Polish migrants across the country to come together. As a result, they established the Irish Polish Society, the oldest Polish cultural organisation still active in Ireland today (Płachecki, 2015). In 1980, after Pope John Paul II visited Brazil, the local Polish community was inspired to preserve and promote their Polish linguistic and cultural heritage. As a result, two organisations were established, Polbras and Braspol, to promote the use of the Polish language and explore the traditions of the Polish migrant community in Brazil, which has a rich history of settlement spanning over 150 years (Miodunka, 2003; Orzeł-Dereń & Sufa, 2021). Since 1993, Polish diaspora congresses have been organized in Latin America to explore new opportunities for collaboration with Poland that arose after 1989 (Orzeł-Dereń & Sufa, 2021).

Currently, the database run by the Polish Centre for Development of Polish Education Abroad lists 1227 Polish complementary schools around the world, of which 220 are located in Great Britain, 116 in Germany, 155 in the United States, 44 in Ireland, 22 in the Netherlands, and 20 in Australia¹. However, it is important to note that these numbers may not accurately reflect the actual scale of Polish complementary education as schools voluntarily add themselves to the database without any obligation to do so. Nevertheless, since the enlargement of the European Union in 2004, the number of Polish complementary schools in Europe has significantly increased due to the large migration of Polish people across the continent, resulting in the establishment of new schools and the expansion of existing ones in the countries where Polish families have settled.

The historical context of Polish complementary schools presented above sets the stage for this research, which aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of Polish complementary schools in today's Ireland. As shown above, the context of complementary schooling remains deeply intertwined with the historical, social, cultural and economic circumstances of migrant communities in their countries of residence, as much as it is embedded in major political changes in their home countries, and globally. Therefore,

¹ Baza danych szkół [Database of Polish schools], ORPEG, <https://www.orpeg.pl/db/web/database/115> [Accessed on 10.04.2024]

while research on various ethnic and migrant complementary schools in different countries provides valuable insights, findings should not be generalisable across migrant communities globally (Nordstrom, 2016) as each complementary schooling happens in the unique dynamic of power relations shaping their provision in particular time and place.

1.4 The Irish Context

1.4.1 Societal Bilingualism in Ireland

When discussing complementary schooling in Ireland, it's essential to recognize the country's intricate relationship with its own national language, Irish. Like many migrant communities striving to preserve their national languages in Ireland, the Irish language faces numerous similar challenges. To comprehend the role of immigrant HLs in Irish education and society, one should first grasp the linguistic landscape of Ireland as the fate of immigrant HLs here remains influenced not just by their speakers but also by a variety of economic, political, and sociological powers within the broader national context.

Article 8 of the Constitution of Ireland states that both Irish and English are the state's official languages. The Irish language is recognized as the national language and first official language of Ireland, while the English language is the other official language of the state. Since the introduction of The Irish Sign Language Act in 2017, Irish Sign Language (ISL) has been recognized as a native language of Ireland.

One dimension of the complexity of Ireland's linguistic profile lies in the ability and frequency of the Irish language use among the country's population. As the national and official language of Ireland, Irish is a much less commonly spoken language within the state population than English, with 40.4 per cent (1,873,997 people) of the state population aged 3 years and over able to speak Irish (Central Statistics Office [CSO], 2023). Irish is a compulsory subject taught in Irish education from the beginning of primary school to post-primary school. However, 29 per cent of Irish speakers in Ireland (551,993 people) speak Irish daily only within the education system (CSO, 2023), which includes students and professionals engaged in the public educational sector. The frequency of speaking Irish only outside the educational system remains low as only 71,968 people in Ireland stated to speak

Irish daily outside the education system, and 472,887 (25 per cent of all Irish speakers in the country) reported never using the language (CSO, 2023). Moreover, over 30% of respondents aged between 6 and 19 claimed no ability to speak Irish (CSO, 2023). In 2022, 55 per cent of all Irish speakers in Ireland reported they could not speak Irish well, 32 per cent could speak the language well, and 10 per cent indicated they could speak it very well (CSO, 2023). Despite its low frequency of use, the Irish language receives financial support from institutional programmes and national policies that aim to reinforce its position within Ireland (Walsh, 2022), setting it apart from immigrant minority languages spoken throughout the country.

Another aspect of Ireland's linguistic complexity is the distribution of Irish speakers throughout the country and the entire island of Ireland. Although the language is statistically much less commonly spoken than English, Irish remains the main language spoken in communal settings and/or households in Irish language speech communities and Gaeltacht, geographical areas located mostly in the west of Ireland (Ceallaigh & Dhonnabhain, 2015). Therefore, Gaeltacht has traditionally been attached a symbolic value of being at the heart of the Irish nation's cultural identity (Johnson, 1993). Irish is also spoken in Northern Ireland, where it is taught as an optional subject in some schools in Northern Ireland. The 2010 census in Northern Ireland revealed that 11 per cent of the state had some ability in Irish. Results of the 2021 census in Northern Ireland revealed an increase of over 43,700 people (compared to the 2010 census) in the Irish-speaking population (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency [NISRA], 2022). A great achievement for the Irish language speakers in Northern Ireland was undoubtedly the long-awaited recognition of the Irish language as a minority language in the northern state by The Identity and Language (Northern Ireland) Act 2022.

Attitudes toward the Irish language can be viewed as another aspect of the complexity of Ireland's linguistic profile. The Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) report (Darmody & Daly, 2015) found that negative attitudes towards the Irish language are more prevalent among primary and post-primary pupils in the Republic. These attitudes may be influenced by how Irish is taught in schools. However, the report also noted that adults in both the Republic and Northern Ireland generally have more positive attitudes toward the language, with 67% of respondents in the Republic and 45% in Northern Ireland expressing

positive feelings about Irish. The report also highlighted that attitudes towards Irish and its frequency of use are determined by factors such as language learning in schools, opportunities for using the language outside of the classroom, and attitudes and language practices within families (Darmody & Daly, 2015). These findings are particularly relevant in the context of this study as they may also impact the perceptions of the importance of foreign/HL education in Irish primary and post-primary schools for pupils, parents, and educators.

To gain a better understanding of the attitudes of the Irish population toward Irish and English in Ireland, it is necessary to provide a brief overview of the historical dimension. Ireland was under British rule for over 700 years following the Norman invasion in the late 12th century. During this time, the Irish language was suppressed by medieval laws and then prohibited since the early 1700s (Crowley, 2000). An interesting response to the penal laws introduced in 1695, which forbid Catholic education, was the establishment of Irish hedge schools in the 18th and early 19th centuries. These secret schools provided education to Irish children in both Irish and English (Lyons, 2016). In the 19th century, the attitudes towards and the frequency of using the Irish language among the Irish people changed. This shift was linked to the poverty among Irish-speaking communities, the ban on the use of Irish among school children that was introduced in 1831, and the high death and emigration rates during the Great Famine (1845-1849) (Ceallaigh & Dhonnabhain, 2015).

Due to the impact of the Famine, economic policies from Westminster, and the gradual urbanisation of Ireland, English began to be perceived as the language of wealth and trade due to its status in Ireland's business at the time (Johnson, 1993; Ceallaigh & Dhonnabhain, 2015). English gradually displaced the Irish language in the hedge schools, as many Irish parents at the time began to see English as a practical educational opportunity for their children's future (Lyons, 2016). It was also during the 19th century when the Gaeltacht (areas along the west coast of Ireland where the Irish language was primarily used within local communities and Irish homes) started to be seen as the cultural heartland of the country (Johnson, 1993). In 1893, Conradh na Gaeilge (Gaelic League) was established to promote the Irish language. By that time, the number of Irish speakers had declined to about 14% of the Irish population (Johnson, 1993).

In the early 20th century, the Irish people tried reviving their native language. After Ireland gained independence in 1922, the Free State Government aimed to promote the Irish language and preserve Irish-speaking areas in the west of the country. Irish became a compulsory primary school subject in 1922, and the 1937 Constitution established it as the national and first official language of Ireland (Ceallaigh & Dhonnabhain, 2015). Unfortunately, despite these cultural initiatives, the government at the time neglected the long-standing economic issues in the Gaeltacht, leading to economic struggles in the most culturally successful region of Ireland and a decline in the number of Irish speakers in these areas (Johnson, 1993). In 1957, the government published *An Caighdeán Oifigiúil*, the official standard for writing in the Irish language. By the 1970s, the number of schools teaching in Irish had significantly declined as the Government allowed more focus on oral Irish rather than teaching through the medium of Irish (Ceallaigh & Dhonnabhain, 2015). In the 1960s and 1970s, parents advocating for the Irish language lobbied the State to establish Irish-medium primary schools with immersion in the Irish language (Mhic Mhathúna & Nic Fhionnlaoich, 2021).

In 1999, due to the Good Friday Agreement 1998, Foras na Gaeilge, a cross-border organisation promoting the Irish language, was established. The Education Act 1998 also contributed to efforts to increase the daily use of Irish in schools and society and support the maintenance of Irish as the primary language in the Gaeltacht region (Ceallaigh & Dhonnabhain, 2015). The Official Languages Act 2003 brought the Irish language to the public services sector, ensuring that people in Ireland can access public bodies and offices using either of the state's official languages. Another development included promoting the use of the Irish language through radio and TV (Day & Walsh, 2020). The Broadcasting Act 2009 obliges all public and private radio broadcasters to include the Irish language in their programs. One of the aims of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland is to promote and support the development of broadcasting services in the Irish language. Despite the legislation, the Irish language seems marginalised in Ireland's English-medium radio stations broadcasting (Walsh & Day, 2018). This is especially important considering the recent report published by the European Broadcasting Union (EBU-MIS, 2022), revealing that radio remains the most trusted medium in Ireland for the 12th year.

In 2010, *the 20-Year (2010-2030) Strategy for the Irish Language* was introduced by the Government of Ireland (GoI, 2010) to promote the Irish language within education and community and support the maintenance of Irish in Gaeltacht and outside. The number of Irish-medium schools in Ireland continued to grow; by 2021/22, there were 152 Gaelscoileanna (primary schools) and 29 Gaelcholaisti (post-primary schools) outside the Gaeltacht. From October 2022 to July 2023, the Department of Education (DE) conducted a public consultation process to inform the development of a new policy for Irish-medium education outside of the Gaeltacht to increase the number of children enrolled in Irish-medium education and foster deeper community engagement with Irish-medium schools.

In 2017, the Irish Sign Language Act was enacted to formally recognize Irish Sign Language (ISL) as a native/preferred language of the Deaf community in Ireland. The Act ensures the right of ISL users to preserve and develop their language. Public bodies are required to offer free interpretation services to ISL users accessing statutory entitlements. The Act also sets out specific obligations for legal proceedings, education, and broadcasting (National Disability Authority [NDA], 2021). Regarding education, ISL classes must be available to parents/guardians, siblings, and grandparents of a deaf child. A program should also be established to provide ISL support to children attending school whose primary language is ISL. Additionally, ISL training should be available in higher education, and minimum qualifications for teachers of children who are deaf or hard of hearing should be established (NDA, 2021).

1.4.2 Past attempts at foreign language teaching in Ireland's primary schools

Since the inception of the national education system in 1922, English and Irish have been the only two mandatory languages taught in all of Ireland's mainstream schools, both at primary and post-primary levels. In English-medium schools where English is the first language of instruction (L1), all subjects except Irish are taught through English, while Irish is taught as a second language (L2). Irish is the primary language of instruction (L1) in Irish-medium schools within and outside Gaeltacht, with English taught as a second language (L2) there. Foreign languages are offered as subjects in Irish post-primary schools but are not mandatory. The new *Primary Curriculum Framework* (DE, 2023) introduces modern foreign language

(MFL) or ISL classes as an integrated part of Irish primary education for the first time on a national level.

Nevertheless, the place and role of all languages in Ireland's education system have been a subject of national debates for many decades (Kellaghan et al., 2004; National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), 2008). With the publication of the *Report of the Board of Studies for Languages* in 1987, it has become clear that a comprehensive approach to languages in curriculum, classroom, and students' overall educational experience was necessary (Little, 2003; NCCA, 2005a, 2005b). Since then, the long process of changing mindsets and approaches to all languages in Ireland's education (Irish, English, and foreign languages) has begun and new policy has proposed introducing important changes to Ireland's language education, such as integrated language learning and teaching language awareness (see: Batardière et al., 2022; DE, 2019; DES, 2023; Keogh-Bryan, 2019; Little, 2003; NCCA, 1999a, 1999b, 2001a, 2001b, 2005b, 2008; Ó Duibhir & Cummins, 2012).

In the early 1990s, the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) published the results of its investigation on foreign language provision based on data collected from 1834 mainstream primary schools. It revealed that despite MFLs not being part of the primary curriculum at the time, 23.8% of schools already offered foreign language classes. However, these were usually provided after school hours and required parents to pay fees (Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO), 1991). French was the most popular foreign language offered in schools. It is interesting to note that Irish-medium and multi-denominational schools were among the schools most likely to provide such classes. Most of the schools used either their existing staff or hired external teachers and teachers from other countries for this purpose. This was in line with many parents' desire for their children to receive foreign language classes, as advocated by the National Parents' Council in 1989 (NCCA, 2008).

In the late 1990s, a successful initiative was undertaken to introduce foreign languages into the primary sector on a project basis. In December 1997, the Minister of Education and Science launched the Pilot Project for Modern Languages in Primary Schools (1998-2001), known as the Modern Languages in Primary Schools Initiative (MLPSI) since 2001. The project began in September 1998, and 270 primary schools participated nationwide

(NCCA, 2005a). The number of participating schools varied yearly due to a limited capacity, initially with some schools on a waiting list. Primary schools were given the option to either use their own teacher or staff member or to involve a peripatetic language teacher to introduce German, Italian, Spanish, or French to pupils of 5th and 6th grade. In total, up to 15% of all primary schools in Ireland participated in the pilot project (Royal Irish Academy [RIA], 2011). NCCA prepared *Draft Curriculum Guidelines* (NCCA, 1999a) and *Teacher Guidelines* (NCCA, 2001b) and financed other materials to support schools participating in the project. The project aimed mainly to enhance language learning in primary schools and to raise awareness among children towards the importance of respecting other cultures (NCCA, 2001b).

In 1999, the *Primary School Curriculum* was published by the Government of Ireland (GoI, 1999). It was prepared by the NCCA, which established committees representing partners and interests in primary education. The curriculum consisted of six main areas: Language, Mathematics, Social, environmental and scientific education, Arts education, Physical education, and Social, personal and health education. It was designed in line with recommendations of the *Report of the Review Body on Primary Curriculum* published in 1990 and based on philosophical fundamentals of the previous revision of primary school curriculum, *Curaclam na Bunsciole* published in 1971 (DES, 1999). The curriculum reflected the principles and aspirations of both the Education Act from 1998² and the National Convention on Education 1994. Languages covered in the language area of the curriculum were Gaeilge (Irish) and English. Yet, the document also mentioned that a third language's possible contribution towards pupils' language acquisition should be taken into account in the context of the success of the Modern Languages in Primary School project.

In 2005, NCCA recommended that the decision on foreign language education in primary schools should be deferred due to the implementation of the *Primary School Curriculum* and overload (NCCA, 2008). In 2012, the government made the decision to abolish the Modern Languages in Primary Schools Initiative despite its success in nearly 550 participating schools (MLPSI, 2012). The decision of Ireland to cease the successful project came as quite a surprise, given the country's prior commitment to the Barcelona objective,

² <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1998/act/51/enacted/en/html>

which aimed to encourage multilingualism among EU member states and ensure that every individual could communicate in at least two additional languages besides their native tongue. Additionally, both the Royal Irish Academy (2011) and the Council of Europe (DES & CoE, 2008) recommended that the Irish government formulate a languages-in-education policy and furnish the requisite funding and resources for its execution. The Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (2005) also recommended integrating foreign language provision into primary schooling to enhance MFL knowledge as students' life skills that are valuable in the social and economic dimensions of today's European and global contexts. Around the same time, the Irish government launched the *National Strategy: Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life 2011-2020*, aiming to improve literacy and numeracy skills among children and young people (DES, 2011). However, it was viewed by some as prioritizing the development of English literacy skills at the expense of primary foreign language education, which could have reinforced the widespread perception that learning English alone is enough, already common in Ireland and other countries where English is the main language spoken by most of the population (Devitt & O'Murchadha, 2021). This belief seems to have been reflected in the Irish education system for decades as, until recently, the study of an MFL was not mandatory at any level, be it primary, post-primary, or third level.

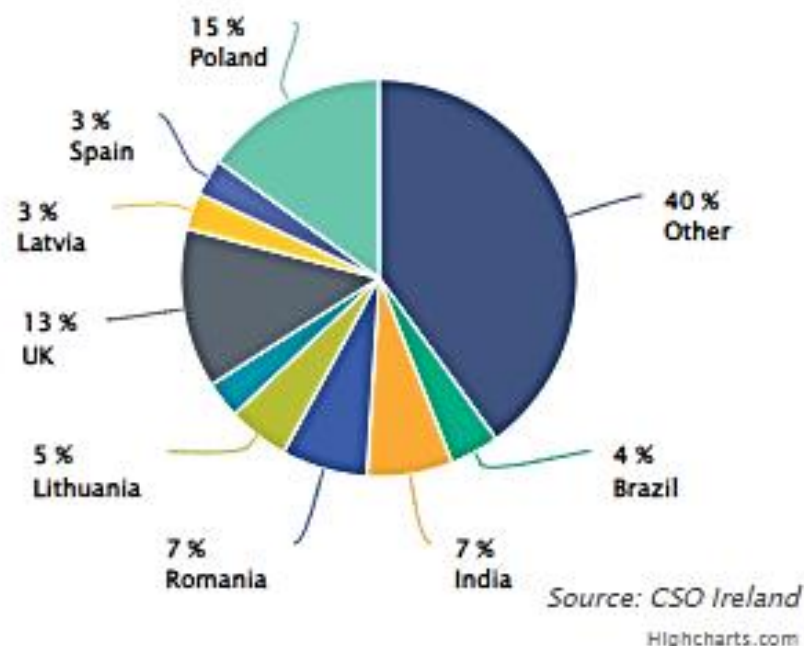
1.4.3 Linguistic and cultural diversity in today's Ireland

Before the economic boom between 1995 and 2008, often referred to as the 'Celtic Tiger', Ireland was a country with high levels of outward migration (Mac Sharry, 2001; McAleese, 2000). However, the economic growth during this period brought about considerable social and economic changes, transforming Ireland into a country characterized by a high inward migration, including returning Irish nationals, and foreigners arriving from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds (Mac Sharry, 2001; McAleese, 2000). Many EU nationals, particularly those from Poland and other newly admitted EU member states, migrated to Ireland and secured employment following the European Union's expansion in 2004 when Ireland implemented an open border policy (Central Statistics Office [CSO], 2007). In the years that followed, there was a notable increase in both economic and chain migration, with family members of those already working in the country also joining them.

In recent years, Ireland has continued to be a popular destination for migrants and asylum seekers (Murphy & Sheridan, 2023). Due to current international conflicts and aggression, Ireland has recently welcomed thousands of refugees from diverse backgrounds, such as arrivals from Serbia and Ukraine (CSO, 2023, 2024). Many of these individuals come from diverse backgrounds and cultures, seeking a better life and greater opportunities. They bring with them their languages, cultures, and traditions, as well as skills and experiences, adding to the rich tapestry of Irish society.

The national Census conducted in April 2016 recorded 535,475 non-Irish nationals of over 200 different nationalities who arrived in Ireland from 180 countries (CSO, 2017). Census 2022 recorded a further increase in Ireland's population diversity, revealing the number of almost 632,000 non-Irish nationals, accounting for 12% of the state population (CSO, 2023).

Figure 1: National background of migrants in Ireland (CSO, 2023)



Note. Non-Irish population usually resident and present in the State by citizenship (%), 2022, In *Census of Population 2022 – Summary Results* (CSO, 2023). Retrieved on 23.12.2023 from <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cpsr/censusofpopulation2022-summaryresults/migrationanddiversity/>

Despite a 24% decrease in the number of Polish nationals in Ireland between 2016 and 2022, Polish people constituted the largest migrant community for the third time in Ireland's history: firstly, in 2011, with 122,585 people (CSO, 2012), then in 2016, 122,585 persons (CSO, 2017), and in 2022, 93,680 people (CSO, 2022). Polish nationals also constituted the largest group among all newcomers residing in Ireland in 2022, accounting for 15% (see Figure 1). Other largest non-Irish communities residing in the state in 2022 included UK citizens (83,347) followed by Indian (45,449), Romanian (43,323), Lithuanian (31,177), Brazilian (27,338), Italian (18,319), Latvian (18,300) and Spanish citizens (17,953). A 68.7 % increase in the number of Romanian people present in the country was noted in the 2016 census, along with a 56.7% increase in the number of Brazilian nationals (CSO, 2017). While Romanian and Brazilian communities continued to increase, Indian, Ukrainian, Croatian, Italian, Spanish, and Chinese citizens were also among the groups, which grew rapidly between 2016 and 2022 (CSO, 2022). Between March 4th, 2022 and February 4th, 2024, 104,870 people arrived in Ireland from Ukraine (data based on the number of PPS numbers issued to Ukrainian nationals over this period), of which those below the age of 20 made up 31% of all arrivals, while women and men over the age of 20 accounted for 46% and 23% of the total arrivals respectively (CSO, 2024).

It is worth noting that the 2022 Census changed the nationality question to ask respondents to indicate their country of citizenship. This change may have affected responses, as some migrant parents may not be aware of their country of origin's laws regarding the citizenship of their child (e.g. born abroad or with at least one foreign national parent). For example, according to Polish law, as of 15th August 2012, a child of a Polish national born abroad will automatically acquire Polish citizenship by law. However, some Polish migrant parents in Ireland who do not apply for a Polish passport for their children at the Embassy of Poland in Dublin may not realise that their child's Polish citizenship is automatically granted by Polish law. As a result, they may report their child as Irish rather than Irish-Polish in their census responses.

According to Irish law, children born in Ireland before 1st January 2005 automatically received Irish citizenship, regardless of their parents' citizenship. Under the Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act of 2004, a child born in the Republic of Ireland on or after 1st January

2005 may obtain Irish citizenship if one of their parents or grandparents has Irish citizenship or was born on the island of Ireland, or if one of their parents with non-Irish citizenship resided in Ireland for at least 3 out of 4 years immediately before the child's birth.

Moreover, the decrease in the number of some non-Irish national groups residing in Ireland observed between 2016 and 2022, such as Polish citizens and Lithuanian citizens, can be partially explained by the increase in the number of residents with dual foreign-Irish nationality. Since 2016, the number of people with dual Irish citizenship has increased by 63% to 170,597 people in 2022. The largest groups included Irish-UK (31,907 people, of which 4,264 were born in Ireland), Irish-American (30,044 people, of which 13,405 were born in Ireland), and Irish-Polish who increased by nearly 50% compared to 2016 (17,152 people in 2022, of which 8,636 born in Ireland) (CSO, 2023).

The number of Ireland's residents who spoke a language other than Irish or English at home increased from 514,068 in 2011 to 751,507 in 2022 (CSO, 2023). The most commonly spoken foreign languages included Polish, Romanian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Lithuanian. French and Polish were the most spoken foreign languages among Irish-born people (CSO, 2023). While the common knowledge of French among Irish residents can be partially explained by its long history as the most popular foreign language taught in Irish schools, the popularity of Polish, Romanian, Lithuanian and Portuguese is strongly related to the numbers of their native and heritage speakers, who live in Ireland, as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Most commonly spoken foreign languages in Ireland (CSO, 2023)

Language	Total number of speakers in Ireland in 2022	Number of speakers born in Ireland
Polish	123,968	32,060
Romanian	57,383	11,137
French	51,568	32,244
Spanish	48,113	18,966
Portuguese	43,985	5,526

Lithuanian	34,885	7,690
------------	--------	-------

Note. Based on data from the 2022 National Census (CSO, 2023).

As the above table indicates, linguistic and cultural diversity is also greatly noticed in Irish mainstream classrooms at all educational levels. In 2022, there were 60,480 pupils in Ireland's primary schools whose first language was neither English nor Irish³. As Table 4 illustrates, primary school pupils represent diverse national and cultural backgrounds. Results of the 2016 Census (CSO, 2017) revealed that in 2016, non-Irish students and pupils aged 5 years and over accounted for 96,497 pupils in Ireland's education system (18% of all non-Irish nationals in 2016). Polish pupils represented the largest non-Irish group of 22,450 people, followed by UK nationals (11,704 pupils), Lithuanian nationals (7,133 pupils), and Brazilians (4,632 pupils) (CSO, 2017). In addition, as of February 2024, there were 18,185 enrolments of arrivals from Ukraine in Ireland's schools, including 11,312 Ukrainian pupils in Irish primary schools, and 6,873 Ukrainian students in Irish secondary education (CSO, 2024).

Table 4: National background of primary school pupils in Ireland in 2022

Place of origin	Number of pupils
Ireland	489,123
United Kingdom	3,135
EU 13 ⁴	24,182
EU 15 ⁵ excluding Ireland and United Kingdom	4,263
Other European countries (not EU)	9,807
Asia and Middle East	14,957
Africa	6,266
United States and Canada	1,298

³ Information obtained from the Department of Education on 18/01/2024 via email correspondence. This information is recorded on the Primary Online Database and is supplied by the parents or guardians of pupils. Parents/guardians may choose not to answer this question.

⁴ European Union member countries: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia

⁵ European Union member countries: Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom, Sweden

Other America	2,417
Australia and South Pacific	734
Other countries	1,961

Note. Data obtained by the author on 18.01.2024 from the Department of Education through email correspondence.

Nevertheless, the linguistic diversity among pupils in Irish education is not reflected in mainstream schools' teaching population, which remains mostly white, Irish, and Catholic (Mc Daid & Nowlan, 2022). Access to teaching positions in Ireland's public primary and post-primary schools is regulated through registration with the Teaching Council of Ireland. Only since the 1st of January 2023, teachers of the new post-primary curricular languages, Polish, Lithuanian, Chinese and Portuguese, have been offered a chance to register with the Teaching Council as post-primary teachers due to updated *Curricular Subject Requirements (Post-primary)*⁶. Before that date, these languages were not recognized by the Teaching Council as curricular subjects, even though they were introduced into Ireland's post-primary curriculum in 2020. Moreover, the process of registration with the Teaching Council, especially recognition of teaching qualifications and experience gained abroad, has been considered complicated and discouraging by many migrant teachers (Mc Daid & Nowlan, 2022). The Migrant Teacher Project initiated at Marino Institute of Education in 2014 seeks to expand the number of migrant teachers within Irish education by offering a bridging programme to support teachers when they apply for employment and undergo the registration procedure.

1.5 Polish migration to Ireland

1.5.1 Demographic overview

Before Poland joined the European Union in 2004, the Polish community in the Republic of Ireland was small. The 2002 census in Ireland (CSO, 2003) records that the country has a population of 3.9 million, including 2,137 people born in Poland - of which 1,278 were men

⁶ The Teaching Council, updated *Curricular Subject Requirements (Post-primary)*: <https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/news-events/latest-news/2022/curricular-subject-requirements-post-primary-update-june-2022.html>

and 859 were women. Despite not being a popular destination among Poles before the European Union's enlargement in 2004, a popular destination for Polish migrants, a handful of Polish nationals had already resided in Ireland as early as the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. Some of them made important contributions to Irish science and culture at the time (Dowling, 2012).

Since 2004, Ireland has opened its borders to new EU members like Poland, and thousands of Polish migrants settled in Ireland initially as part of an economic migration wave. The 2006 census revealed that almost 90 per cent of 63,276 Polish nationals in Ireland in 2006 came here in 2004 or after (CSO, 2007). The following family reunification has been captured in the dramatically decreasing numbers of Polish nationals who were married and not living with their spouse. In 2006, 47 per cent of married Polish nationals in Ireland were not living with their spouse; in 2011, this group decreased to 12 per cent, and in 2016, to 9 per cent (CSO, 2007). Interestingly, research indicates that many Polish migrants who arrived in Ireland before the economic recession in 2008 opted to remain in the country despite the crisis. Their decision was driven by several factors, such as the creation of new social networks and the establishment of a desirable standard of living during their time in Ireland, which played a significant role in their choice to stay despite the economic downturn (Krings, et al., 2009).

The Polish community in Ireland continued to grow, as evidenced by the 2011 census which recorded 122,585 Polish nationals in Ireland, almost double the count in 2006 (CSO, 2012). Although it stayed nearly the same between 2011 and 2016, the average age of a Polish resident in Ireland increased from 27.7 years old to 31.3 years old in 2016, and those aged 32 and over-represented more than 56 per cent of the Polish population in Ireland in 2016 (CSO, 2017). This might be explained by the fall in the number of Polish children aged 0-5 fell from 11,592 in 2011 to 5,392 in 2016. The composition of households headed by Polish nationals has also indicated longer-term migration plans of Poles in Ireland, as the number of Polish households consisting of a family with children increased from 20,080 in 2011 to 27,427 in 2016 (CSO, 2017). Moreover, households headed by Polish were more likely to have one or two children in the household than other migrant groups and Irish nationals (McGinnity et al., 2022). Among households headed by migrants, Poles had a lower number

of single-parent households compared to households headed by Irish nationals and other non-Irish nationals living in Ireland (McGinnity et al., 2022).,

Although the number of Polish nationals residing in Ireland decreased from 122,515 in 2016 to 93,680 in 2022, they still constituted the largest migrant community for the third time in Ireland's history (CSO, 2023). The number of people with dual Irish-Polish citizenship has been constantly growing. In 2016, there were 9,273 people with dual Irish-Polish citizenship, out of which 70,4% (6,530 people) were born in Ireland, and children aged 0-9 years old (both male and female) constituted 71% of all people with dual Irish-Polish citizenship in Ireland. In 2022, there were 17,152 dual Irish-Polish citizens, out of which approximately 50% (8,636 people) were born in Ireland (CSO, 2023). As depicted in Table 4 below, the number of Polish language speakers in Ireland appears to correspond to the population of individuals with Polish heritage, including those born in Ireland and those with dual Irish-Polish citizenship.

Table 5: Polish nationals and Polish language speakers in Ireland between 2002-2022

Year	Number of Polish nationals in Ireland	Number of Polish speakers in Ireland ⁷
2002	2,137	No data
2006	63,276	No data
2011	122,585	119,526
2016	122,515	135,895
2022	98,680	123,968

Note. Based on data obtained from Irish national censuses (CSO, 2003, 2007, 2012, 2017, 2023)

Despite the nine per cent decrease in the number of speakers between 2016 and 2022, Polish remained by far the most commonly spoken home language other than English, with a total of 123,968 Polish speakers in 2022 (CSO, 2022). Among those who spoke Polish at home in 2022, the majority had Polish (63%) citizenship or Irish (35%) citizenship, although 251 Lithuanian citizens also reported using Polish at home (CSO, 2022). The 2022 census also

⁷ The 2011 Census first introduced the question about language(s) other than English or Irish spoken at home.

discovered that over 50% of Polish speakers reported that they could speak English very well, 31% could speak it well, 12% could not speak English well, and only 2% could not speak it at all (CSO, 2023).

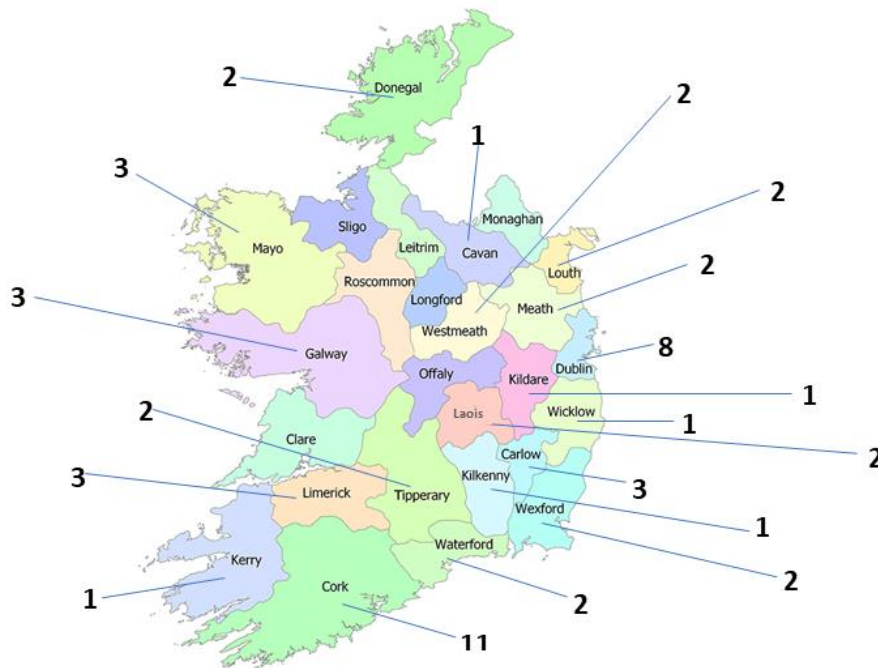
1.5.2 Polish Complementary Schools in Ireland

As outlined above, there has been a significant rise in the number of Polish nationals since 2004, when Ireland opened its borders to new EU members, including Poland. Over the two decades since the EU enlargement, there has also been rapid growth in various Polish community-based initiatives, including Polish social and cultural associations, societies, non-profit organisations and media, such as Polish radio and Polish newspapers (Płachecki, 2012; Płachecki et al., 2023). While some of the bottom-up community initiatives organised by Polish migrants faded over time or “exploited their potential after reaching their goals” (Płachecki, 2015, p. 14), many Polish migrants in Ireland continue to show their interest in activities aimed at supporting the maintenance, transmission and celebration of Polish language and culture among older and younger generations of Poles living in this country. Polish complementary schools in Ireland are one such example.

From the inception of the first Polish complementary school in Dublin in 2005, the number of such schools across Ireland grew to 31 by 2014 (Nestor, 2014) and reached over 50 in 2019 (Pedrak, 2019). As shown in Figure 2, Polish complementary schools are present in 19 out of the 26 counties in the Republic of Ireland. As per the estimates provided by the Embassy of Poland in Dublin, around 6,500 students of Polish background attended these schools in 2021/2022. Over the last three years, six Polish schools have either suspended or closed their operations; the number of students attending these schools also continues to decrease.⁸

⁸ Information obtained by the author on 04/03/2024 via email correspondence with the Embassy of Poland in Dublin.

Figure 2: Number of Polish complementary schools in Ireland per county in 2023



Note. Developed by the author with <https://www.mappr.co/counties/ireland/>. Based on the list of Polish complementary schools in Ireland: <https://www.gov.pl/web/irlandia/szkoly-polskie> [Accessed on 21.12.2023]

Currently, there are five Polish schools run by the Embassy of Poland in Dublin Polish schools by the Embassy of Poland in Dublin located in Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Waterford and Cavan. Historically, Polish schools by Embassies of Poland around the world were initially set up by the government of Poland to provide Polish education to the children of Polish diplomats. As Polish migrant communities grew over time, they expanded to provide complementary education to children of wider Polish migrant communities. Therefore, despite their name, they are not run by the Embassy, and the Embassy has no supervision over these schools. Instead, they operate within the organisational framework of the Centre for the Development of Polish Education Abroad (ORPEG—Ośrodek Rozwoju Polskiej Edukacji za Granicą) located in Warsaw and are fully funded by the Polish government and supervised by the Polish minister responsible for education in Poland. In line with the policy of free school education in Poland, fees are not charged.

Additionally, there are more than 40 Polish complementary schools referred to as “Polish community schools” in Ireland. These are schools that are usually set up and run by members of the Polish community in Ireland (such as Polish migrant teachers or parents) and operate as private companies, not-profit organisations, associations, or charities. They remain largely self-funded and typically require parental fees for children’s education in these settings. Because Polish community schools operate as privately managed organisations/companies, they are not managed by ORPEG nor supervised by the Ministry of Education in Poland. Many Polish community schools in Ireland are associated with umbrella organisations, such as the Polish Educational Society in Ireland, established in 2012. It offers collaboration in developing/consulting teaching programmes and educational projects and organises conferences for teachers.

An interesting collaboration between some Polish complementary schools and other cultural associations and institutions happened in May 2014. As a result of collaboration between Forum Polonia, the Irish Polish Society (IPS), Together-Razem Centre, The Polish Social and Cultural Association (POSK), the Polish Complementary School in Dundalk, the Polish Complementary School SEN in Dublin, Polonia Razem, and Polish and Irish individuals affiliated at various organisations/institutions like SIPTU, Cairde, the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Dublin, and UCD, a joint submission on Ireland’s National Integration Strategy was submitted to the Department of Justice and Equality in Ireland, in order to highlight the importance of Polish migrants integration in various areas, such as active citizenship and engagements, education, health and welfare, and employment (Forum Polonia, 2014). Regarding the education sector, the submission strongly recommended building awareness of the importance of home language maintenance, acknowledging the input of complementary schooling in migrant children’s literacy development, and building links between mainstream and complementary schools in Ireland.

1.5.3 Previous Research on Polish Complementary Schools in Ireland

Research on Polish complementary schooling in Ireland remains very limited but offers some interesting insights. O’Mahony (2013), in discussing the shortcomings of Ireland’s foreign language provision, was one of the first to make recommendations about heritage/minority

language complementary schooling. He suggested, for example, that the State should provide such schools with teaching facilities free of charge. From O'Mahony's economic perspective, migrant young people were viewed as human capital beneficial for Ireland's economic growth.

Those young people coming from non-English speaking homes can become one of our greatest assets. If we assist them to acquire native speaker standard competence in their HLs, we will be going a significant way to meeting our need for workers fluent in both English and a foreign language. (O'Mahony, 2013, p. 15)

Similar suggestions can be seen in a paper on Polish complementary schools in Ireland issued in the IPS Yearbook in 2014 (Nestor, 2014), which described Polish complementary schooling provision as “an integral part of the education sector” (Nestor, 2014, p. 43). Other studies used the lens of cultural and linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1991) to focus on the symbolic value and language ideologies that underpin parents' and children's decisions about the maintenance of HLs (Connaughton-Crean, 2020; Connaughton-Crean & Ó Duibhir, 2017, 2024). The transmission of the Polish language to the young generation was perceived as an important part of parenthood by Polish migrant parents in Ireland (Kealy, 2019). Furthermore, Polish complementary schooling remains an important support to children's HL development outside the context of the home and the mainstream school as it creates opportunities for young Polish migrants to socialise and to develop socio-historical competencies through Polish and to enrich their perceptions of belonging, as well as negotiations of cultural norms and identities (Machowska-Kosciak, 2020). While attendance at a complementary school may support children's linguistic and cultural development (Machowska-Kosciak, 2020; Pedrak, 2019), it can also come with challenges, such as extensive workload and the need to balance extracurricular and compulsory learning with social life (Connaughton-Crean, 2020; Machowska-Kosciak, 2020). Nevertheless, attendance at such schools was considered by both migrant children and their parents as an investment in language learning (Darvin & Norton, 2023; Norton Peirce, 1995), especially among those Polish migrant families who considered returning to Poland (Diskin, 2020). Complementary schooling has also been seen to build migrant children's cultural and linguistic capital in a way that “may place people in a more globally central position due to

the opportunities particular languages and dialects can provide” (Connaughton-Crean & Ó Duibhir, 2017, p. 26).

1.6 Aims of the Study

This research project aims to address the gap in the literature on Polish complementary schooling in Ireland by providing a deeper, comprehensive understanding of their role for migrant children, families, communities and society at large. The main focus is to explore how attending these schools may influence maintaining and developing HL, negotiating identities, and fostering a sense of belonging and connection with Polishness. Furthermore, the study aims to explore how complementary schools can serve migrant individuals and families beyond HL maintenance. One way is by acting as cultural centres for the wider Polish migrant community. Another is by providing employment opportunities for Polish migrant teachers in Ireland.

The objectives of this research project include:

- 1) Identifying the potential influence of complementary schooling on migrant children’s HL maintenance, development and identity negotiation
- 2) Unfolding reasons for complementary schooling, and perceptions of associated benefits and challenges.
- 3) Exploring ways in which complementary schools may serve their migrant communities beyond HL teaching.

Moreover, by exploring the experiences of Polish migrant families and their children in Ireland, this research project aims to provide meaningful insights into the significance of complementary schools in maintaining cultural and linguistic diversity, promoting social integration, and contributing to the wellbeing of migrant families and their children.

1.7 Rationale of the Research

With the increasing inward migration since the 1990s, Irish society and education became enriched by various grassroots initiatives set up by the newcomers who strive to maintain and pass down their linguistic and cultural heritage. One example of such initiatives are Polish complementary schools. While the number of Polish complementary schools in Ireland has been rapidly growing since 2005, little is known about their ways of operating, their possible influence on pupils' language development and identities, as well the opportunities they bring to the wider migrant community and the challenges faced by their participants. Research on complementary schooling in Ireland is limited, and insights into this phenomenon, although valuable, remain fragmentized. Therefore, the rationale of this study emerges from the urgent need for comprehensive research on complementary education in Ireland and from my interest in this area of study as explained in the Researcher's Positionality Statement (Section 1.2).

Moreover, despite Polish complementary schools operating outside the Irish mainstream education sector, their provision remains embedded in the socio-cultural, political, and economic dynamics of the Irish state and its education system. Recent developments in Ireland's education policy related to languages, such as the introduction of Polish as a curricular subject in Ireland's post-primary schools in 2020, and the planned introduction of foreign languages into primary schools (NCCA, 2023), remain important factors that shape the context in which Polish complementary schools provide their teaching. These developments can also influence how they are perceived by migrant parents and the children who avail of their services. By taking a broad perspective and acknowledging the relationships of power in Irish education, this study will contribute to the existing literature on complementary schooling and maintenance of HLs and can offer valuable implications for language policy and education in Ireland. By understanding the challenges and benefits of attending Polish complementary schools, the study can provide insights into how to better support migrant children and families in Ireland, for example, by developing more inclusive and empowering language education models that consider the unique needs of migrant communities and support linguistic diversity in Ireland's education and society.

1.8 Thesis Outline

The current chapter (Chapter 1) presents background and contextual information enhancing understanding of the phenomenon of Polish complementary schooling in Ireland. It begins with outlining the Researcher's Positionality Statement which considers my position as a researcher with reference to my background as a migrant parent and my experience as a complementary school teacher in Ireland. This chapter provides an overview of Polish complementary schools globally, with a particular focus on the historical circumstances in which this type of schooling operated in the USA and the UK since the 19th century. It delves into the intricacies of the Irish linguistic landscape in society and education by overviewing the situation of the Irish and English languages in the past and nowadays. Demographical characteristics of the Polish migrant community in Ireland are presented along with general information on Polish complementary schools in Ireland. The chapter presents a summary of up-to-date research on Polish complementary schools conducted recently in Ireland and concludes with an outline of the literature gap that motivates the aims and rationale of the present study.

Chapter 2 presents the literature review and theoretical framework underpinning this study. It explores the past and present theoretical approaches towards children's bilingualism in multilingual contexts. Theoretical framework unfolds Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* and *cultural capital*, as well as Norton's notion of *investment in language learning*. Moreover, this chapter also delves into the notion of belonging, specifically in the context of Polish migrant families residing in Ireland who live transnational lives. Lastly, it examines preserving linguistic and cultural heritage among migrant families at home and through complementary schooling in light of family language policy and agency.

Chapter 3 outlines the research design and methodology. It explains how these aspects supported the main objective of the study and contributed to revealing meaningful results. The chapter starts with an outline of the study focus and research questions. It then presents the chosen paradigm and philosophical stance that overarch the mixed methods research design and methodology of the study. As this study involves interviewing individuals, including minors, this chapter also covers ethical considerations regarding informed consent, data storage, access, transcription, potential risks and benefits from participation in the study,

and the steps taken to mitigate these risks. The multiple research methods employed in this study are presented along with the rationale for their choice, design, and purpose within the research project. This includes details of data collection through both quantitative and qualitative approaches, as well as descriptions of the process of participant recruitment. Finally, the last two sections of this chapter address the approaches chosen for quantitative and qualitative data analysis and acknowledge the limitations of the methodology used.

Chapter 4 provides a national context for researching HLs in Ireland. It overviews recent statistics and results of reports issued by national institutions (such as NCCA, MIE, and PPLI), which reflect the viewpoints of students, parents, and teachers on the latest curricula developments in Ireland. It delves into the situation of heritage and foreign languages in Irish schools, specifically focusing on the Polish language, by examining foreign language provision and uptake in Irish schools. This chapter presents migrants' experiences and expectations regarding language provision in mainstream schools, mainstream teachers' and whole school approaches to linguistic diversity pupils' HL bilingualism. It also examines the language ideologies that guide migrants' actions towards HL maintenance and promotion and provides examples of successful community and institutional collaboration towards greater HL recognition and provision of Polish in the Irish education system.

Chapter 5 delves into the intricate relationship between language, identity, and belonging within Polish migrant families residing in Ireland as they strive to pass down their linguistic and cultural heritage through home practices and Polish complementary schooling. Through thematic analysis of language portraits and interviews with children, parents, and teachers participating in Polish complementary schooling, the study aims to uncover how these families navigate their cultural identities and maintain their connection to Polishness. It reveals how migrant children adapt their language usage in various contexts and examines their perceptions of other languages, notably English and Irish, as they navigate their positions globally and within Irish society. Furthermore, the study considers the complexity of defining "home" from migrant children's and parents' perspectives and how parents' aspirations to pass down Polish cultural heritage to their children are influenced by their language beliefs. It also looks at migrants' agency and negotiations of participation in Polish

complementary schools. Finally, this chapter explores the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic on social interactions in Polish complementary schooling during 2020-2021.

Chapter 6 delves into the provision of Polish complementary schools in Ireland and examines how the experiences of Polish migrant families and individuals in these schools are shaped by the schools' ways of different ways of operating. Based on data collected from an online questionnaire filled in by the principals of ten Polish complementary schools across Ireland, this chapter highlights the similarities and differences among Polish complementary schools in terms of their goals, funding, curriculum, subjects taught, admission and promotion criteria, and levels of education covered. The chapter also presents the findings of in-depth interviews that explore the differences in expectations between children and parents towards these schools, their commitment to balance mainstream and complementary schooling, and the approaches taken by some teachers in complementary schools to tailor their teaching methods to meet the needs of bi/multilingual students.

Chapter 7 presents the findings of the study in the context of existing literature on complementary schooling and language education in multilingual contexts. The discussion focuses on four key areas: 1) navigating identity and belonging in the context of migration, 2) the significance of heritage and foreign languages in language education in Ireland, 3) the valuable opportunities provided by Polish complementary schools for maintaining and cultivating connections with HLs and cultures, and 4) the impact of the Covid-19 lockdowns in 2020-2021 on teaching and learning in Polish complementary schools. The chapter also provides insightful conclusions on the importance of Polish complementary schooling in Ireland from a national and global perspectives. Finally, Chapter 7 addresses the limitations of the study and presents implications and recommendations for policy and practice that arise from this research project, as well as suggests future research directions.

1.9 Summary

This chapter provided a contextual ground for delving into the phenomenon of Polish complementary schools in Ireland by providing a historical overview of Polish complementary schools abroad, highlighting the long-standing tradition of Polish migration in setting up these schools to support HL transmission and maintenance of Polish traditions.

As complementary schools aim to cater to the linguistic, cultural, social and educational needs of ethnic minority children and their families, the contexts within which they operate are deeply intertwined with the historical, social, cultural, and economic circumstances of migrant communities, both in their countries of residence and globally. Therefore, when discussing complementary schooling in Ireland, it is important to recognise Ireland's intricate relationship with its own national language, Irish.

Like many less commonly spoken languages in Ireland, the Irish language confronts numerous challenges in Irish society and education, including the dominant position of English as an official and the most commonly spoken language in Ireland and a *lingua franca* internationally. However, the situation of Irish differs from that of other languages as it is constitutionally the first national language of Ireland and remains symbolically significant, even for those who do not use it on a daily basis. Irish is also spoken in communal settings and households in Irish language speech communities and Gaeltacht, geographical areas located mostly in the west of Ireland. Additionally, the number of Irish-medium schools nationally has recently increased, and it is further supported by the national strategy that aims to promote the use of Irish within education, local communities, and wider Irish society.

The chapter also presented the increasing linguistic and cultural diversity in Ireland, which can also be observed in the Irish education system, particularly over the last two decades. It also outlined Ireland's previous attempts at introducing foreign language teaching in the primary sectors, which is crucial to consider when exploring complementary schooling in today's Ireland, especially in light of recent changes in national curricula, both at primary and post-primary levels (see Chapter 4). The next chapter will review the literature on bilingualism and HL education with reference to the Irish context of Polish complementary schooling.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

“Language plays a great part in our life. Perhaps because of its familiarity, we rarely observe it, taking it rather for granted, as we do breathing or walking” (Bloomfield, 1933, p. 3).

Bloomfield’s reflection on language was published almost 90 years ago, at a time when linguistics was still an emerging field. Since then, the study of language has expanded and given rise to new fields and subdisciplines, such as sociolinguistics and HL education. While HLs (HLs) around the world have been transmitted by migrating families and communities for centuries, they only gained more international research interest in the 20th and 21st centuries due to an increase in globalisation and migration processes around the world as well as technological advances (Cruickshank et al., 2023). Moreover, across geo-political and sociolinguistic contexts, HL bilingualism and education are being addressed and valorised differently in national and international policies (Seal & Shah, 2017; Jiménez Raya et al., 2020). Those differences in approach and ideologies towards languages are reflected in language education policies, classroom practices, as well as in research portraying these phenomena through lenses of different frameworks. Meanwhile, technology has advanced significantly, enabling migrant families, researchers, and educators to engage with HLs at different levels. All these influence Polish migrants in Ireland’s collective and individual experiences of bilingualism and biculturalism as they remain embedded in relationships of symbolic power within structures and mechanisms of home and host societies, as well as influenced by the position of English as a global language.

The purpose of the following literature review is to provide an overview of historical and current research on bilingualism and HL education. The review will explore the complexities of defining what a HL is and who can be referred to as a bilingual by presenting several approaches and terminology. Examples of the Irish context will be provided to aid in understanding. In addition, the literature review will present global, European and Irish language policy with regard to plurilingualism and linguistic human rights in an educational

context. The theoretical framework of this study will also be presented, focusing on the relationship between language and identity in multilingual contexts. Bourdieu's conceptual lens of *habitus* and *cultural capital* will be explained in connection to Norton's concept of *investment* in language learning. The notion of belonging will be explained while considering the transnational ways of living of Polish migrant families in Ireland. Lastly, this chapter examines preserving linguistic and cultural heritage among migrant families at home and through complementary schooling in light of family language policy and agency.

2.2 Past and Present Research on Childhood Bilingualism

Since the early 1930s, bilingualism has been studied from many different perspectives, such as psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, psychology, social sciences, and education (Baker, 2011). Despite multiple attempts to define the phenomenon, it is not obvious how to decide who can be referred to as *bilingual* and the answer is often influenced by who is defining this population and for what purpose (for example, governments may define it differently to scholars). The historical and recent definitions of bilingualism presented below show bilinguals were identified from multiple points of view and with a focus on different aspects of their bilingualism, such as language proficiency, language use, age of acquisition, and others. This section looks at historical and current approaches to bilingualism, including individual vs. societal bilingualism, additive and subtractive bilingualism, as well as an explanation of a translanguaging approach to bilingual education.

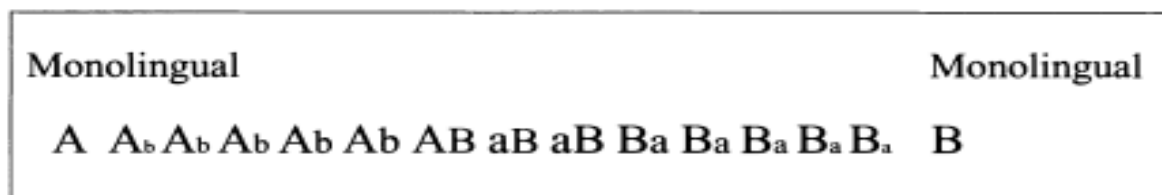
2.2.1 Historical and Current Definition Attempts

One of the first definitions of bilingualism comes from Bloomfield (1933) who referred to it as to a “native-like control of two languages” (1933, pp. 55-56). This definition focused on the language user's proficiency, however, Bloomfield claims that it is not possible to “define a degree of perfection at which a good foreign speaker becomes bilingual” (ibid.). Perhaps, such a definition is too narrow to include various situations of contemporary bilingual communities around the world. Moreover, native-like proficiency in both languages is very rare among bilinguals as they tend to use their languages in different places, occasions, and for different purposes (Baker, 2011). Another definition of bilingualism was created by Uriel

Weinreich, a Polish-American linguist, who specialized in sociolinguistics and dialectology. Weinreich refers to “the practise of alternately using two languages” (Weinreich, 1953, p. 1). Such a definition, contrary to Bloomfield’s, does not specify the users’ proficiency in any of their languages, but it includes code-switching (the use of both languages in one utterance). Haugen (1953, p. 6) proposed that bilinguals are those who are able “to produce complete meaningful utterances in the other language”. This definition has been then criticized for focusing on the results while ignoring early stages of bilingualism, when bilinguals are not yet able to produce such utterances in their L2 (Wald, 1974). In his minimalistic definition of bilingualism, Diebold (1964) introduced the term *incipient bilingualism* that includes people whose L2 is at early stage of development as bilinguals. This was, in turn, criticized as too broad and inclusive definition, which can result in lack of clarity when researching bilingualism (Wald 1974). In his exploration of bilingualism, Mackey (1968) posits that bilingualism is more than just a feature of language; it is defined by how language is utilized (p. 51). He outlines four key questions or characteristics that must be addressed to fully describe an individual's bilingualism: proficiency in each language, the purpose of language use, the potential for language alternation, and the potential for interference and language mixing (Mackey, 1968, p. 52).

Contemporary research on bilingualism takes a comprehensive and inclusive approach, viewing bilingual individuals not as simply the combination of two monolinguals (Baker, 2011). According to Grosjean (1998), bilinguals are those who “use two (or more) languages (or dialects) in their everyday life” (p. 132). This definition recognises the diversity among bilinguals in terms of language use and proficiency levels while emphasizing the shared characteristic of living with two languages. Valdés (2005) suggests that heritage ‘L1/L2 users’ (Valdés, 2005, p. 414) can be regarded as bilinguals positioned somewhere on a continuum between L1 and L2 monolingual speakers, depending on their strengths in both languages, as depicted in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: A Continuum of L1/L2 Users by G. Valdes (2005)



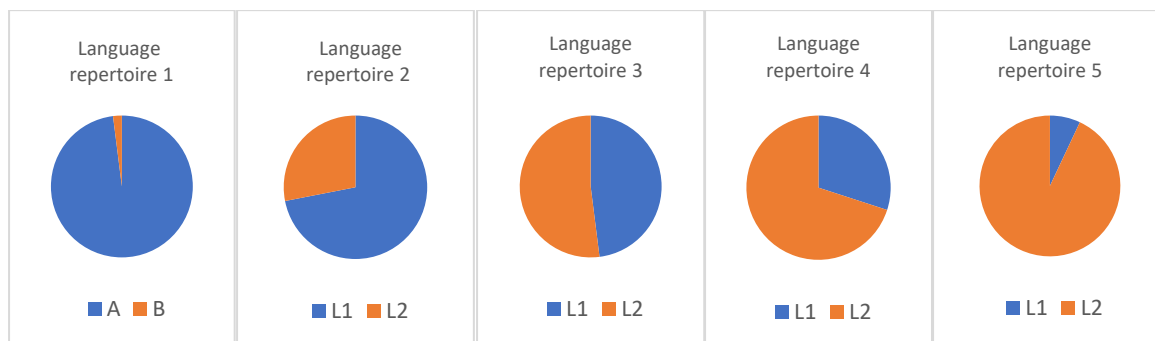
Note. Retrieved from: Valdés, G. (2005). Bilingualism, Heritage Language Learners, and SLA Research: Opportunities Lost or Seized?. *The Modern Language Journal*, 89, p. 414.

Furthermore, Baker (2011) provided a comprehensive explanation of bilingualism, delineating eight dimensions: ability, use, balance of two languages, age of acquisition, development, contexts, culture, and elective bilingualism. Additionally, he stressed the significance of distinguishing between language ability and language use, also known as degree and function (Baker, 2011). This differentiation aids in understanding that bilingual individuals possess varying levels of proficiency in their languages and utilise them with differing frequencies across various aspects of their lives.

As this research does not investigate participants' levels of proficiency in their languages, the term 'bilinguals' will draw on Grosjean's definition and will refer to those who are using two (or more) languages on a regular basis. Bilinguals in this study are, similarly, like in Valdés' understanding (2005, p. 414), seen as individuals on a continuum, more or less able to "linguaging bilingually" (Garcia, 2009, p. 323), hence 'emergent bilinguals' (ibid.). Their language repertoires are seen as the unitary collection of linguistic resources that individuals accumulate, utilize, and interpret (Blommaert & Backus, 2013) "to make meaning and to negotiate particular communicative contexts" (Vogel & Garcia, 2017, p. 1). Moreover, individuals' language repertoires develop nonlinearly: "explosively in some phases of life and gradually in some others" (Blommaert & Backus, 2013, p. 18) as they are influenced by the circumstances of the individual's life. Bilingual individuals often exhibit variability in their proficiency across linguistic competencies such as speaking, reading, writing, and understanding. This variability may be attributed to various factors, including the complex dynamics of language use in both home and educational environments. For instance, research by Dubiel and Guilfoyle (2021) has demonstrated that a dominant

language of Polish-English bilingual children in Ireland may shift from its HL to the majority language between the mean ages of 8 and 11.5 years old. Furthermore, Dermody et al. (2022) reported on the English language development of migrant children in Ireland and found that while just over 30% of children with two non-English speaking parents spoke English as their first language at age three, this percentage increased to 62% for nine-year-old children. These findings highlight the intricate nature of bilingual language acquisition and learning, emphasizing the significance of recognizing the dynamic nature of one's language repertoire throughout their lifetime. With that in mind, I argue that HL learners' bilingualism and language proficiency should be viewed holistically, and their language skills should be portrayed as occupying a spectrum between beginner and native speaker levels in those languages (Valdes, 2005; Polinsky & Kagan, 2007; Garcia, 2009), like presented in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Sample language repertoires of migrant bilinguals



As shown in Figure 4, “individuals’ languaging repertoires are unique to them” (Vogel & Garcia, 2017, p.3) as they evolve dynamically in the context of changing circumstances over the individual’s life course. For instance, while we can read *language repertoire 1* in Figure 2 as a representation of a first-generation migrant who only began to learn and use the language of the host country (B), it may also represent an overall set of linguistic resources of a 2nd generation migrant child who speaks their L1 at home and only began to acquire their L2 once starting early-years or primary education in their host country. It is possible for *language repertoires 2-4* to represent both 1st and 2nd generation immigrants, as well as 1.5

generation immigrants whose L1 and L2 languages may be developing or regressing over time due to varying levels of use across different life domains of an individual. We could see *language repertoire 5* as that of an individual who belongs to the second- or third-generation migrants. Such individuals' HL may not be extensively developed and not very prominent in their daily lives due to a variety of factors such as limited exposure to the language, lack of willingness to learn it, or not having enough opportunities to use it with other speakers. As a result, their language skills in the HL may be less developed than those of individuals who use the language frequently, even if they would belong to the same migrant generation. Language repertoires are not static but are influenced by various factors such as context, purpose, frequency, and interaction with other language users. For instance, individuals may adjust their language use in response to the environment they are exposed to. Additionally, they may modify their language repertoire to suit different purposes they would like to achieve, such as using vocabulary from formal and informal language registers across different settings. The frequency of language use can also impact the repertoire, and individuals may prioritize using one of their languages more or less frequently than the other. Finally, the language users with whom multilingual speakers/learners interact can also influence their language repertoire as they interact with one another. This study may contribute to established definitions by throwing light on how complementary schools may contribute to bilinguals' HL use in different domains of their everyday lives (Baker, 2011), especially at home and in their complementary school. In addition, language portraits made by children participating in the study will provide valuable insight into the young migrant generation's reflection on their own language repertoires and bi-/multilingualism and their identity negotiation.

2.2.2 Simultaneous and sequential bilinguals

In research on childhood bilingualism, one of the most distinctive aspects is the age of L2 acquisition. 'Simultaneous bilinguals' are those who started developing their L1 and L2 simultaneously from birth or had their L2 introduced before the child's third year of life, for example, children from mixed marriages, in which each parent interacts with their child in their mother tongue from the first days of a child's life (Baker, 2011). The term 'sequential

bilinguals' refers to children who start developing their L2 after the infancy or toddlerhood period, many of them start being exposed to L2 upon commencement of early childhood education (creche/nursery) or primary school (Baker, 2011). In such situations, language dominance in a child can shift; for instance, a child who was growing up only with their L1, developed a strong command of this language, but once he/she started attending school held in L2, their L2 may become stronger than their L1 over time, especially when the L2 is the majority language (La Morgia, 2018).

For many years, researchers have argued whether the critical period in language acquisition exists and how it could influence language learning in bilinguals. The latest psycholinguistic research rather disqualifies the idea of a natural 'hard' line in language acquisition and shows the possibility for gradual changes in L2 acquisition (Baker, 2011). Some periods may seem more favourable for language acquisition, like early childhood and the school-age years, because of existing socio-linguistic factors that allow children to acquire an L2 in the way they do at this particular moment of their lives (Pearson, 2002, 2008). In fact, there is no singular way to become bilingual, and even growing up with two languages from birth does not guarantee that a child will develop a native-like competency in both L1 and L2 (La Morgia, 2018). Language acquisition in a bilingual child is a complex process that is influenced by many child-internal and child-external factors, not only the quality and quantity of L1 and L2 input, but also language use with different persons (parents, peers at school, teachers), mother's L2 fluency and her education, and the richness of the linguistic environments where the child is exposed to their languages (Paradis, 2011; Paradis et al., 2021). Awareness of that should be promoted among those who work with bilingual children/families in various multilingual settings.

2.2.3 Individual and societal multilingualism

Bilingualism can be studied as a characteristic of individuals who use more than one language in their everyday life. It can also be examined as a characteristic of societies, communities, and indigenous groups living in regions or countries where more than one language is spoken (Baker, 2011; Hoffmann, 1991). At an individual level, a bilingual person may use two languages daily. For example, a migrant could use both their heritage language and the

dominant language of a monolingual host society in their country of residence. Societal bilingualism is recognized when two or more languages are spoken by the population of a country or region. As observed by Hoffmann (1991), some countries may have two or more officially recognized languages, but not all are widely spoken within the country's population. For instance, in Ireland, English is the predominant language used by the majority of the Irish population, while Irish is not widely spoken on a daily basis (CSO, 2017, 2023). However, the Gaeltacht regions are where Irish is spoken daily and these areas are considered to represent the societal bilingualism in Ireland and play a crucial role in preserving the Irish linguistic and cultural heritage (Ceallaigh & Dhonnabhain, 2015).

In the 20th century, societal bilingualism was often viewed in the context of diglossia. The term was initially coined by Ferguson (1959), who differentiated between high (prestigious) and low varieties of a language within each society. Fishman (1967) expanded the concept to include languages and outlined four possible scenarios for the interaction between diglossia and bilingualism in a society:

- Diglossia with bilingualism – the majority of a society is bilingual and uses each language for different purposes (function);
- Diglossia without bilingualism – two languages present in a country, but each is spoken by a different language community;
- Bilingualism without diglossia – most of the country's population is bilingual, and they speak both languages for the same purposes;
- Neither diglossia nor bilingualism – theoretically possible, for instance, in a society that has changed from being linguistically diverse to monolingual due to language death or language extermination.

The presence of two languages in 21st-century society and education has been, on the other hand, described in the context of transglossia (Garcia, 2009), which emphasises the dynamic character of communication within multilingual societies where many languages are found in functional interrelationships (Garcia, 2014). This approach seems to portray better the fluid use of two languages within a society in a way that allows their speakers to maximize their communication and reflects their (bi)cultural identities (Garcia, 2013). As Garcia's studies

reveal (2009, 2013), the tension between monolingual perspectives on bilingualism and actual bilinguals' language practices is most visible in the classroom context.

2.2.4 Additive and Subtractive Bilingualism

Additive bilingualism refers to a situation when a person who learns their L2 is likely to benefit from it rather than lose their language skills in their L1 (Baker, 2011). It is often put in the context of childhood bilingualism, and positive effects on a child's overall language development are pointed out (Liddicoat, 1991). Subtractive bilingualism occurs when acquiring proficiency in a second language (L2) jeopardises a child's proficiency in their first language (L1), potentially leading to language loss (Baker, 2011; Lambert, 1980). It is particularly important to recognize subtractive bilingualism in the context of children from migrant backgrounds. These children often start with proficiency in their HL, but as they begin formal education, their exposure to the L2 in educational settings allows them to rapidly develop proficiency in this language, making it their dominant language (Dubiel & Guilfoyle, 2021). Consequently, the development of their HL may be affected due to limited opportunities for its advancement in formal education settings. In sociolinguistics, when members of a migrant community gradually stop using their HL in favour of the dominant language, it is known as a language shift, which may lead to the underdevelopment of HL or even language attrition (loss of their HL) in the subsequent generations (Brehmer & Treffers-Daller, 2020). Both phenomena, language shift and attrition, have been observed in immigrant and non-immigrant contexts (Brehmer & Treffers-Daller, 2020; Clyne, 2001; Dubiel & Guilfoyle, 2021; Gal, 1979; Potowski, 2013).

In the context of today's globalized societies and the far-reaching impact of technological advancements on language communication, learning, and use, Garcia contends that bilingualism needs a fresh perspective. She advocates for a view of bilingualism as recursive and dynamic (Garcia, 2010). Recursive bilingualism endeavours to revive ancestral languages in communities or generations affected by language shifts, while dynamic bilingualism involves cultivating new language practices. This reframes the conventional emphasis on autonomous languages in additive or subtractive bilingualism, instead

highlighting the imperative for educational systems to harness language resources within their communities to foster the development of dynamic bilingualism (Garcia, 2010).

The abovementioned concepts are closely tied to language prestige, societal language attitudes, and power dynamics in multilingual environments (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). The situation of minority or heritage languages is particularly vulnerable in countries where dominant global and prestigious languages like English hold sway in the host society or are the sole medium of instruction in the education system. Meanwhile, migrant languages are often viewed as 'inferior' and not valued by the broader society. Recognizing that languages are not in competition but rather complement each other in providing resources to individuals and societies is essential for policymakers, educators, and parents. This understanding should also be imparted to children. This awareness is crucial to ensure that all children have ample opportunities to reach their full potential and benefit from their bilingualism or multilingualism in all aspects of their daily lives (Carton & Rosenback, 2021; Cummins, 2017; Garcia, 2010).

2.3 Heritage Languages and Heritage Language Education

For centuries, migrating families and communities have transmitted HLs worldwide. However, the study of this phenomenon varies across different geopolitical contexts and disciplines. In this section, we will delve into the commonly used terms and provide an overview of research on HL education, with a particular focus on complementary schooling.

2.3.1 Heritage, community or minority language? An overview of terminology in use

In recent research on multilingualism and migration, the term 'heritage language' typically refers to a language other than the dominant language(s) in a society, which is spoken by individuals with a recent or ancestral connection to it (Polinsky & Kagan, 2007; Rothman, 2009; Seals & Shah, 2018; Valdes, 2000). Rothman (2009) emphasises the natural transmission of such languages in the home environment to the next generation from an early age. However, some scholars note that the term is ambiguous, as any language transmitted naturally from generation to generation could be classified as a HL (Blackledge & Creese,

2008; Rothman, 2009). While some researchers argue that language proficiency is crucial in defining and understanding HLs (Rothman, 2009), others emphasize the cultural and familial connections of HL speakers to their language, rather than focusing solely on their language skills. They contend that these connections set HLs apart from foreign languages that are taught and learned in educational settings (Hornberger & Wang, 2017). Consequently, current studies worldwide not only examine the identities and attitudes of HL learners towards their HLs but also consider maintenance and language policy planning (Carreira, 2004; Brinton et al., 2008; Seals & Shah, 2018). Some researchers emphasize the distinction between heritage language speakers and learners (Hornberger & Wang, 2017; Seals & Shah, 2018), while others argue that individuals can simultaneously be both speakers and learners (Seals & Shah, 2018). In addition, there is significant inconsistency and overlap in the terminology used in international and national studies on heritage languages (HLs) and heritage language education (HLE) across continents (i.e., Australia, North America, and Europe). The term ‘community language’ comes from Australia and refers to the languages spoken by specific communities within a context where another language is predominant (Clyne & Clyne, 1991; Cruickshank et al., 2023; Smolicz & Secombe, 1983). In North America, ‘heritage language’ describes both languages spoken by migrant communities and indigenous languages spoken there by indigenous people. It has also been observed that HL may be associated with the past rather than the present due to the connotations of the word *heritage*. Therefore, in North America, some researchers have adopted the term ‘international languages’ to reflect that these languages are valued in the contemporary world and can offer opportunities for the future of their speakers (Wiley, 2001). In Europe, researchers and policymakers frequently employ the term ‘immigrant language’ to describe languages of diasporic origin in the host country context. This reflects the migration within EU countries and the smaller number of speakers of these languages compared to the dominant language within a country/region. However, another term, ‘minority language’ has also been frequently used in Europe to refer to both a ‘regional minority language’ (e.g., Catalan language in Catalonia due to its historical and symbolic significance) and an ‘immigrant minority language’ (e.g., Polish language in Ireland due the relatively ‘small’ number of speakers compared to the dominant language in the country) (Extra & Gorter, 2001). The linguistic landscape in today’s Ireland, as examined in Chapter 1, demonstrates that defining what ‘qualifies’ as a heritage language is often

unique to a national or regional socio-political context. It requires not only statistical evidence but also sensitivity to the varied positions that languages and cultures hold in each country or region, and for their speakers. Hence, it is crucial to differentiate between regional and immigrant HLs, particularly in the context of Ireland, as they are perceived differently in society, language education, and policy. Consequently, their learners and speakers encounter distinct opportunities and challenges.

In the context of this study, it is also important to carefully consider the concept of a ‘mother tongue’, as it holds significant importance in both academic and societal contexts, particularly in relation to linguistic human rights (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1994). However, defining what a mother tongue entails is not straightforward and may lead to confusion. While those who are monolingual may have little difficulty identifying their mother tongue, it is much more complex for bilingual or multilingual individuals who juggle two or more languages in different domains of their everyday life (e.g. in school, work, home, travel, and contact with their extended family or friends). Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson (2012) propose the following criteria to explain what a mother tongue is:

1. Origin – the language(s) that one learned first
2. Competence – the language(s) that a person knows best
3. Function – the language(s) used the most often by an individual
4. Identification
 - a) internal – the language(s) one identifies with
 - b) external – the language(s) that an individual is identified with as a native speaker by others.

In order to underscore the complex and dynamic characteristics of a mother tongue, let us contemplate a hypothetical scenario involving a child from a Polish migrant background being raised in Ireland. While the state officially recognises two languages, Irish and English, a migrant child may not be exposed to either of them during their early years and may only learn Polish in their home environment. It can be argued that someone’s mother tongue is Polish if they learned it first while communicating with their Polish-speaking family at home. However, when the child begins their education in an early years educational facility or

mainstream primary school, English becomes the language they use frequently during the day. In such a scenario, English can be considered the child's mother tongue based on the function criterion. As the child grows up and continues their education in English, they may also attain a higher level of proficiency in it, further justifying its classification as their mother tongue under the competence definition. Additionally, self-identified mother tongue(s) may not always match the language that society associates them with. Therefore, different languages can be viewed as one's mother tongue(s) based on the criteria applied (Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson, 2012).

Another term, 'home language', is also commonly used in research and policy contexts, such as the *Primary Language Curriculum* (DE, 2019) in Ireland. According to the online glossary of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the home language is defined as a "language learned in childhood in the home environment, also referred to as mother tongue, first language, or native language" (UNESCO, n.d.). However, this study does not adopt this term for two reasons. Firstly, it implies that home languages are only used in domestic settings, whereas speakers of home languages often use their language skills in various contexts, including mainstream schools when interacting with peers with the same linguistic background. Secondly, in many immigrant households, multiple languages, including the dominant language, are spoken daily. For instance, some families utilise the 'one parent, one language' (OPOL) strategy that advises each parent to speak their HL(s) when interacting with their child(ren), while the entire family uses another language (e.g., English) for mutual communication. In such families in Ireland, English also qualifies as the child's home language while it is at the same time the dominant language of Irish society.

In this study, the term 'heritage language' refers to the languages (other than English and Irish) spoken by migrant communities living in Ireland. This definition is based on Valdés' (2000) understanding of HL as a language primarily used in a home environment and distinct from the majority/official languages spoken outside the home. According to Wang and Hatoss' (2024) review of language policy and planning studies in the migration context (conducted between 2001-2023), the term 'heritage language' was used in 66.3% of studies to refer to the "language of transnational minorities" (p.1). This conceptualisation

encompasses individuals from different generations of the wider group of Polish speakers in Ireland, including 1st generation migrants, 2nd generation (children of 1st generation migrants born in Ireland), and generation 1.5 (children of 1st generation migrants born in their home country and migrated to Ireland at a young age). It encompasses varying levels of HL proficiency, including those with ancestral ties to their heritage language but did not have the opportunity to learn it in childhood, and those who use their HL in various ways across different contexts. This perspective considers the HL as an additional asset alongside the dominant language of the place of residence. Accordingly, this study investigates the implications for HL maintenance and identity by applying the framework of capital and investment through complementary schooling in Ireland.

2.3.2 Research on Heritage Language Education

The study of HL education gained significant interest in the United States in the late 1960s and early 1970s. A pioneering effort in this field was undertaken by Fishman from 1960 to 1963 (Fishman, 2001), whose comprehensive national study of complementary schools located 1,885 such schools operating outside the public education system, established by and catering to diverse ethnic migrant communities across the US at that time (Fishman, 1966). As Fishman (2001) points out, it took another 20 years for national organisations to develop an interest in researching HLs as a national resource. During the 1980s, when he revisited the project, he located a total of 6,553 complementary schools that provided teaching in 145 different languages (Fishman et al., 1985). French, German, Italian, Polish, Greek, Hebrew, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, and Yiddish remained the most frequently taught languages in these schools (ibid.). Notably, the study also observed, similarly to Polish studies on Polish complementary schools in the 20th century (see Section 1.3), that these schools often had close ties with religious organisations, such as churches, mosques, and temples, providing opportunities for religious practice in these community languages.

From the end of WW2 in 1945 till the 1990s, researchers in Poland also developed an extensive body of research on the Polish diaspora worldwide and Polish complementary education in the 20th century. Research centres established in Poland in the 1970s and 1980s, as well as new ones, continue to explore Polish diaspora and Polish complementary schooling

today. The most prominent of them include, among others, the Committee of Migration Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences, the Institute for the Study of Polish Community and Its Ministry at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, The Polish Language and Culture Centre for Polish People from Abroad and Foreigners at the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, the Institute of American Studies and Polish Diaspora at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Research Centre on the Polish Diaspora and Poles in the World at the University of Rzeszów, the World Research Council on Poles Abroad at the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Faculty of Polish Studies at the University of Warsaw, Institute of Central and Eastern Europe at the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, Institute of Polish Philology of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, and more (Miodunka, 1998; Wiśniewska, 2019). Research at these and other centres looks at the intricacies of Polish migration and complementary schooling around the world from various perspectives, such as linguistics, history, political sciences, sociology, and pedagogy. Therefore, the scope of these studies remains broad, including socio-historical studies of the Polish diaspora and complementary schools in the UK conducted by, among others, Radzik (1992) and Koprukowniak (1980), research on the dynamics of Polish identity, organisational structures and Polish schooling in the context of Polish migration to Brazil (Miodunka, 2003), research on the Polish language and Polishness in Australia (Dębski, 2009; Harris & Smolicz, 1984; Lipińska, 2013), research on the Polish language around the globe (Dubisz, 1997; Miodunka, 1990; Sękowska, 2010), research on Polish migrant communities in Europe in the past (Szydłowska-Ceglowska, 1992) and after Poland's accession into EU (Grzymała-Moszczyńska et al., 2010; Kloc-Nowak et al., 2023). All of the aforementioned studies demonstrated that maintaining the Polish language and traditions was crucial to sustaining a strong connection to Polishness and developing a Polish identity while living abroad. The recently published book (also in Polish) *Polish Diaspora and Poles Abroad. Cultural and Educational Areas of Research and Experience* (Boroń et al., 2021), aims to summarise achievements and directions of Polish research on Polish communities abroad from the perspective of historical research, comparative pedagogy, and cultural studies. The book delves into various topics related to Polish education abroad and the negotiation of Polish migrants' identities, situating them in the global and local context of their socio-cultural reality. Regrettably, the majority of these studies, with the exception of Smolicz's works

published in English, were exclusively available in Polish. This makes it challenging for them to gain recognition in academic circles outside of Poland and could potentially lead to misinformation. For example, while a well-known and widely cited paper by Li Wei (2006) suggests that complementary schools began in the Afro-Caribbean community in the UK in the 1960s, Polish research indicates that Polish complementary schools were established in the UK much earlier (see Section 1.3).

Over the decades, types of HL programmes available across continents and countries have varied depending on the socio-political contexts and the status given to HLs within different societies and educational systems. Nevertheless, the aim of HL education research continues to lie in portraying the distinct educational experiences of HL learners and comparing them with those of L2 learners, as well as in investigating the challenges, opportunities, and pedagogical implications of teaching and learning HLs in a range of multilingual contexts (Peyton et al., 2001; Brinton et al., 2008; Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2014).

Recent research saw a growing interest in HL schooling globally and in the UK context (Creese et al., 2006; Cruickshank et al., 2023; Kagan et al., 2017; Liu & Hoare, 2023; Maylor et al., 2010; Nordstrom, 2016; Steenwegen et al., 2022a, 2022b; Trifonas & Aravossitas, 2018). In Li Wei's (2006) historical review of complementary schooling development in Britain, the author discusses the marginalised position of these schools in society and the challenges they faced at that time. Additionally, several national studies conducted in England examined complementary schooling on a larger scale, either regionally or nationally. These studies looked at the schools' provision, their functioning, their communities, and their influence on students' attainment (Martin et al., 2003; Maylor et al., 2010; Evans & Gillan-Thomas, 2015).

Many studies in the UK context explored community schooling as spaces offering opportunities for developing multiple identities. As a result, complementary schools were identified as places providing a "safe haven for exploring ethnic and linguistic identities while producing opportunities for performing successful learner identity" (Creese et al., 2006, p. 23; see also Martin et al., 2003). Researchers (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Creese & Martin, 2008) have also looked at Chinese and Gujarati complementary schools from the

perspective of language ecology in multilingual classrooms (Hornberger, 2002), describing and advocating for the use of flexible bilingual teaching pedagogies, such as translanguaging, to support bilingual learners. Wei (2014) has also explored translanguaging in the context of identity development in complementary schools and argues that complementary schools have the potential to transform societies as they generate space for “translanguaging practices where new configurations of language knowledge, cultural values and identities are generated and old understandings and structures are released” (p. 158). Wei (2013) also explored how Chinese migrant children learn language and cultural values in complementary school classrooms through the lens of funds of knowledge, symbolic competence, and translanguaging.

Complementary schools have also been explored through lenses of possible advantages they offer to their learners and wider communities. Francis, Archer and Mau (2009) explored Chinese complementary schooling in the UK through the lens of capital, founding a range of instrumental benefits and opportunities for developing cultural identities emerging from perpetuating Chinese as an HL in these schools. According to Nordstrom (2016), many parents enrol their children in Swedish complementary schools in Australia because they see it as an investment in the cultural capital of the Swedish language. Parents also viewed learning Swedish as a way for their children to connect with their Swedish identity and to feel a sense of belonging. In a study by Patterson (2019) on complementary schools in the UK, it was found that these schools play a significant role in building social capital. They provide opportunities for connecting migrant communities, organisations, and the larger society. Additionally, these schools can offer pupils and parents ‘progression capital’, which draws on and expands their cultural capital (Patterson, 2019). In addition, a recent study carried out in the Netherlands has investigated the potential of complementary schools in bridging the gap between home and school environments (Piqueray et al., 2016). These schools have been found to benefit their communities in various ways, extending beyond HL maintenance (Steenwegen et al., 2022b). Other emerging areas of interest include exploring teachers’ identity (Eckert, 2023; Nordstrom, 2020), management and leadership in complementary schooling (Souza & Arthur, 2020; Thorpe, 2018, 2023) to determine their influence of the HL provision.

Recent research also examines HL complementary schooling internationally, focusing on the implications, opportunities, and challenges for policy and practice in the new HL teaching and learning dynamics influenced by globalisation, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the rapid development of digital technologies (Cruickshank et al., 2023). MacLeroy and Anderson (2023) propose to look at HL schooling from a new perspective encompassing the effects of globalisation and digitalisation on HL literacy development in the young bilingual generations. Their Critical Connections Multilingual Digital Storytelling Project shows that using new technologies, Project-Based Language Learning, and Content Integrated Language Learning in HL provision can positively influence HL learners' motivation to HL literacy development through an innovative, creative and engaging model of HL learning involving drama, music and arts. Further research exploring the use of digital technologies for HL teaching and learning revealed that the transition to online provision during the Covid-19 pandemic opened up space for complementary school teachers' agency, enhanced parental engagement, innovation and collaboration that may enhance online HL provision internationally and facilitate greater use of new technologies for teaching and learning HLs in the complementary schools after the pandemic (Hancock & Hancock, 2023; Nordstrom & Jung, 2020).

Nonetheless, while research on complementary education during the pandemic is limited, there have been numerous challenges associated with the transition to online provision during the lockdowns in 2020 and 2021. Some of these challenges include technological and logistical issues, with teachers and students in some complementary schools facing limited access to necessary resources and equipment for effective online engagement (Hancock & Hancock, 2023; Young & White, 2022). Additionally, some families encountered logistical challenges with online learning, requiring parental presence conflicting with work and other commitments (*ibid.*). Complementary schools also highlighted the need for professional development in delivering online HL classes. Some schools were able to leverage their connections with mainstream education or received methodological support from national organisations like NRCSE (Hancock & Hancock, 2023; Young & White, 2022). Others found opportunities to share best practices among themselves. For instance, Polish schools in the UK established a Facebook group for principals of Polish complementary schools (Young & White, 2022). However, while these

opportunities promoted collaboration among complementary schools, there was no evidence of a strong partnership with the mainstream education sector or local authorities at the time (Hancock & Hancock, 2022). This marginalised position and a decrease in the number of enrolled pupils observed in many complementary schools during the pandemic, worsened their struggles. As a result, some of these schools experienced challenges with finances and renting premises, which forced them to suspend their operations or shut down permanently (Hancock & Hancock, 2022; Young & White, 2022).

Furthermore, although the shift to online instruction during the pandemic received a positive reception from many educators, parents, and students at complementary schools worldwide (Hancock & Hancock, 2023; Nordstrom & Jung, 2020; Young & White, 2022), it also presented social and psychological challenges that affected the school community and individuals. These included limited opportunities for social interaction, the inability to organise cultural events, and a lack of community-building opportunities, which a complementary school in Scotland referred to as “losing the community spirit” (Hancock & Hancock, 2023, p.36). Moreover, findings of national and international studies on online teaching and learning during the pandemic revealed that teachers, parents and pupils of mainstream schools faced similar problems related to the limited availability of resources, teachers’ training, equity implications, a decline in student engagement, limited interpersonal and community interaction (Bray, et al., 2020; Bray et al., 2021; Burke & Dempsey, 2020; Devitt, et al., 2020; Flynn, et al., 2021; Hatzichristou et al., 2021; Keane, et al., 2023; Kim et al., 2021; Okyere et al., 2023; Tadesse & Muluye, 2020; UNESCO et al., 2020; Van Der Spoel et al., 2020). Further implications on pupils’ mental health and wellbeing were also evident in Ireland (Quinn et al., 2021) and globally (Montero-Marin et al., 2023; Rogers et al., 2021; UNESCO et al., 2020).

In light of the mentioned challenges impacting individuals and communities, it is important to approach HL schooling from a comprehensive standpoint. This approach should not only focus on HL teaching and culture transmission but also address the social and emotional dimensions of complementary schooling, whether online or in person. Liu and Hoare (2023) advocate for viewing complementary schools as language communities of practice and developing new policies that would benefit not only HL learners but also wider

societies globally. Their multidimensional model for researching HL schools (Figure 5 below) proposes taking a holistic perspective, incorporating studying five key areas of HL schooling: social integration, emotional wellbeing, language maintenance, educational opportunity, and cultural inheritance (Liu & Hoare, 2023).

Figure 5: Multidimensional model for researching HL schools by Liu and Hoare (2023)



Note. Retrieved on 10.04.2024 from Liu, Y., & Hoare, L. (2023). Complementary schools as heritage language communities of practice: Reaching beyond language maintenance. In H. Pinson, N. Bunar & D. Devine (Eds.) *Research handbook on migration and education* (pp. 203-220). Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781839106361.00020>

While this study primarily focuses on HL maintenance and development and identity negotiation, all five key areas of interest mentioned above will be evident throughout the presentation of the findings (Chapters 4-6) and the subsequent discussion (Chapter 7). In addition, this study offers valuable insights into the impact of Covid-19 lockdowns on learning, teaching, wellbeing, and social interactions in Polish complementary schools in Ireland during 2020-2021 (Sections 5.4.3 and 6.4).

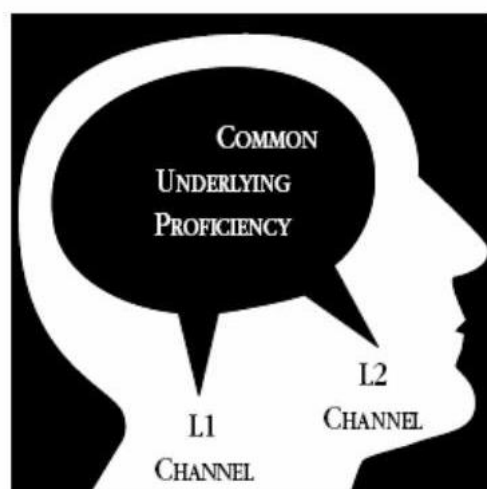
2.3.3 Research on Translanguaging and Cross-Language Transfer

Translanguaging refers to the simultaneous use of two or more languages, involving strategic practices in an educational context. The term has an educational origin as it was coined by a Welsh researcher and educator, Cen Williams, in the 1980s. It refers to a pedagogical approach that emphasises benefits in students' language development and learning outcomes through the systematic use of two languages within the same lesson or activity (Baker, 2011; Garcia & Wei, 2014). The concept has since developed and become one of the most important concepts in language education pedagogy and planning worldwide (Garcia & Wei, 2014). In the strong version of translanguaging, it is believed that there are no boundaries between languages and the common segregation of languages is based on historical monolingual perspectives, such as 'one nation – one language' that has been common around the world for centuries. Translanguaging allows switching between learners' languages to maximize their learning outcomes through the mediation of understandings and making sense of bilingual worlds (Garcia, 2009).

In his Thresholds Theory, Cummins (1977) proposed that for bilingual children to benefit from bilingualism on a cognitive level, they must obtain a certain level of linguistic proficiency in their second language. The threshold theory may also apply to minority children who may struggle with academic disadvantages, such as following the curriculum in their mainstream schools until (and, indeed, if) they obtain an appropriate level of proficiency in the language of schooling (Ardasheva et al., 2012). What is more, research into bilingual language development showed that it takes between three to five years to develop English oral proficiency, while academic English proficiency may take between four to seven years to develop (Hakuta et al., 2000; Baker, 2011). To understand it better, Cummins made a distinction between basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) that occur in support of context-embedded situations and cognitive/academic language proficiency (CALP) that develops in context-reduced academic situations (Cummins, 1979, 2021). Although this hypothesis was found to be informative for teachers and policymakers around the world, it is important to understand its limitations and note that the development of firstly BICS and then CALP in minority children may not be the case for all children (Baker, 2011).

Cummins' Developmental Interdependence Hypothesis (Cummins, 1979, 1981), is also important as it highlights the possible two-way transfer between languages of an individual due to a common underlying proficiency (Cummins, 2001, 2008). He has identified five potential types of cross-language transfer that can occur, depending on the level of support within the sociolinguistic setting. These include the transfer of conceptual elements, the transfer of metacognitive and metalinguistic strategies, the transfer of pragmatic aspects of language use, the transfer of specific linguistic elements, and the transfer of phonological awareness (Cummins, 2016).

Figure 6: The Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP) Model by Cummins (2005)



Note. Retrieved from: Cummins J. (2005) *Teaching for cross-language transfer in dual language education: Possibilities and pitfalls*, p. 4

It is important for diverse learners' linguistic potential to be acknowledged in language education policies and for the use of HLs to be supported in schools' language policies. However, this approach must be reinforced in classrooms by the use of multilingual pedagogies, e.g. translanguaging, for the transfer to occur (Cummins, 2016). Teachers' positive attitudes towards multilingualism also play a significant role, and it is important that they have received appropriate training in and access to using multilingual resources. It is crucial for multilingual learners to feel safe and supported in the classroom environment,

which enables them to feel proud of their HL and embrace their linguistic identity (Omidire & Ayob, 2022).

2.4 Linguistic Human Rights and Language Planning

2.4.1 Linguistic Human Rights in Global Perspective

Whenever individuals or groups using different languages are in contact, human rights are involved (sometimes invisibly, often taken for granted by the dominant language groups/individuals) as they negotiate their communication and language practices (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2012). Language rights and linguistic human rights (LHRs) are not the same; linguistic human rights are concerned only with those language rights “which are so basic for a dignified life that everybody has them because of being human; therefore, in principle no state (or individual) is allowed to violate them” (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2008, p. 109). Language rights are broader than LHR, and they remain subject to regional and national legal regulations, such as constitutions. Their broad scope can be observed in how they are legally defined:

fundamental rights protecting language-related acts and values. The term ‘fundamental’ denotes the fact that these rights are entrenched in the constitution of a country, or in an international treaty binding on that country (Mancini and de Witte, 2008, p. 247 in Skutnabb-Kangas 2012, p. 237).

Skutnabb-Kangas (2012) makes a distinction between collective and individual language human rights (LHRs). Collective LHRs aim to protect language groups from discrimination and ensure their right to use their language in public institutions, legal processes, social and economic contexts, as well as to transfer their language and cultural heritage to future generations (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2012; Rubio-Marin, 2003). International treaties often express collective rights within the framework of individual rights, such as Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which states that:

in those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, a child belonging to such a minority shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his group, to enjoy his own culture, to profess and practise his own religion, or to use his own language. (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2012, p. 241)

LHRs refer to the different ways in which individuals interact with different languages in their lives. These LHRs remain interconnected and impact an individual's and groups' identity, education, functioning in the structures of a society, and protection against forced assimilation (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2012, p. 242-245). For instance, identity rights refer to the right of individuals to use their language in everyday life, e.g. to express themselves in a language that they feel comfortable with and to choose to use their languages in various contexts. This right is essential for language preservation and the maintenance of cultural diversity at a national scale. Educational rights refer to the right of individuals to learn different languages through formal education. This includes the right to learn their mother tongue(s), second or official language(s), and foreign language(s). Understanding this right is crucial for conducting research on language acquisition and for the promotion of multilingualism as beneficial for individuals and societies. Functional rights refer to the right of individuals to use different languages in different situations and for various purposes. This includes the right to use different languages in the workplace, public services, and social interactions, as well as being provided with an interpreter in legal proceedings. Finally, the LHR right to not be pressured to assimilate refers to the right of individuals and groups to *freely* choose languages they want to use and transmit without fear of social or economic disadvantage, such as discrimination, marginalisation, or having to choose between one's heritage and one's future opportunities. This right is crucial for the protection of linguistic diversity, language rights and the linguistic and cultural heritage of indigenous and minority communities around the world (ibid.). Lack of respect towards LHRs may have serious consequences, especially in the context of unequal power relationships within multilingual societies. Neglecting or violating LHRs may lead to language shift or attrition among minoritized families or even hugely contribute to *linguicide*, which is a language death that brings social, political, and economic changes worldwide (Day, 1985; Skutnabb-Kangas, 1998, 2000).

Numerous international treaties have been issued in the 20th and 21st centuries to protect human rights, including Linguistic Human Rights (LHR), globally. The United Nations emphasized individual state authorities' obligation to support and protect LHR within their territory by ensuring that all individuals and linguistic groups/communities have

the right to use their language in all aspects of their daily life, such as education, administration, medical services, courts, media, culture, and socio-economic activities.

Linguistic rights can be described as a series of obligations on state authorities to either use certain languages in a number of contexts or not interfere with the linguistic choices and expressions of private parties. These might extend to an obligation to recognize or support the use of languages by minorities or indigenous peoples. (Izsak-Ndiaye, 2017:5)

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948 by the United Nations General Assembly, was one of the first documents that outlined human rights. Although the declaration does not focus on Linguistic Human Rights, it prohibits linguistic discrimination. It states that everyone is entitled to all rights and freedoms without any distinction based on any factors such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Moreover, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty (Article 2, UDHR). Furthermore, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, another treaty from the United Nations, adopted in 1966 and ratified by Ireland in 1999, secures ethnic, linguistic, and religious minorities' rights to celebrate their culture and language by cultivating their identities.

In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language. (Article 27, ICCPR, p. 179)

Although the Covenant does not elaborate specifically on LHR, the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (United Nations, 1992), inspired by the above article of the Covenant, focuses in particular on the rights of linguistic minorities. It notes that states should protect the identities of minorities within their territory and should take measures to ensure that minorities have an opportunity to learn their mother tongues as well as the culture and traditions associated with them.

The 2013 annual report prepared by Rita Izsák-Ndiaye (United Nations, 2013) brought attention to the endangerment of many minority languages as a result of the prevalence of national and international languages. The report delved into issues concerning minority languages, such as LHR recognition, minority languages in education and the media, and the provision of services in minority languages. Her book, *“Language Rights of Linguistic Minorities: A Practical Guide for Implementation”* (Izsak-Ndiaye, 2017), aims to inform practice and support the promotion of the rights of linguistic minorities. In the 2020 Report of the Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues (United Nations, 2020), Dr Fernand de Varennes focuses on language and the human rights of minorities in educational contexts. He emphasised that although minority members have the right to establish complementary schools providing education in their HLs, it remains unclear whose responsibility it is to financially support such schools as none of the general human rights documents directly regulate it.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child highlights a child’s LHR in five instances. Furthermore, Article 29, 1 (c) refers specifically to a state’s obligation towards ensuring that a child’s education is directed towards respecting one’s linguistic and cultural background as well as cultural and linguistic diversity present in the society and worldwide:

The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilisations different from his or her own. (United Nations, 1989:9)

In the context of this study, it is crucial to acknowledge the importance of LHRs of children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds who are growing up in today’s multicultural Ireland. Providing complementary education through a child's HL is an example of delivering their rights to explore and preserve their cultural heritage. Therefore, complementary schools can be seen as organisations safeguarding linguistic diversity and promoting inclusion and social justice on a national and global scale (Lamb, 2020).

2.4.2 European Guidelines on Languages and Cultures in the Context of Education

The recognition of all European languages as valuable cultural and linguistic resources has been a shared interest of the European Union (EU) and the Council of Europe (CoE) as outlined in documents and educational guidelines issued by these institutions. For instance, Article 165 (previously known as Article 149 TEC and earlier as Article 126 EC) highlights the European Union's commitment to promoting quality education by fostering collaboration among its member states and providing necessary support. The EU acknowledges the responsibility of individual member states for the content and organisation of their educational systems, as well as protecting and promoting their unique cultural and linguistic diversity. The EU's objectives include enhancing the European dimension of education through promoting student and teacher mobility, recognition of international qualifications, collaboration among educational systems, facilitating information sharing, supporting youth development and socio-educational exchanges, engaging young people in democratic life, and expanding remote learning opportunities. EU recommends collaboration with CoE in achieving these objectives.

Nevertheless, the history of protecting cultures and languages across Europe goes back to the European Convention on Human Rights, originally drafted by the Council of Europe in 1950, which strictly prohibits linguistic discrimination under Article 14:

The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status (Article 14, ECHR, p. 13).

In 1954, the European Cultural Convention was adopted in Paris by the CoE. It aims to promote the development of Europe's culture and European identity based on values respecting human rights, democracy, and a mutual understanding of the importance of cultural diversity across Europe. The Convention has been signed by 47 member states, including Ireland, and three non-member states. The Convention encourages the preservation and celebration of national contributions to Europe's common cultural heritage and diversity through collaboration at the regional and international levels, study of the languages, history and civilisation, as well as cultural initiatives.

In 1992, the Council of Europe created the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages to preserve and promote Europe's cultural and linguistic heritage. The Charter has the key aim of acknowledging, promoting and facilitating the use of minority and regional languages in both spoken and written forms. The document advocates for equal regard to be given to all languages, regardless of their official, regional or minority status. However, there were some issues with the Charter's scope and possible implications, particularly in the Irish context. The Charter defines 'regional or minority languages' as those that are traditionally spoken in a specific territory by a smaller group of people than the state's general population and differ from both the official language(s) of the state and the language(s) spoken by migrant populations residing within the state. Nevertheless, in its practical arrangements (Article 3 of the Charter), it refers to “regional or minority language, or official language which is less widely used on the whole or part of its territory” (Ó Murchu, 2004, p. 140). This creates ambiguity when it comes to possible practical implications of signing the Charter for the Irish language in Ireland, particularly regarding Article 8 of Ireland's Constitution, which recognises Irish as the first official language in the state, and existing policies on regional and minority languages in the Republic of Ireland (Ó Murchu, 2004). Additionally, the Charter excludes sign languages, which poses another issue for the Irish context since Irish Sign Language is legally protected and recognized as the State's native language in the Irish Sign Language Act (2017).

The European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) and Language Policy Programme, both divisions of the Council of Europe, aim to promote language learning, plurilingualism, and linguistic diversity in education. The Council of Europe has developed many instruments to support equity and quality in education, which have found practical use in language classrooms throughout Europe. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, and Assessment (CEFR), first published in 2001, is a well-recognized and widely used across Europe and beyond. CEFR was designed to promote plurilingual education by supporting the elaboration of language curricula and assessments. (CoE, 2001a). It is available in 40 languages and is continuously developing. Both the CEFR and the European Language Portfolio (CoE, 2001b), which is a tool for language learners to set learning goals and record progress, play crucial roles in the Council of Europe's initiatives aimed at enhancing language education, promoting the right to quality

education, and protecting the rights of minorities. The PRO-Sign project, developed between 2012 and 2015, created descriptors for sign languages, aligned with the CEFR reference levels to establish European standards for sign language proficiency for professional purposes, with a focus on sign language teaching and interpreting (Leeson, et al., 2016). Another Council of Europe project, between 2014 and 2016, aimed to develop illustrative descriptors for mediation, which is the fourth mode of language activity, along with reception, interaction, and production, present in the CEFR. (North & Piccardo, 2016).

Since the publication of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in 2001, resources, such as guidelines and workshops, have been developed to support its implementation and language curricula development. These guidelines include “The language dimension in all subjects: A handbook for curriculum development and teacher education” (Beacco et al., 2016a), *“Guide for the development and implementation of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education”* (Beacco et al., 2016b), *“From linguistic diversity to plurilingual education: Guide for the development of language education policies in Europe”* (Beacco & Byram, 2007), and *“Languages and Language Repertoires: Plurilingualism as a way of life in Europe”* (Beacco, 2005). They see plurilingual education as a response to the needs of multinational Europe, and plurilingual competence is an individual's ability to use their linguistic repertoire, consisting of languages of schooling, regional/minority languages, migration languages, and foreign languages, for a variety of purposes. Pluricultural competence refers to the ability to recognize and apply knowledge of the cultures associated with those languages. Intercultural competence is the ability to recognize and analyze the experience of linguistic diversity. The Council of Europe takes a holistic approach towards language education, considering all languages present in the school, whether as subjects or as part of other subjects. This means that language education takes part in every lesson and subject, not only during language classes, which creates opportunities for using language mediation to enhance the use of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach across subjects. The Council of the European Union issued a recommendation in 2019 regarding the teaching and learning of languages. The recommendation prioritises multilingual competence and identifies it as one of the eight essential skills for lifelong learning in a European Education Area. It encourages member states to adopt comprehensive approaches that enable and support young people in learning

foreign languages, with the goal of achieving an adequate level of competence in at least one European language other than the language of instruction. The recommendation also stresses the importance of promoting language awareness in schools and advocates for early language learning. Additionally, it highlights the critical need to provide support and training for language teachers and school leaders. The Annex accompanying the Council Recommendation delves into more detail about language awareness in schools and explores topics such as multilingualism in schools and vocational education, effective and innovative teaching methods, support for teachers, and partnership opportunities to enhance language teaching and learning in schools.

Over the last decade, the European Commission also organised multiple workshops and seminars followed by a number of guidelines issued (European Commission, 2018a, 2018b, 2020) that address current issues in language education in the EU, such as “*Rethinking language education and linguistic diversity in schools (2016-2017)*” and “*Migrant in European schools: learning and maintaining languages (2016-2017)*”. In 2019, the Council of the European Union issued “*The Council recommendation of 22 May 2019 on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages*” that places multilingual competence among the eight key skills for lifelong learning. The document encourages EU member states to use comprehensive approaches and support early language learning to enhance young learners’ foreign language education in line with the European strategy on multilingualism that recommends teaching two languages besides one’s mother tongue, commonly known as the Barcelona goal of “mother tongue + 2” since 2002 (Saville & Gutierrez Eugenio, 2016). According to the Council's recommendation of 2019, EU member states should focus on providing training for language teachers and school leaders. The Annex to this recommendation delves deeper into the importance of language awareness in schools and highlights the significance of efficient and innovative teaching, support for teachers, and partnership opportunities to improve language teaching and learning in schools.

In 2015, the European Commission and the European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe (ECML) began to cooperate on “Innovative Methodologies and Assessment in Language Learning”. It includes two initiatives: the development of Supporting Multilingual Classrooms and aligning language curricula, assessments, and

examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference (RELANG). Member states of the European Centre for Modern Languages and the European Union can participate in various training workshops every year as part of both initiatives.

Furthermore, other EU initiatives aiming at promoting multilingualism, especially significant in the context of this study, include the European Language Label Award and the European Day of Languages (celebrated on 26th September). In Ireland, both initiatives are managed by Leargas, a non-profit organisation managed by the Department of Education and Skills. The European Day of Languages is celebrated in some Polish complementary schools in Ireland. The European Language Label Award, granted to schools and institutions for excellence and innovative achievements in teaching languages, was in 2016 awarded to the Polish School in Galway, which remains the only Polish complementary school in Ireland to have received this distinction.

Finally, in 2022, the CoE adopted the “Recommendation to member states on the importance of plurilingual and intercultural education for democratic culture” (CoE, 2022). It aims to address two key concerns regarding language learning in diverse European societies, such as Ireland (see: Wallen & Kelly-Holmes, 2006). Firstly, the tendency of public authorities and wider society to assume that knowing just one additional language is enough. Secondly, the notion that minority or migrant languages hinder societal cohesion. The document highlights the cognitive, linguistic and social benefits of multilingualism, demonstrating the ways in which plurilingual and intercultural competencies may contribute to pupils’ educational attainment and enhance societal integration (CoE, 2022). Its strength lies in the emphasis on the need for collaboration between various stakeholders in language education, including public institutions and community-based initiatives, in order to achieve the common goal: fostering democracy.

2.4.2 Ireland’s Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education

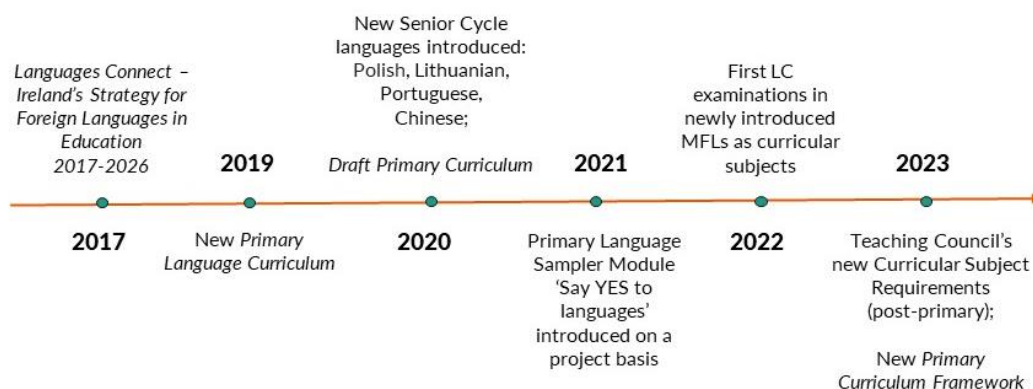
In 2017, the Department of Education and Skills (DES) introduced “*Languages Connect, Ireland’s Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026*”, followed by the “*Languages Connect Implementation Plan 2017-2022*”, to improve foreign language teaching and learning at all levels of the Irish education system and increase the

diversification of foreign languages provision for individual, societal, and economical benefits. The strategy was designed after conducting a series of studies and consultations with various stakeholders. The analysis of studies and nearly 80 responses to an online questionnaire launched in 2014, along with input from participants of two consultation events in 2015, indicated a strong need for consistent and sustainable foreign languages in education policy, increasing the number of languages to choose from for students, raising awareness in Irish society about the benefits of foreign language learning, recognizing the importance of immigrants' languages, and ensuring quality in teacher education, both initial and continued (DES, 2017a, p. 15). As a response to these needs, the “*Languages Connect*” strategy was developed as part of a broader “*Action Plan for Education 2016-2019*”, which aimed to improve the Irish educational system by enhancing the quality of teaching and learning, ensuring a supply of skilled teachers and educators in schools and in the higher education sector, and diversify the provision of foreign language learning opportunities. The plan also aimed to improve awareness of the benefits of language learning for career opportunities and for studying abroad (DES, 2017a, p. 15). The Languages Connect strategy is built on four overarching goals (DES, 2017a):

1. Enhancing language proficiency through the creation of a more engaging language learning environment.
2. Broadening and increasing the uptake of languages learned and cultivating the languages of the new Irish.
3. Raising awareness about the significance of language learning to promote the broader use of foreign languages.
4. Strengthening employer engagement in the advancement and use of trade languages.

The strategy initiated a series of significant changes in Ireland's language education (see Figure 7), including the publication of a new primary curriculum introducing mandatory foreign language classes in primary school and integrating four immigrant languages into the post-primary school curriculum. Chapter 4 discusses these developments concerning Polish HL education in Ireland.

Figure 7: Recent Changes in Ireland's Foreign Language Education



The Interim Review Report and Implementation Plan to 2026, published by the government of Ireland on the 28th of March 2024, provides an updated overview of the Languages Connect strategy's progress towards achieving its four goals. The report also includes a detailed implementation plan until 2026. Notable achievements highlighted in the report include, among others, the introduction of four new foreign languages for the Leaving Certificate, the implementation of a new specification for Modern Foreign Languages for the Junior Cycle, an increase in Foreign Language Assistants, and the roll-out of the Say Yes to Languages sampler module at primary level. Moving forward, one of the critical actions outlined in the Languages Connect Implementation Plan is the phased introduction of modern foreign languages for senior classes at the primary level, starting in September 2025.

While progress has been made in some areas, this report outlines concerns that still need to be addressed. One such concern is the decline of foreign language learning among post-primary students in Ireland. This trend, however, is mainly observed with French, as opposed to immigrant languages like Polish, which continue to see stable uptake in Leaving Certificate exams (see Chapter 4).

There is cause for concern regarding the number of foreign language teachers registering with the Teaching Council. Although there has been an 80% increase in registered MFL teachers over the past decade, this growth has been mainly among French, German, and Spanish teachers. Between 2012 and 2023, among teachers of French, there were 1355 newly registered teachers; among German teachers, there were 638 new registrations; and among

Spanish teachers, 674. The report states that between 2012 and 2023, the number of registered Polish teachers increased from zero to just four, and for Chinese teachers, it grew from zero to only one. Therefore, it is crucial to review the registration process for migrant teachers so that more languages can be made more widely available in Irish post-primary schools. This is particularly important given the significant number of non-Irish students in the Irish education system and the increasing demand for immigrant languages at the Leaving Cert. To address this issue, the action plan until 2026 includes working closely with the Teaching Council to improve the situation and increase the provision of newly introduced languages across Ireland's post-primary schools.

Other areas of improvement planned till 2026 include offering more language training to educators, increasing foreign language assistants in schools, providing mobility options through Erasmus+, reassessing foreign language courses, advocating for CLIL, and promoting lifelong language learning. Although the plan until 2026 includes meetings with embassies, cultural institutes' representatives, and enterprise sector representatives to discuss progress and collaboration in language learning, it does not list establishing collaboration with complementary schools. Nor does it acknowledge their existence and contribution to the successes of thousands of pupils who have been learning foreign and HLs in these schools at both primary and post-primary levels over the last two decades. While the report ensures that efforts will be made to prioritise actions supporting plurilingualism and multilingualism in Irish society, there is no recognition or planned action to recognise and collaborate with complementary HL education settings to achieve this goal under the current implementation plan to 2026.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

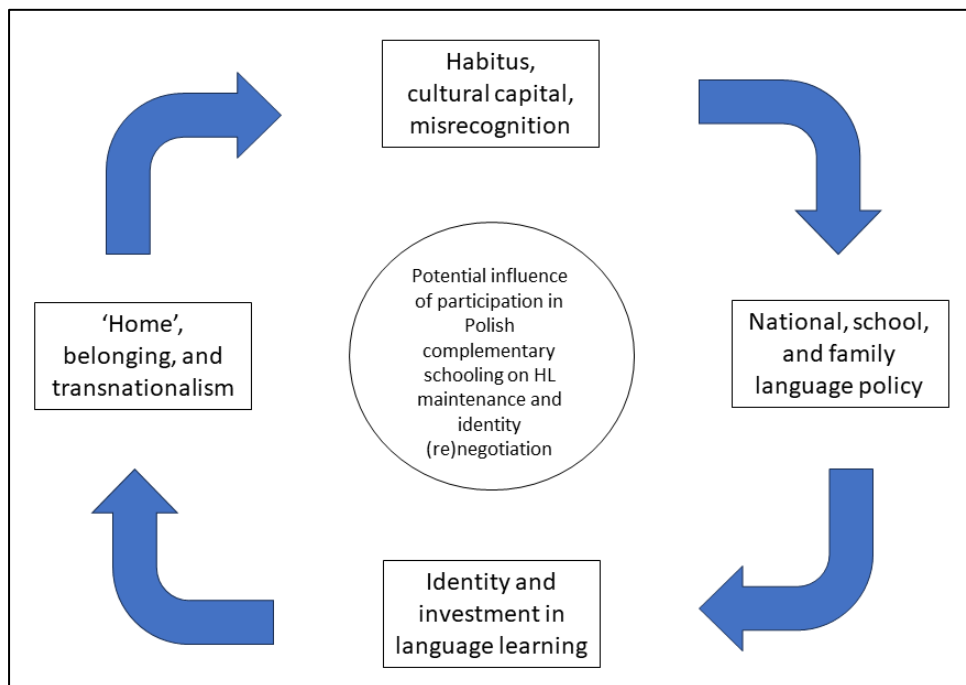
In this section, I will present the theoretical framework utilised in this study. Four theoretical lenses were chosen to aid the purpose of this research project:

- 1) Bourdieu's ideas of cultural capital and misrecognition (1977; 1991),
- 2) Darwin's and Norton's (2015) concepts of investment and identity in language learning,
- 3) the notion of belonging within transnational families (Antonsich, 2010; Zontini, 2004),

4) national and family language policy in the context of bi-/multilingual families (Spolsky, 2004; Schwartz, 2010; Curdt-Christiansen & Lanza, 2018).

As illustrated in Figure 8 below, I believe these theoretical frameworks complement one another and provide a comprehensive tool to explore the potential influence of participation in Polish complementary schools on migrants' maintenance and development of their HL, as well as their identity construction and (re)negotiation.

Figure 8: Interconnectedness of theoretical framework applied



According to Bourdieu (1977, 1991), habitus affects language policy across various fields, including family, school, community, and society. It directly influences the beliefs and practices of individuals and groups, shaping their conceptualisations of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1991), based on past and present experiences across social contexts. Within the realm of Family Language Policy (FLP), migrants make decisions regarding their investment in HL learning (Darvin & Norton, 2015) in response to their diverse cultural and linguistic

needs and the availability (or lack thereof) of HL resources in the national system of education (Lanza & Curdt-Christiansen, 2018; Schwartz, 2010). Engaging in HL learning in complementary schooling can potentially contribute to migrants' identity (re)negotiation by offering the opportunity to participate in a language community of practice (Liu & Hoare, 2023). As a result, it may further influence perceptions of 'home' and belonging among migrant families and individuals (Antonsich, 2010). The experience of migration and transnational living (Zontini, 2004) can shape migrants' habitus (Marshall & Foster, 2002) and challenge language policies and practices within families, schools, and broader societies (Lamb, 2015, 2020).

2.5.1 Habitus, Capital and Misrecognition in the Context of Migration

The concept of habitus lies at the centre of Bourdieu's theory of practice and his perspective on language and education. It is defined in his words as:

A system of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 53)

As a set of dispositions, habitus orientate (but do not determine) agents' everyday practices so that they act in certain ways and, based on their habitus, recognise what is or is not appropriate in the given circumstances as they navigate through various social contexts (fields) of their daily life: home, school, workplace, etc. These dispositions remain 'regular' without being consciously co-ordinated by any 'rule' and are described by Bourdieu with five features (Bourdieu, 1991, pp. 12-13):

- inculcated – acquired through inculcation, especially in one's childhood through learning in different environments (family, home, school);
- structured – they show social conditions in which they were acquired, such as one's class background;

- durable – they are deeply rooted in one’s body in such a way that they exist throughout one’s lifetime and operate in a pre-conscious way, not easy to be consciously changed;
- generative – able to generate multiple practices, perceptions, attitudes, and appreciations;
- transposable – able to operate in fields other than the ones they were acquired.

According to Bourdieu (1991), habitus provides people with a ‘feel for the game’, a ‘practical sense’ which is a ‘state of the being’ embodied in such a way that it becomes “a permanent disposition, a durable way of standing, speaking, walking, and thereby of feeling and thinking” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 13). The human body is thus seen here as a repository of dispositions and a site of continuous production and reproduction of practical schemes that originate from incorporated history and reproducing it at the same time (ibid.).

Agents navigate their positions within specific social contexts, which Bourdieu refers to as fields, markets, or games. According to Bourdieu, a field or market can be seen as a structured space of positions where the positions and their interrelations are determined by the distribution of different types of resources or ‘capital’ (Bourdieu, 1991). Capital, in Bourdieu’s understanding, is not only economic but also cultural or symbolic. Cultural capital includes knowledge and skills, while symbolic capital refers to prestige and honour. Linguistic capital would then be a part of cultural capital and refer to mastery of a language or a language variety (Bourdieu, 1991). A field becomes “a site of struggles in which individuals seek to maintain or alter the distribution of the forms of capital specific to it” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 14). The practices and perceptions of agents are shaped by the interplay between habitus and specific fields, rather than solely by habitus itself. All participants in a field share a fundamental belief in the game and the value of its stakes (Bourdieu, 1991). Incumbents, as the dominant players (not only individuals, but also institutions) are motivated to maintain the status quo in order to preserve their position in power, while insurgents seek to change the field in order to advance and gain more opportunities to exchange their capital to gain more power: “The state, as a superpower, can reorganise fields, dictate the conversion rate of capitals and, thereby, reinstitute the relations of force among the respective holders of various capitals in the fields” (Çelik, 2021, p. 524). Through

coordinated and planned actions of various governmental bodies, the state can change the rules of the game. For example, recent reforms in Ireland's language education, such as the inclusion of HLs in the post-primary senior cycle curriculum, have had a significant impact on the field of education. These changes reflect a shift towards recognising the value of minority languages in Ireland. These changes, made in response to the evolving demographic profile of the country, have the potential to influence the habitus of the school-age population and, hence, also impact the future of language education in Ireland and its future job market and economy.

Additionally, institutional and community players on the side of the migrant community have also played a role in shaping these changes. The Embassy of Poland, along with Polish complementary schools and the Polish Educational Society in Ireland, has been involved in raising awareness about the importance of introducing Polish into Ireland's post-primary curriculum for the benefit of both the migrant community and Irish citizens. Such actions modify the field of education so that knowledge of Polish might be recognised as a form of cultural capital by wider Irish society. This enhances opportunities for individual HL learners and teachers within the field of mainstream education, e.g. more students have the option to prepare for their Leaving Certificate in their mainstream post-primary schools, more Polish migrant teachers can be employed by mainstream schools that have Polish in their offer, the value associated with knowing the Polish language can increase the status of complementary schooling in Ireland. As recent studies show, "school's institutional habitus combines the communal values of the immigrant community and the middle-class academic practices; the former narrows the gap between home and school, and the latter modifies the classed feelings of students" (Celik, 2021, p. 522). Therefore, except for clearly unequal power positions, it is both mainstream schools and complementary schools that can influence pupils' educational trajectories and influence changes in the field of education through their institutional habitus and agency.

Moreover, it is crucial to recognise that one's background and childhood play an especially important role in shaping one's habitus and, therefore, shape what one does (and does not) recognise as capital. Therefore, the habitus of migrants and their children will be distinct from that of the native citizens of the dominant country because they grew up in

socio-cultural contexts where fields and power forces within them were shaped differently. The habitus of adult immigrants would then be mostly shaped by the circumstances that existed in their home country when they lived there. However, 1.5 and 2nd generation migrants will have their habitus influenced by both, to varying extents, their parents' culture, which is transmitted at home during everyday linguistic exchange in their HL, everyday practices, attitudes, holidays, and religious celebrations, as well as the culture of the host society which they acquire through their participation in various fields such as education, and interacting with both Irish citizens and migrants of diverse backgrounds. While under the strong influence of the Irish culture and Irish socio-political context, migrants' habitus and perceptions of capital remain also shaped by the very experience of migration and transnational experiences of building connections with new social networks within the host society while sustaining ties with networks in the home country. Nevertheless, it is crucial to recognise that immigrants come from diverse social backgrounds, including differences in social class, gender, and education, just like members of the dominant group in society. Immigrants do not represent a homogeneous group but rather consist of many sub-groups of similar but varying beliefs, practices, attitudes, and aspirations.

Furthermore, knowledge, in Bourdieu's view, is more than possessing certain information and knowing facts; it is also about having the ability to apply it effectively in different social fields that produce knowledge (James, 2015). Originating from the French word 'connaissance', knowledge involves *awareness* and *acquaintance* with implicit or tacit norms and 'rules of the game' which govern various social fields. Having the knowledge makes individuals able to navigate these fields successfully as they would be familiar with the underlying dynamics that operate in different social situations within the fields. According to Bourdieu, "Social reality exists twice, in things and in minds, in fields and in habitus, outside and inside of agents. And when habitus encounters a social world of which it is the product, it finds itself 'as fish in water' it does not feel the weight of the water and takes the world about itself for granted" (Wacquant, 1989, p. 43). On the contrary, when the habitus meets an unknown context, e.g. in the case of migrants in the host society, the feeling of 'not fitting in' appears as the rules and norms recognised within one's set of dispositions do not apply to the new context. Therefore, misrecognition, in Bourdieu's understanding, refers to a situation or action that is "not recognised for what it is because it was not

previously ‘cognised’ within the range of dispositions and propensities of the habitus of the person(s) confronting it” (James, 2015, p. 99). In the context of migration, this can be observed within some dominant societies and their educational systems where “some languages and identity options are, in unforgettable Orwellian words, more equal than others” (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004, p.3). When the language environment builds on the ‘monolingual habitus’ (Gogolin, 1994, 2002) or the “one nation, one language” ideology, it misrecognises the value of immigrant languages in education and society at large, especially in the context of the growing dominance of English due to globalisation. Research on the educational experiences of minority youth in the Irish context is currently limited. However, recent studies indicate that young people with a minority background are at risk of experiencing feelings of ‘otherness’, discrimination, and prejudice from their peers (Machowska-Kosciak & Barry, 2022; Sala Rothen & Mc Daid, 2023). They also may receive insufficient support from teaching staff who may be unaware of these issues or lack the necessary skills to address them (ibid.). Therefore, recognising the significance of social environments, such as schools, in creating knowledge as a form of capital associated with power and prestige (Bourdieu, 1991; James, 2015) is essential. This understanding leads to the conclusion that addressing injustice involves removing institutional barriers that prevent individuals from fully participating in social life on an equal basis with others (Fraser, 2007; Little & Kirwan, 2019; Valenzuela, 1999). Hence, by challenging the common misrecognition in society and the unequal power dynamics prevailing in the field of education, it becomes feasible to introduce new insights only when a different policy framework is embraced. Nevertheless, this can be accomplished not just through institutional policies, but also through everyday opportunities for comprehensive and critical re-education, both within formal educational settings and informal public spheres (Lamb, 2015, p. 152). This involves leveraging research findings and the resources available within society due to the increased linguistic and cultural diversity.

2.5.2 Identity and Investment in the Context of Language Education

Language and identity remain intertwined, especially in multilingual contexts where some identity options and language uses remain contested (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). This

study applies a poststructuralist lens on identity as constantly evolving. Hence, it “assumes different identities at different times, identities which are not unified around a coherent self” (Hall, 2002, p. 277) in order to understand how actions taken by Polish migrant children and their families aimed at maintaining their linguistic and cultural heritage are modified by power relationships existing in education and the wider Irish society. In Norton’s model of investment, identity can be seen as “how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is structured across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (Norton, 2013, p. 45). In this understanding, this study also acknowledges the increased range of identity options made available due to linguistic and cultural diversity (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004), while at the same time exploring how HL learners “who struggle to speak from one identity position may be able to reframe their relationship with others and claim alternative, more powerful identities” through deploying their agency in different contexts (Norton, 2013, p. 3).

The pivotal role of language in shaping culture and society greatly influences how social identity and ethnicity are formed and maintained (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 1982; Heller, 1987). As language is deeply rooted in socio-political conditions that influence language use and identity formation (Bourdieu, 1991; Heller, 1987) individuals’ linguistic practices may help them challenge or resist symbolic domination (Heller, 1995), and even achieve economic and social success (Haller, 2009). Therefore, language should be seen not merely as a means of communication but also as a powerful tool for gaining power and navigating one’s identity and social position. As such, it is widely used by individuals to influence other people’s position in a societal hierarchy by recognising differences in particular language uses (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 1). Moreover, language has the ability to influence individuals’ social participation in different settings and put them in more disadvantaged or advantaged positions. This can occur through the individual’s own actions or via language use by authorities to maintain the continuity of the mechanism of cultural reproduction as “every linguistic interaction, however, personal and insignificant it may seem, bears the traces of the social structure that it both expresses and helps to reproduce” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 2). For instance, language policy and practice in the education system can be used as a means of social control, illustrating monolingual ideologies present in society and limiting identity options available to language users and learners in the classroom

(Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). On the other hand, language practices can challenge this dominance and offer a broader selection of identities available in a particular place and time.

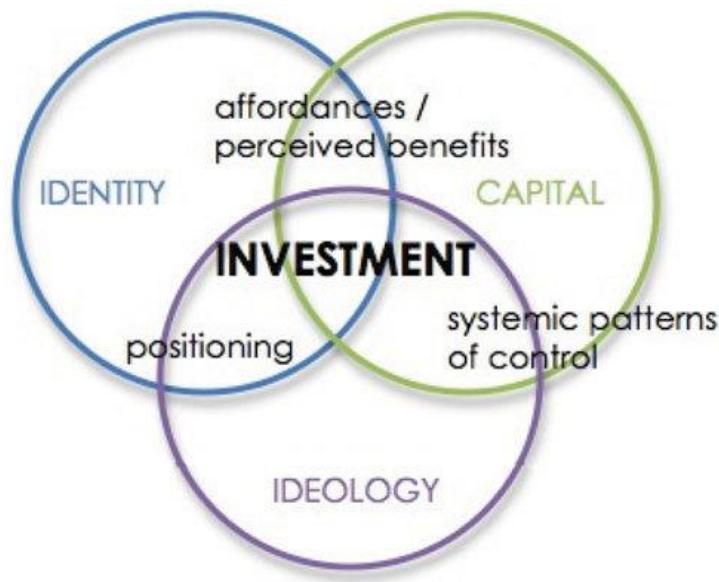
Norton's concept of 'investment in language learning' builds on the interplay between ideology, capital, and identity (see Figure 9). It sees language learners not as passive recipients of knowledge but as agents actively engaging in the task of developing language proficiency "with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will, in turn, increase the value of their cultural capital and social power" (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 37). As such, investment complements earlier attempts to understand learners' motivation to learn languages by portraying them as agents "with a complex identity that changes over time and reproduces in social interaction" (Darvin & Norton, 2015, 2021). It provides a framework to explore the dynamics of identity negotiation in language learning and how it can influence individuals' social positions. Drawing on Bourdieu's notion of capital, the notion of ideology is understood as:

Constructed and imposed by structures of power and reproduced through hegemonic practices and consent, ideologies are dominant ways of thinking that organize and stabilize societies while simultaneously determining modes of inclusion and exclusion, and the privileging and marginalisation of ideas, people, and relations (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 43).

Hence, individuals' and societies' perceptions of the value of various types of capital (economic, cultural, social) are closely intertwined with the prevailing ideologies within the socio-political frameworks in which they operate (ibid.).

The exchange of capital, just like the concept of identity, is deeply rooted in negotiation. Norton characterises identity as multiple, a site of struggle, and subject to continual evolution across time and space (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 36). This highlights the complexity and ever-changing nature of identity, which is influenced by various factors and experiences.

Figure 9: Darwin and Norton's 2015 Model of Investment



Note. Retrieved from Darwin, R., & Norton, B. (2015). Identity and Model of Investment in Applied Linguistics. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 35, p. 42.

Moreover, identity negotiation is crucial in determining an individual's investment in HL learning. This negotiation involves the process of constructing and affirming one's identity through language use, which can be influenced by factors such as culture and ethnicity. Moreover, interaction with family members further influences the (re)negotiation of a person's identity and their decisions about investment in HL learning. Decision-making is a dynamic process in which parents, children, siblings, and extended family members enact agency, mediate and control the values, meanings, and symbols of the cultural worlds in which these individuals exist (Smith-Christmas, 2022; Kerrane & Hogg, 2007). Personal beliefs are shaped through various interactions, influencing attitudes towards investment and capital. For instance, individuals who strongly identify with their ethnic group may be more willing to invest in learning the language commonly spoken within their community and family. Additionally, power dynamics and recognition in different fields can also influence an individual's commitment to language acquisition. In educational and professional contexts, language proficiency may be viewed as a crucial factor for success. Therefore, individuals may be more willing to invest in learning a language that, within a particular field(s), is recognised as crucial to gain “a wider range of symbolic or material benefits,

which will, in turn, increase the value of their cultural capital and social power” (Norton & McKinney, 2011, p. 75). Hence, it is crucial to consider individual and contextual factors when seeking to understand and support HL speakers as they engage in learning languages in multilingual contexts.

Through the lens of Wenger’s theory, (language) learning can be seen as a process of social participation in ‘communities of practice’ influencing the learner’s identity (1998). Anderson’s concept of nation-states as ‘imagined communities’ (Anderson, 1991) also links the learner with a larger community through the process of imagining “because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (p. 6). Drawing on the above concepts, Norton (2000, 2001) argues that language learners invest in language learning to be rewarded with belonging to a language community. The extent to which an individual invests in learning a language depends on a multitude of factors, including their negotiation of identity, agency, as well as the distribution of power within various fields and communities (Pavlenko & Norton, 2007). As such, the concept of investment in language learning is complex, often contradictory, and remains fluid (Norton, 2013; Norton Peirce, 1995).

2.5.3 Transnationalism and Belonging

The development of the concept of transnationalism in migration studies moved the scholars’ attention from portraying migrants as linearly moving to their new host society to seeing the complex and different patterns and networks that migrant families create while living abroad and maintaining links with their country of origin (Zontini, 2004, 2006). Those ties may include maintaining across-borders family/friends’ networks due to easier than ever communication through social media, video calling, text messages, more affordable long-distance transportation. Zontini (2004) emphasises the significant contribution of women in supporting their families and transnational communities. Developing links with heritage may also take the form of staying involved in more institutional initiatives, for example, through participation in migrant organisations operating in the host country, such as cultural associations or complementary schools. The diversity of choices that migrants take after

moving to the host country makes them seen as “social actors and not as passive victims, but which also considers the social, political and economic power structures, at the national and international level, which limit and influence their actions” (Zontini, 2004, p. 1123).

Research on transnationalism has influenced the understanding of maintaining relationships in migrant families that “live some or most of the time separated from each other yet hold together and create something that can be seen as a feeling of collective welfare and unity, i.e., ‘familyhood’, even across national borders” (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002, p. 3). Erlinghagen (2021) argues that migration is embedded both culturally and socially. The concept of a transnational family should, therefore, not be restricted to a geographical unit, co-residency or a physical household unit but take into consideration the spatial mobility of family members, maintaining geographically distant relationships while taking care of building kinship networks within and above state borders (Faist, 2000; Zontini, 2004).

Recent research has highlighted the correlation between transnational family life and the development of HL while living abroad. A study conducted in Ireland among Polish migrant families revealed that parental language strategies aimed at maintaining and strengthening their connections with Poland and fostering their families' ability to maintain a transnational style of living (Connaughton-Crean & Ó Duibhir, 2024). Furthermore, transnational movements have been shown to enhance children's HL outcomes (Chondrogianni & Daskalaki, 2023).

The above considerations remain closely connected to how Polish migrants perceive their belonging, which often informs their decisions regarding permanent settlement or return migration, influencing their daily language practices. Belonging is a complex concept that can be viewed from different angles. According to Antonsich (2010), place-belongingness refers to a personal and intimate feeling of being ‘at home’ in a place, while politics of belonging can be understood as “a discursive resource that constructs, claims, justifies, or resists forms of socio-spatial inclusion or exclusion” (p. 644). Regarding the first meaning, the place-belongingness of migrants can be influenced by various factors such as their future plans, economic situation, and social networks in both the country of origin and the host country, among others. For instance, during the economic crisis in Ireland in 2008, many Polish migrants chose to stay in Ireland despite the economic downturn. Their decision was

based on the feeling of having achieved a certain life standard in Ireland and the development of social networks (Krings, et al., 2010). On the other hand, some Polish migrants may choose to return to their home country out of a sense of obligation or because they do not feel ‘at home’, even if they know the language of the host society well (Nowicka, 2010; Slany & Ślusarczyk, 2013). Gilmartin and Migge (2015) conducted a study in Ireland that looked at the relationship between immigrant identity and place by focusing on the concept of home. The study revealed the importance of examining immigrants’ linguistic strategies as they construct their notions of home discursively.

However, belonging is not solely determined by individual choices and feelings. Political powers also have a significant influence on “who is included or excluded from the circle of those entitled to a just distribution and reciprocal recognition” (Fraser, 2007, p. 20). While this research project is not concerned with class-based and economic-based social injustice, it is important to bear in mind that without recognition, opportunities for official financial support for grassroots community initiatives, like complementary schooling, remain limited. Block (2018) argues that most language education research concerns recognition issues, e.g., culture- and identity-based injustices. He advocates for a focus on political economy and redistribution issues in language education to make sure new pedagogies and approaches are accessible to those who need them. This should include re-thinking how complementary schooling is financially organised to facilitate community integration and belonging.

2.5.4 Complementary School’s Relevance to Language Policy and Family

The term ‘language policy’ refers to the deliberate actions and decisions that are taken to influence language practices and aim at changing positions, perceptions and use of different languages within groups, e.g. societies and communities (Curdtt-Christiansen, 2009). As noted by Walsh (2012), numerous terms are used to describe efforts to influence language use, often used interchangeably or combined, such as language planning, language governance, language policy and planning. While the difference between policy and planning may seem blurry (Shohamy, 2006), it is important to recognise that attempts to influence language use that are government-led remain explicit at international, national, regional, and

institutional levels (e.g., international treaties, language legislation, language strategies, school language policies). Yet, they are also implicitly acknowledged and practised differently by individuals at all levels and across contexts and sectors, including community, education, and family (Curdtt-Christiansen, 2009; Shohamy, 2006; Walsh, 2012).

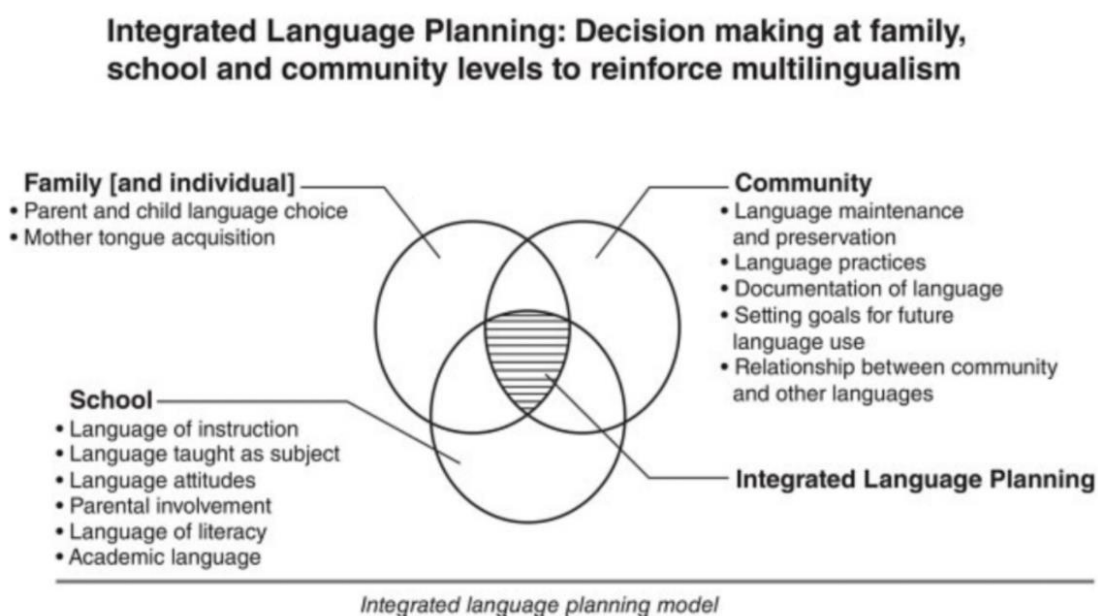
Spolsky's language policy model (2004) offers a comprehensive framework for investigating language policy by exploring its three components: language practices (language ecology among groups and individuals), language management (language planning), and language beliefs (ideologies about language and language use). Walsh (2012) proposes expanding this model by incorporating language governance, which “involves new concepts of civil society, social capital, political empowerment and participatory democracy” (p. 327), permitting different language groups to represent their interests through interaction between national, transnational, community, and grassroots organisations. In this context, complementary HL schools and umbrella organisations also play a role in influencing HL use among migrant communities and families, enriching the national linguistic landscape and democracy by preserving linguistic diversity (Lamb, 2020).

Researchers across the globe are in consensus regarding the ongoing necessity to develop language policies that would effectively tackle inequalities, monolingualistic ideologies, and the marginalisation that persists within multilingual societies and education systems due to a failure to recognise the value of societal and individual HL bi/multilingualism (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017; Chang & McLaren, 2018; Cruickshank et al., 2023; Cummins, 2008, 2017; Garcia et al., 2017; Hornberger, 2002; Jiménez Raya et al., 2020; Kagan et al., 2017; McCarty & May, 2017; Ní Dhuinn & Keane, 2023; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2008; Seals & Shah, 2017). Therefore, it is important to consider appropriate language planning when addressing these issues and shifting from viewing HLs as problems to recognising them as the rights of HL communities and valuable resources within multilingual societies (Ruiz, 1984). Lo Bianco's model of integrated language planning (Figure 10) emphasises the decentralisation of language decision-making by involving various stakeholders who bring their resources: schools provide formal language and literacy education, promoting positive language attitudes and involving parents to engage;

communities ensure the transmission and preservation of HLs and set goals for their sustainable future; and families ensure the acquisition of HLs within the home environment.

Moreover, he suggests that the ongoing transformations in societies, education, and learning on a global scale should encourage efforts “towards overcoming the notions of mainstream and side stream, centre and periphery, core and afterthought” (Lo Bianco, 2023, p. 10) to reimagine language teaching and learning. He views HL community schools as drivers toward a change that goes beyond integration and leads towards a long-term intergenerational multilingualism supported through new technologies and digital literacies (ibid.). Accordingly, it investigates the possible influence of language policy at both national and family levels on Polish migrants’ attitudes and use of Polish as a HL and on their perceptions of opportunities and challenges associated with HL education.

Figure 10: Integrated Language Planning Model by Lo Bianco (2023)



Note. Retrieved from Lo Bianco. (2023). Community/Heritage Language Schools Transforming Education. Beyond complementary, more than integration. In K. Cruickshank, J. Lo Bianco, & M. Wahlin (Eds.), *Community and Heritage Languages Schools Transforming Education: Research, Challenges, and Teaching Practices* (pp. 1-23). Routledge.

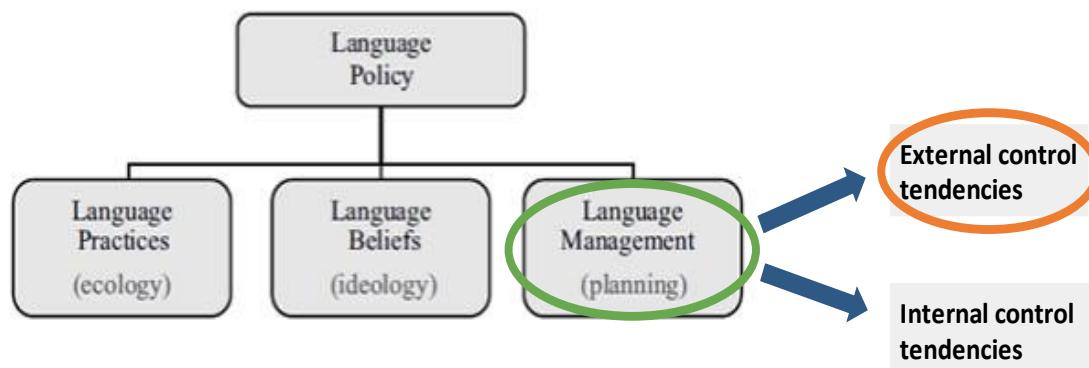
On the family level, FLP provides a framework to investigate the deliberate efforts of Polish migrants to establish specific patterns of HL use and literacy practices within the family and home contexts (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, p. 351). In recent years, FLP has garnered significant attention, particularly in Europe, due to the rise in migration and transnational families (Lanza & Curdt-Christiansen, 2018). According to King and Fogle (2017), FLP “provides a framework for examining child-caretaker interactions, parental language ideologies (including broader societal attitudes and ideologies about language(s) and parenting), and ultimately, child language development” (p. 315).

Based on Spolsky's model (2004), this study explores language ideologies, language practices, and language management among Polish migrants in Ireland, with a particular focus on the role of Polish complementary schooling in their FLP. Recent studies conducted with Polish transnational families in Ireland revealed that the transmission of Polish linguistic and cultural heritage to their children was perceived as an important part of being a Polish migrant parent or even as an obligation emerging from this role, as it was seen as central to children's development of Polish identity (Kealy, 2019). This study further explores how Polish family members' beliefs and opinions about languages and language use may be influenced by the broader socio-cultural and economic context of Ireland and migration, and by participation in HL complementary schooling. Hence, it delves into the language practices of migrant families and examines how evolving language ideologies may influence these practices. This entails studying the actual language use of family members and how they employ their language repertoires on a daily basis across various settings such as home, mainstream society, and complementary school environments. The study also explores the concept of language management among Polish migrants, which encompasses their efforts and strategies undertaken to ensure the efficacy of HL transmission within a family (Lanza & Curdt-Christiansen, 2018).

Schwartz (2010) pointed out that family language management can involve two main tendencies. The first is the search for external support in controlling the family language policy by seeking a socio-linguistic environment that aligns with their language goals. The second tendency involves exerting control over the home language environment (Schwartz, 2010). Complementary schooling is seen in this study as an example of the first tendency, as

it provides an educational and community-based space to support the FLP by facilitating the learning and use of heritage languages outside the home setting (see Figure 11).

Figure 11: Position of complementary schooling towards FLP



Note. Based on: Spolsky (2004) and Schwartz (2010)

Recent studies (Schwartz, 2024; Smith-Christmas, 2022; Szczepaniak-Kozak & Wasikiewicz-Firlej, 2024) see children, parents, and teachers as active agents influencing linguistic policies and practices of fields within which they live and function. As complementary education remains integrated into the everyday lives of migrant families through doing homework, learning assessments, and preparing for school cultural activities, it provides opportunities for various family members to actively engage in HL education beyond the Polish school classroom hours. Therefore, participation in community HL education is regarded here as a means of negotiating and influencing the existing linguistic context within and beyond the family. This study explores how this participation is perceived and negotiated by Polish migrant children, parents, and teachers.

2.6 Summary

In this chapter, I provided a thorough examination of bilingualism and HL education in the context of migration, delving into language rights and language planning at both European

and national levels. The literature review offered a contextual framework for understanding the implications of participation in complementary HL education, laying the groundwork for the subsequent data analysis and enriching our understanding of the complexity and depth of complementary schooling and the context in which it occurs. I have also detailed the four theoretical frameworks undertaken: 1) Bourdieu's ideas of cultural capital and misrecognition (1977; 1991), 2) Darwin's and Norton's (2015) concept of investment and identity in language learning, 3) the notion of belonging within transnational families (Antonsich, 2010; Zontini, 2004), and 4) national and family language policy in bi-/multilingual families (Spolsky, 2004; Schwartz, 2010; Curdt-Christiansen & Lanza, 2018). By employing these four theoretical perspectives, I aim to explore how attending Polish HL schools may influence students' maintenance and development of their HL, as well as their identity construction and (re)negotiation. The subsequent chapter (Chapter 3) will outline the methodology employed to investigate the relevance of complementary schooling at national, community, and family levels, its potential contribution to Ireland's language diversity and language education, and its influence on the bilingualism of Polish migrant children growing up in Ireland.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Research design lays out a solid core structure to best suit reaching the study objective, while research methodology provides theoretical background underpinning each step of conducting the project. When chosen and designed carefully, they both should enhance a detailed investigation and ensure that all parts of the project remain aligned and consistent with one another. Informed by previous studies, a well-thought research design supports the investigator in revealing new aspects of the complex phenomenon under observation.

In this chapter, the research design and methodology are thoroughly outlined to demonstrate their support for achieving the main objective of the study and their contribution to the discovery of meaningful results. The chapter begins with an overview of the study's focus and research questions, followed by an explanation of the selected paradigm and philosophical stance that govern the mixed methods research design and methodology employed in the study. Since the study involves interviewing individuals, including minors, ethical considerations are also addressed, including informed consent, data storage and access, transcription, potential risks and benefits from participation, and the measures taken to mitigate these risks. The multiple research methods used in this study are presented, along with the rationale behind their selection, design, and purpose within the research project. This includes an in-depth account of data collection approaches, as well as a description of the participant recruitment process. The last two sections of this chapter delve into the approaches chosen for data analysis and acknowledge the limitations of the methodology employed.

3.2 Focus of the Study and Research Questions

As outlined in the previous chapters, there has been a great increase of Polish migrant families in Ireland after 2004. Also, Ireland's school demographic profile has changed significantly, with thousands of pupils of foreign backgrounds currently attending mainstream schools at each level of the education system. Since the beginning of the Polish

community settlement in Ireland, there has been a visible interest in maintaining and developing the Polish language among the young generations, observed in the rapid emergence of numerous Polish complementary schools and associations across Ireland since 2005. Since 2005, which is before the national curricula were updated to accommodate HLs in Ireland's primary and post-primary education, complementary schools have been providing HL and culture classes for pupils of Polish background of all ages, including the preparation for the Polish Leaving Cert examination.

This research project centres around the phenomenon of Polish complementary schooling in Ireland. Its main objective is to investigate the role of attending complementary schools on HL maintenance and development, as well as its possible influence on identity (re-)negotiation among migrant pupils of Polish background and their families living in Ireland. Research questions aim to provide specific directions for the research study and narrow the broad scope of interest into sub-areas connected to the main research focus (Cresswell, 2012). They emerge from the main objective of the study as stated above, as well as the literature review and researcher's positionality, and are underpinned by the chosen paradigm and methodology described in detail in the following sections. The rhetoric of research questions reflects the main objective of the study which is to *explore, describe, and understand* the investigated phenomena. This study aims to contribute to the current understanding of complementary education's role within migrant families, as well as in the greater Irish society, through quantitative insight into characteristics of complementary schools' aims and provision, as well as qualitative exploration of experiences and perceptions of Polish schools in the eyes of Polish migrant pupils, parents, and teachers.

Therefore, this research project aims to address the following research questions:

1. Considering recent developments in Ireland's national language and education policies, what are the goals, designs, and perceptions of Polish complementary schools in Ireland among Polish migrant pupils, parents, and teachers?
2. In light of migrants' perspectives on 'home' and belonging, what are the reasons behind participation in Polish complementary education, and what advantages and challenges are

associated with involvement in HL education in Ireland? (Do participants' viewpoints align or conflict with one another?)

3. Considering language beliefs and practices in Polish migrant families, how may attending Polish complementary schooling influence the maintenance and development of HL and the (re)negotiation of identities among Polish migrant pupils, parents, and teachers in Ireland?

4. What were the implications of COVID-19 on teaching and learning in Polish complementary schools during 2020-2021?

The research questions mentioned above were explored using the data collection methods outlined in the subsequent sections. The analysis outcomes will be presented in Chapters 4 to 6, and the final discussion and conclusions will be covered in Chapter 7.

3.3 Research Design and Methodology

A mixed-methods research design has been chosen to best suit the goal of this research project. A combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods offers rich insight into the phenomenon of complementary schooling, which remains an under-researched topic in Ireland.

Mixed methods research has been referred to as a research paradigm (Gunasekare, 2015) and a research methodology (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, 2010). In the first understanding, mixed methods research (MMR) is seen as a 'third paradigm', alongside qualitative and quantitative research approaches. As a methodology, MMR refers to utilising qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study or series of studies in data collection, data analysis, integration of findings and drawing inferences (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003; 2010). MMR has benefited studies in many disciplines, including sociolinguistic and educational research: "Researchers in various disciplines were integrating qualitative and quantitative methods long before the field of mixed methods formally emerged, and typologies were established" (Denzin, 2010, p. 422). It has gained more interest and recognition as a methodological approach after the publication of the *Handbook of Mixed Methods Research* by Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003; 2010) and the emergence of the *Journal*

of Mixed Methods Research in 2007. Deriving from both qualitative and quantitative methodological traditions, MMR provides an opportunity for innovation and flexibility in exploring different ways of combining various research methods, as well as for richness in exploring a research problem through addressing diverse research questions (Guest, 2013; Sammons & Davis, 2017; Teddlie & Sammons, 2010).

MMR can be used to: a) test findings from first data collection phase, e.g. following-up a quantitative phase with qualitative methods to gain a more detailed insight into a research inquiry; b) explore qualitatively in order to develop quantitative data collection method, or vice versa, e.g. qualitative interviews in order to develop questions for a quantitative survey; c) provide a deeper understanding of the research problem than it would be possible if using either qualitative or quantitative approaches alone. Therefore, MMR can be quantitatively or qualitatively driven, meaning that quantitative data can be secondary to qualitative data, or vice versa: qualitative data can be secondary to quantitative. Moreover, quantitative and qualitative data can be collected or concurrently (at the same time) sequentially (qualitative collected prior to quantitative data, or quantitative data collected prior to qualitative data).

A convergent mixed methods design has been chosen as I believe that it allows to explore the role of Polish complementary schools on a deeper level, not possible to reach when using a single approach, either quantitative or qualitative. Using the convergent (or parallel or concurrent) MMR, qualitative and quantitative data were collected simultaneously, datasets were then analysed separately, and results were compared in order to see whether they complemented or contradicted one another. It is believed that such research design allows the balancing of the strengths and weaknesses of each dataset collection method alone (Creswell, 2008). This research project is mainly qualitatively driven and quantitative data is seen as complementary to qualitative in-depth inquiry. Data from the questionnaire for Polish schools, such as information about subjects taught, operating times, number of teachers employed, number of pupils attending, registration status, etc., aimed to bring contextual information about complementary schooling to better understand individuals' experiences with it. In this way, quantitative data complemented qualitative data leading to an enriched understanding of the individuals' perception of the role of

complementary schools, and placed it in the national context, e.g. the context of current reforms in the language education policy in Ireland, to enhance holistic understanding of the studies phenomenon and its possible implications for individuals as well as the entire society.

Therefore, MMR has been chosen for the following reasons:

- quantitative data collected through desk research brought detailed information about the national context of Polish language use and provision in Ireland;
- using the quantitative and qualitative data collected through the online questionnaire filled in by principals of Polish complementary schools provided a detailed picture of the Polish complementary schooling provision that has never been available in Ireland before;
- semi-guided interviews and language portraits helped to gain an in-depth insight into the experiences of pupils, parents and teachers engaged with these schools;
- through comparing the analysis results of both, quantitative and qualitative data, MMR allows us to see in what ways the results complement or contradict one another, and thus, provide an in-depth understanding of the researched inquiry;
- applying the MMR approach also supports increasing the reliability of the study's findings through triangulation, that is, corroborating different types of data from different methods of data collection (Creswell, 2008).

Employment of triangulation in this study included three types of triangulation as identified by Denzin (1970, 1978): data triangulation, methods triangulation and theory triangulation. Data triangulation included collecting data from different sources. Data for this project was collected with 10 different Polish complementary schools, instead of one school, to present differences and similarities among these schools, which has never been revealed in such detail in previous studies involving complementary schools in Ireland. To understand parents, children and teachers' experiences with these schools, i.e. their perceptions of the school programme and teaching approaches, one needs first to understand how each of these schools operates and what their language provision looks like in detail. Consequently, to capture different perceptions and multiple perspectives on participation with different types

of Polish schools in Ireland, thirty-four interviews were conducted to present the perspectives of pupils, parents, and teachers and how they align or contradict.

Methods triangulation included using multiple quantitative (desk research, an online questionnaire) and qualitative research methods (semi-guided interviews and language portraits) in data collection. Application of multiple methods in a study has been claimed to enhance data validity, enrich understanding of the studied phenomena and provide more opportunities for confirmation of findings (Bekhet & Zauszniewski, 2012; Fusch et al., 2018). Using qualitative data helped to gain a deeper understanding of various factors influencing participants' experiences with Polish schools, while quantitative data helped to picture Polish schools from both a broad perspective of national language and education policy in Ireland and a narrow perspective showing how each school operates within their local Polish migrant community.

Theory triangulation includes using multiple theories or worldviews when investigating a phenomenon. For this study, a pragmatist stance combines beliefs in both 'objective' reality and subjective 'experiences' of this reality by individuals (further details provided in section 3.4). Moreover, theory triangulation in this study included looking at the studied phenomenon through the lenses of four theoretical frameworks: language policy in bi-/multilingual families (Spolsky, 2004; Schwartz, 2010; Lanza & Curdt-Christiansen, 2018), Darwin's and Norton's (2015) notion of investment and identity in language learning, and Bourdieu's concepts of cultural capital, and misrecognition (1977; 1991), transnationalism (Zontini, 2004) and belonging (Antonsich, 2010) in migrant families. Such application of triangulation emphasises rich insights emerging from applying the above four theoretical perspectives during the data analysis process.

3.4 Research Paradigm and Philosophical Stance

The term *paradigm* refers to a worldview, set of beliefs, values and philosophical assumptions, that guided me as the researcher through the research process (Lincoln et al., 2011; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Schwandt (2001) defines paradigms based on Kuhnian understanding (1962) as: "commitments, beliefs, values, methods, outlooks, and so forth,

shared across a discipline” (p. 183-184). A paradigm should not be mistaken with a *philosophical stance* which may be understood as “pragmatically justified perspectives or ways of seeing” (Boucher, 2014, p. 2331). Each paradigm consists of philosophical assumptions about the nature of reality (ontology), the nature of knowing (epistemology), as well as about the role of value systems in research (axiology) (Patton, 2002). As such, paradigms guided the research methodology (the way I designed and conducted the inquiry) and the research rhetoric (the use of language in research) (Lincoln et al., 2011; McChesney & Aldridge, 2019; Schwandt, 2001).

Between the 1980s and 1990s, there was a debate among scientists (also referred to as the ‘paradigm war’) over the compatibility of worldviews and methods used within a study (Gage, 1989). Some researchers argued that research methods should be aligned with particular philosophical, epistemological and axiological assumptions. For instance, quantitative research methods were often seen as ‘correct’ in research framed under the post-positivist paradigm, while qualitative methods were associated with the interpretivist paradigm. This dichotomy was based on the main epistemological and ontological assumptions constituting these worldviews. In post-positivism, similarly to positivism, there is one objective reality. Knowledge about it can only be *obtained* and *measured* through quantitative methods (e.g. questionnaire, survey) that allow researchers to create hypotheses and general theories. Through interpretivist lenses, reality is seen as subjective, depending on individual experiences and seen through the eyes of individuals, and as such, it can be *explored* through qualitative research methods, such as interviews and observations.

Pragmatism may be seen as a middle point on the continuum between post-positivist and interpretivist research as it encourages plurality of methods and worldviews in order to use ‘what works best’ for investigating the particular researched problem/central phenomenon (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019). As such, pragmatism is common in mixed methods research studies (Biesta, 2010; Creswell, 2008; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The advocates of pragmatism claim that embracing various philosophical and epistemological approaches allows the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). Although pragmatism is said to support the richness of the research questions through exploring and bringing together multiple viewpoints, its critics

point out that many studies framed under the pragmatism paradigm lack precisely stated philosophical and epistemological stances, which may negatively affect research cohesion and, in consequence, question research validity and credibility of findings (Hall, 2013).

Pragmatism as a philosophy emerged in the US in the late 19th century. It was developed by, among others, William James (psychologist), John Dewey (educationist and reformer in the field of social work), Charles Sanders Peirce (philosopher) (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019). Action (from the Greek word ‘pragma’) lies in the centre of pragmatism. Pragmatists view human actions as shaping both individual and socially shared beliefs. These beliefs originate from experience and help predict future experiences. They are intangible from context, meaning that if the context changes, the consequences of the same actions will be different. This constant state of change and becoming is caused by human actions (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019; Morgan, 2014).

The core of pragmatism as a research paradigm lies in change and transformation. According to Kaushik and Walsh (2019, p.11), the primary goal of pragmatism is to generate practical knowledge that can be applied to make a purposeful difference in practice. This approach is particularly promising in social research because it focuses on addressing concrete issues, such as social inequality and discrimination, reflecting a commitment to advocating for social justice (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019; Morgan, 2014). In the context of this study, which intersects sociolinguistics and educational linguistics (Hornberger, 2001), the aim is to explore the practical implications of HL teaching and learning for HL maintenance and identity negotiation among the Polish migrant community. Through this, I seek to fill the gap in research on complementary schooling in Ireland and connect it to a broader discussion on more inclusive approaches in language education policies and practices. Consequently, although mostly qualitative driven, this project is framed within a pragmatic paradigm that guides both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis approaches, leading to a comprehensive understanding of HL complementary education (Patton, 2002).

3.5 Ethical Considerations

In line with the *National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-making (2015-2020)* issued by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA, 2015),

this research project enabled active participation of children and young people by providing them with a platform to express their perspectives on issues affecting their lives, such as the maintenance of linguistic and cultural heritage through home practices and engagement in Polish complementary schooling. Through their involvement in this study, they were offered a safe space where their voices could be heard, with an assurance that their input would be taken seriously and could potentially influence HL policies and practices through the dissemination of this study's findings.

Research ethics of projects involving human subjects should involve considerations of “norms and standards of behaviour that researchers are expected to follow” (Connolly, 2003, p. 4) to ensure the protection of the rights and welfare of all study participants (Stanley & McLaren, 2007). The research policy at TCD places a strong emphasis on safeguarding the wellbeing of individuals and groups at risk of vulnerability, such as people under 18 years old (children). To ensure the safety of all participants and minimise any potential risks stemming from data collection, storage, and access, this research project has been carried out in strict compliance with the *Trinity Policy on Good Research Practice* (TCD, 2014, 2024), *TCD Data Protection Policy* (TCD, 2020), and the *Guidance for developing ethical research projects involving children* (DCYA, 2012). Furthermore, I completed the Trinity College Dublin GDPR Training module on Data Protection, IT Security, and Data Management (Module CPDDPITSDM-A-Y-201718) on 20.01.2021. I have also undergone a successful Garda vetting process, and my clearance disclosure was issued on 04/03/2022 (Appendix O).

The Research Ethics Committee, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences, Trinity College Dublin, considered ethical approval for this research project and approved it in full on 19/05/ 2021 (REC Approval Letter attached in Appendix N). As outlined in the following sections, ethical considerations applied in this study include the design and implementation of standards aimed at “utilising an approach that is sensitive to diversity, cultural values and the social and cultural context in which research is conducted” (Stanley & McLaren, 2007, p.35.).

3.5.1 The Gatekeeper

Gatekeepers play a prominent role in facilitating researchers' access to study sites and stakeholders and communicating information about the study and recruitment process to potential participants (Andoh-Arthur, 2019). In this research project, the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Dublin served as the Gatekeeper who forwarded an email invitation to all Polish schools in Ireland. The Embassy's central position within the Polish migrant community allowed for an impartial connection with principals and managers of Polish complementary schools in Ireland, as well as the individuals under their care, such as students and teachers. The choice to engage the Embassy as the intermediary was based on its representation and protection of the interests of all Polish people and organisations in Ireland. The Embassy can reach out to potential participants due to its authority, knowledge, and extensive network within the Polish migrant community in Ireland. Additionally, the institutional nature of the Embassy enhanced trust, safety, and protection of rights, including data protection rights. The Embassy was tasked with distributing the invitation to participate in the study to the principals and managers of Polish schools via email, allowing potential participants to respond directly to me or my supervisors using the provided contact details. Further details about the participant recruitment process are outlined in section 3.6.3.

3.5.2 Participant Information Leaflets and Informed Consent

Participants who indicated their interest by reaching out to me or the supervisor received the Participant Information Leaflet (Appendices H, K, & L), leaflet (Appendix F), poster (Appendix G), and Explicit Consent Form (Appendix I). Parents also received the Parental Consent Form for those Under 18 (Appendix J). The PIL was tailored into three versions: one for children (using simple language) (Appendix H), one for parents (Appendix K), and one for teachers (Appendix L). All materials were available in both Polish and English to accommodate linguistic preferences. PILs provide information in a Question and Answer format, covering the following topics: project title, organiser and funder details; contact information for researcher and supervisors, data controller; reasons for conducting the study, eligibility criteria for participation, voluntary participation and the right to withdraw,

description of the interview process, potential benefits and risks of participation, data storage, access, and security details, and contact information for the Data Protection Officer at TCD.

Special attention was given to ethical considerations to safeguard the wellbeing and interests of participants at risk of vulnerability. In research involving human subjects, the term ‘vulnerable’ refers to individuals such as children/minors, adults with learning difficulties, people with life-threatening conditions, marginalised individuals and groups, and others who are considered to have higher levels of dependency and limited capacities to provide valid informed consent. Consequently, they may be at increased risk of their interests, rights, and welfare not being accurately protected (Gordon, 2020). To the best of my knowledge, there were no participants with disabilities or life-threatening illnesses involved in this study. To ensure that each child participant was protected from harm and discomfort, special ethical steps were taken in line with the *Trinity Policy on Good Research Practice* (TCD, 2014, 2024) and *Guidance for developing ethical research projects involving children* (DCYA, 2012). Parents received Participant Information Leaflets (PILs) when they expressed interest in their children participating, allowing them to make an informed decision. Simultaneously, a Child PIL was sent, and parents were encouraged to discuss it with their children. Parental Consent Forms were obtained prior to each interview. Additionally, I verbally presented the Child PIL to each child participant and obtained their verbal assent before commencing their interview. Both the Child PIL and Assent Form were written using child-friendly language to ensure the participants' full understanding and agreement to participate. Children were only interviewed in the presence of their parents. If a child wished to withdraw from the study at any point, their decision would not be overridden by the parental consent form. In fact, one young participant expressed a desire to withdraw from the study after completing their Language Portrait due to dissatisfaction with their drawing. As previously stated, the wellbeing of the child participant was prioritized over research interests and parental consent. Consequently, to prevent any pressure or discomfort for the child, their participation in the study was promptly discontinued. I also reached out to the child's parent to ensure that the child's wellbeing was not impacted in any way.

All participants were provided with a period of 5-7 days to study the PILs and make an informed decision about their/their children's participation before I contacted them seeking their consent. Written consent was obtained in one of the following options:

- A paper signed consent form (hard copy)
- A scanned copy of a signed consent form sent by email
- A digitally signed consent form by email
- A completed consent form with a typed name from a verified email address (without signature).

All participants were encouraged to ask questions at any point during the research process before and after obtaining informed consent. The PILs provided contact details for reaching me or the supervisors. Additionally, I thoroughly explained the information in the PILs and addressed any questions at the start of each interview. I made sure to respond to participants' inquiries via email, phone, or in person as needed, both before, during, and after the data collection process.

3.5.3 Data Storage and Access

As per information provided in PILs and in line with the requirements of the Research Ethics Committee, audio recordings of the interviews remain retained for the period of 7 years and stored in a secured MS One Drive folder, with access limited only to me and the main supervisor only. Deletion of audio/audio-video recordings takes place after the thesis has been completed and assessed, in line with the regulations. The record of who accessed/changed participants' personal data was recorded automatically in MS OneDrive. It allowed to see details about each file's modification date, the person who modified it and file size. It also allowed them to restore each version of the file in case of any errors occurring. Access to the folder and files containing participants' personal and/or sensitive data collected was restricted to me and the main supervisor only.

3.5.4 Data Transcription and Pseudonymisation

To ensure participants' data protection, I transcribed and simultaneously pseudonymized all the recordings of interviews. Pseudonymisation included changing participants' names to random names (the key code was only accessible to me and the main supervisor), surnames deleted from the interview transcripts in full, and names of particular Polish schools mentioned replaced with a general phrase 'Polish school', and their location was taken out of the transcripts. Every care was taken to maximise the anonymity of participants and keep information about the study site confidential.

Participants were given details about the data transcription and pseudonymisation processes in the PILs. They were also informed about the option to review or make changes to their interview transcripts at a later time. Additionally, they were assured that if they wanted to access their transcript in the future, they could get in touch with me or the main supervisor to arrange it. All the participants' rights as data subjects and the procedures for exercising those rights were thoroughly explained in the PILs.

3.5.5 Potential Risks and Benefits of Participation

As topics such as identity and language use were discussed during the interviews, there was a potential risk that the participants might have felt uncomfortable, stressed or embarrassed. Possible interview participants were made fully aware of any potential risks/discomforts in advance. They were given appropriate time (5-7 days) to study the PIL so that they could make an informed decision about their/their children's participation. Children could take part only in the presence of a parent/carer. If a participant felt uncomfortable with discussing some topics, these were skipped or the interview sessions were paused, according to their wishes. They were also assured they could withdraw their participation at any time without any further consequences and had a right to object to any further processing of the information about them (except where it is de-identified).

I made sure to provide all participants with all relevant information about my positionality as a researcher-practitioner and the study goals in the PILs so that they could make an informed decision before deciding to participate. Nevertheless, I was fully aware that some participants may have felt less comfortable engaging in a conversation due to my

role as a Polish teacher. In particular, young participants might have been sceptical or perhaps even afraid of some kind of judgement. I assured them that I would remain neutral and that their opinions and experiences were to be explored, not judged in any way. All the participants were also assured that the invitation to take part in the study was not in any way binding and that it was their own decision whether they wished to participate in the study. I took all steps to avoid placing any pressure on participants before, during and after their interviews.

Because HL schooling was discussed with participants during interviews, there was a potential benefit for them around gaining a better understanding of HL learning and teaching in Ireland in addition to having an opportunity to reflect on the maintenance of the Polish language and culture within their communities and families. For some participants, it may have been positive that I have been involved in teaching in Polish schools in Ireland as they might have felt more relaxed knowing I was ‘an insider’. Having a migrant background might have been helpful in developing a trusted relationship with some participants so they could feel safe, understood and willing to share their opinions. To facilitate two-way knowledge exchange between academia and community/research users (European Commission et al., 2020; Wilson et al., 2010), participating Polish schools were offered free workshop opportunities for parents and children about bilingualism and language awareness in school-age children. Four Polish complementary schools expressed their interest. In total, I delivered 3 workshops for children and 6 meetings for parents (both online and in-person) in these schools in 2021-2023.

3.6 Research Methods

Research *methods* are not synonymous with research *methodology*. While methodology provides a theoretical framework underpinning the research, methods are the specific tools implemented to gather data (Watkins & Gioia, 2015). Therefore, while methodologies sit within broader and abstract paradigms, “methods are tools and that, in the hands of researchers with certain methodological persuasions, they can be used to promote social justice, maintain the status quo, or promote social transformation” (Greene, 2002 as paraphrased in Hesse-Biber, 2010, p.13).

Having considered the research paradigm, philosophical stance, and methodology employed in this study (see Sections 3.3 and 3.4), the following methods of data collection have been chosen to best serve the study objective and research questions:

1. Desk Research
2. Anonymous online questionnaire for Polish school managers/principals,
3. Semi-guided interviews with Polish complementary schools' pupils, parents, and teachers
4. Optional Language Portrait task for children participating in the semi-guided interviews.

The rationale for each research method has been provided in the table below.

Table 6: An overview of research methods and their rationale

Approach	Methods of data collection	Results	Rationale
Qualitative	Individual semi-guided interviews with Polish migrant children, parents, and teachers	Total of 34 interviews conducted: 14 interviews with Polish complementary schools' pupils, including 2 former pupils who recently resigned from attending; 8 interviews with parents of pupils currently attending a Polish complementary school, including one parent of a former pupil; 12 teachers, including 9 who at the same time were parents of children who were attending a Polish school, and 3 who were Polish schools' principals;	To provide an in-depth insight into Polish migrant children's, parents', and teachers' experiences with and perceptions of Polish complementary schools.

	Language portraits (children participants only)	9 language portraits collected	To allow children participants to reflect on their own bilingualism, biculturalism and the ways they perceive the role of the Polish schools in both.
Quantitative	Online questionnaire for Polish complementary schools' managers/principals;	10 responses to the online questionnaire received from Polish schools' managers/principals	To provide detailed information about the Polish schools' goals, programme design and provision in order to better understand data from in-depth interviews.
	Desk research	Secondary data from reports produced by national and international bodies, such as CSO, NCCA, PPLI, ESRI, OECD	To provide a broad (national) context for qualitative and quantitative data collected in this study.

3.6.1 Desk Research

Desk research, also known as secondary analysis, refers to “a variety of research techniques that make use of publicly accessible information and data” (Schaefer, 2017, p. 142). This includes, but is not restricted to, consulting and re-analysing data coming from: previous research conducted in the field, public statistics and reports published by national and international governmental and non-governmental institutions and organisations, census data collected by national statistics offices (Babbie, 2008; Bednarowska, 2015). Especially in the context of educational research, Gorard (2002) argues that “the potential of secondary data, might actually empower novice researchers, enabling them to critique established work and to conduct powerful and informative analyses of their own” (p.231). Although the use of secondary statistical data does not come without its limitations such as common errors and

reducing social phenomena to numbers that not fully reflect their complex nature, it may be useful and complementary to small scale research projects using in-depth research methods (like this study) by embedding them in a broader (e.g. national) context (Smith, 2008). Moreover, comparing to primary research methods such as qualitative interviews, the use of secondary data assisted me by reducing time and financial costs of data collection, enabling easy access to publicly available databases, and bringing the possibility of looking at a larger sample collected (Babbie, 2008; Bednarowska, 2015; Hofferth, 2008).

As outlined below and in Section 4.1, the desk research in this study examines the latest developments and limitations in HL education in Ireland to explore the implications of these findings for understanding the role of complementary education within Ireland's social and educational landscape.

Purpose and design of desk research in this study

As a secondary method, desk research undertaken here aims to complement findings coming from in-depth qualitative interviews and to put these findings in a wider context. The purpose of desk research here is to explore how immigrant HLs (focusing on, but not limited to, the Polish language in Ireland) are addressed in research and national language education policy and practice. It offers an insight into teaching and learning Polish in Ireland's mainstream schools as well as in Polish complementary schools through providing the newest statistical data obtained from national institutions, such as the Central Statistics Office (Ireland), State Examinations Commission (Ireland), National Centre for Curriculum and Assessment (Ireland), Post-Primary Languages Ireland, Centre for Development of Polish Education Abroad (Poland). Through desk research, changes in approaches to HL education in Ireland were mapped based on an analysis of recent national documents and reports, such as Languages Connect national language strategy, primary and post-primary curricula and syllabuses', (Primary Language Curriculum, Polish Junior Cycle short course and Polish Leaving Cert specifications), reports published by: the National Centre for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), Post-Primary Languages Ireland (PPLI), the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Moreover, it brings information on the current curriculum for Polish

schools abroad issued by the Polish Ministry of Education. Therefore, the desk research conducted in this study enables a critical examination of the latest developments and enduring limitations in HL education in Ireland. It also provides an opportunity to explore the implications of these findings, which is essential for understanding the role of complementary education within the broader context of Ireland's language and education context.

3.6.2 Anonymous Online Questionnaire

The anonymous questionnaire for Polish complementary schools aimed to provide a detailed exploration of the similarities and differences in the operations of Polish complementary schools in Ireland. It was specifically directed to the principals/managers of Polish complementary schools in Ireland, as they possess the most comprehensive information about the schools they oversee. The questionnaire served a dual purpose: first, to establish a comprehensive profile of Polish complementary education provision in Ireland, a level of detail not previously included in national studies; and second, to supplement the information obtained from semi-structured interviews by gaining a more in-depth understanding of the realities experienced by members of the complementary schools' community. The questionnaire was designed to be anonymous: no email addresses or names were required to participate. For the participants' convenience, access to the questionnaire was available in Polish and English.

Questionnaire Layout

The questionnaire was created using Microsoft Forms software due to its ability to create a highly structured format for clarity, while also maintaining a user-friendly design to encourage participation (Cohen et al., 2017; Oppenheim, 1992). The questionnaire consisted of 61 questions, including 51 quantitative questions, 10 qualitative questions, and a text box for participants' comments at the end (see the Online Questionnaire in Appendix R). The open-ended qualitative questions explored topics such as schools' objectives, challenges and accomplishments, allowing participants to elaborate freely. To ensure clarity, the

questionnaire was divided into nine sections. The table below outlines the topics covered in each section, the types of questions used, and the rationale behind their inclusion.

Table 7: Online Questionnaire Layout and Rationale

Section Number	Topics covered	Types of Questions	Rationale
1	Information about the research project and the researcher	Single choice 'yes/no' question	Securing Participant Informed Consent.
2	Data Protection and Participant Rights	Single choice 'yes/no' question	Securing Participant Informed Consent.
3	School's registration type, mission, goals, operating times, details about pupils enrolled (number, place of birth, age), language requirements, fees	Multiple choice, single choice, matrix, open-ended	To profile types of Polish complementary schools in Ireland and explore differences and similarities in ways they operate.
4	Subjects taught, education level covered, extra-curricular activities in offer, Polish Leaving Cert course, holidays celebrated	Dropdown, multiple choice, open-ended	To explore in details these schools' Polish teaching provision.
5	Number of teachers employed and volunteers helping in the school, teachers' qualifications, Teaching Council registration, teachers' recruitment	Single choice, open-ended	To portray teaching workforce and recruitment requirements and additional training opportunities taken by teachers.
6	Collaboration with other schools, organisations, institutions and community groups, parental engagement	Multiple choice, single choice, rating scale, open-ended	To explore ways in which these schools may collaborate with other institutions/organisations.

7	School's operating modes during the pandemic in 2020-2021, parental, children's & teachers' engagement with online teaching and learning, implications of national lockdowns	Multiple choice, single choice, rating scale, open-ended	To explore the implications of Covid-19 pandemic in 2020-2021 for complementary schooling in Ireland.
8	School's biggest achievements and challenges so far	Open-ended	To discover greatest achievements and challenges from the point of view of these schools' managers/principals.
9	Thank you & Your comment	Text box	To provide participants with an opportunity for leaving their comments

The sections included a brief description below their respective titles, along with information about the multiple-choice options when provided. Sections 1 and 2 outlined details about the research project, potential risks and benefits of participation, the questionnaire structure, data protection, participant rights, and contact information. Each of these sections concluded with the mandatory “Yes” or “No” response to the statement: “I understand the above information and agree to participate in the study”. After confirming familiarity with sections 1 and 2 by clicking “Yes”, participants were allowed to proceed to the main body of the questionnaire (sections 3-8). The questions in sections 3-8 were all optional to reduce any pressure on the respondents and let them choose the information about their schools that they wished to disclose voluntarily. In addition, the questionnaire included a brief thank-you note at the end of the questionnaire, along with a text box for participants’ optional comments (Cohen et al., 2017). The estimated time to complete the questionnaire was 20 to 25 minutes, and the information about the time commitment was included in section 1.

Questionnaire administration

Questionnaires were administered online to provide ease of access during the Covid-19 pandemic period, the timeframe during which my data was collected. I prepared an email

invitation to participate in the study (Appendix M), which included the link to the questionnaire form and information about the questionnaire, the study, and contact details for me and my supervisors. The Embassy of Poland in Dublin served as the gatekeeper for this study, forwarding the invitation via email to all 52 Polish complementary schools in Ireland in early June 2021. The aim was to gather a diverse and representative data sample, including small and large schools from urban and rural areas across Ireland.

Sample collected

Data was collected from June to November 2021. During this time, I received ten (N=10) responses filled in by Polish schools' principals, which represented nearly 20% of the 52 Polish complementary schools operating in Ireland at that time.

3.6.3 Semi-guided Individual Interviews

Semi-guided (semi-structured) interviews have been widely used in the fields of social science and applied linguistics for many decades (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002; Talmy, 2010), with their increased popularity as a research method seen particularly in recent studies investigating people's identities, beliefs and experiences (Talmy, 2010). Semi-structured interviews were chosen as a research method for this study as they allow an in-depth insight into the research problem through the diversity of participants' views and opinion.

Interviews are seen as "active meaning-making ventures" (Mann, 2010, p. 5) as they always include social interaction between the interviewee and the interviewer (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995). In this understanding, the role of the interviewer (interviewing researcher) is also active as he provides his input into the content of the interview (Mann, 2010). In semi-structured interviews conducted, my contribution in the co-construction of the interview can be seen, for example, in approaching participants with a pre-planned set of core questions as well as prompt questions. Moreover, as Mann (2010) claims, ideas, views and stories exchanged within an interview are never isolated, they are co-produced by both parties: the interviewee and the interviewer. Being a social and discursive event makes each interview enacting its own context where each opinion is possibly influenced by the communicative

structure of the entire interview (Briggs, 1986; Mann, 2010). To be able to properly understand this context and report participants' viewpoints without bias, I needed to encourage not only self-reflexivity but also participant-situated reflexivity (Riach, 2009; Perera, 2019). This has been done both in the moment of the interview, as well as after, when some time has passed, to allow reflection from a temporal distance (Riach, 2009; Weick, 2002). Riach (2009) argues that a participant's reflexivity may go beyond critical reflection; it may include an epistemological aspect when a "participant consciously considers themselves in relation to their own production of knowledge" (Riach, 2009, p. 365). In such cases, acknowledging a participant's reflexivity enhances capturing the meaning better and provides an additional lens for analysing data from the interview (Riach, 2009).

For the transparency of methodology applied in research, researchers should acknowledge whether their position in the interviewing process was active or not (Mann, 2010). In this research project, I was an active interviewer as a consequence of my positionality as a researcher-practitioner (see Section 1.2). Therefore, information about my role and the purpose of the research project were clearly stated in the Participant Information Leaflets and at the beginning of each interview or in response to a participant's question at any time. Additionally, it was also stated in the PILs that taking part in the interviews may provide participants with an opportunity to reflect on their own practices and experiences as migrant children, parents, and teachers in Ireland.

Interview design

At the beginning of each interview, I collected the following background information: the participant's age, length of residency in Ireland (born in Ireland/less than 5 years/6-10 years/over 10 years), estimated size of the Polish school they attend (large: over 500 pupils; medium: 100-500 pupils; small: less than 100 pupils), and the school location (city/town/village).

There were different sets of questions designed for each participant category: pupil, teacher, and parent, available in both Polish and English. Designing three separate sets of interview questions allowed me to adjust the language style and content to each group of

participants, taking into consideration their age, educational/professional background, and role within their Polish complementary school population. Employing the mixed methods methodology has been reflected in interviewing 3 participant groups: children, parents, and teachers participating in Polish schools in Ireland. It allowed me to gain various perspectives on the same issues. In the case of teacher-parent participants (those who were both teachers and parents at the same time), questions from both sets were used (those for teachers and those for parents).

Questions prepared for the interview were open-ended. This type of question aims to encourage the interview participants to open up and share their experiences via elaborative answers (Jamshed, 2014). Each set of questions included core questions (of a broader scope) and several prompt questions connected to them, that would seek more detailed information. This design was intended to allow the participants to elaborate on their experiences with learning and teaching Polish in Ireland as well as to encourage them to reflect on various aspects of the role of Polish complementary schools in the maintenance and development of the Polish language and culture in their migrant families. Investigated issues were looked at from three different perspectives: of pupils, parents, and teachers as shown in the table below.

Table 8: Examples of core interview questions for each group of participants and rationale

Questions to Group 1: Parents	Questions to Group 2: Children	Questions to Group 3: Teachers	Rationale
Which country do you consider your home?	Which country do you call your home?	Which country do you consider your home?	To investigate perceptions of home and belonging

How, in your opinion, attending a Polish school may influence your child's identity?	Do you think that attending the Polish school changes/contributes to the way you see yourself? How?	How, in your opinion, may attending a Polish school influence pupils' identity?	To explore perceptions of possible influence of attending Polish schools on pupils' identities
How would you describe your child's engagement with the Polish school?	What do you like and dislike in your Polish school?	How would you describe pupils' engagement with Polish schools?	To investigate pupils' engagement with and experiences in complementary schools
Please tell me about your engagement as a parent with your child's learning in Polish school?	Please tell me if and how your parents help you with learning (for example doing homework) for Polish school.	Please tell me about the engagement of your pupils' parents in their children's learning process at Polish school.	To explore parental engagement with complementary schools
What advantages and disadvantages of participation in Polish school do you see?	What benefits and challenges of attending Polish school do you see?	What advantages and disadvantages of participation in Polish school do you see?	To explore perceived challenges and benefits associated with participation in complementary schools
How, in your opinion, attending the Polish school may influence your child/ren's future?	How attending Polish school now may help you in the future?	How, in your opinion, the future of Polish language and Polish education in Ireland will look like?	To explore perceptions of future associated with Polish complementary schooling

In addition to core questions, interviewees were asked additional prompt questions, based on their answers provided. They were always allowed an opportunity to elaborate on these parts of their experiences that they wanted to describe in detail, e.g. teachers often

reflected on their way of becoming complementary school teachers in Ireland and their experiences in this job. A complete list of interview questions is available in Appendix P.

In order to capture the responses better, qualitative interviews in this project were audio-recorded, and these recordings were then transcribed, pseudonymized, and translated (see Section 3.5 *Ethical Considerations* for more details).

Recruitment Process

To approach potential interview participants, I contacted the Embassy of Poland in Dublin on 25/05/2021, after obtaining full approval for data collection from the Research Ethics Committee (Appendix N). To invite Polish schools to the study, the Embassy forwarded an email invitation that I shared with them to 52 Polish schools operating in Ireland at the time (Appendix M). The email included a text invitation to Polish school communities to participate in the study, mine and supervisors' contact details, information about the study, participation criteria, and attachments: the Participant Information Leaflets and promotional materials: poster and leaflet (Appendices F & G). Polish schools were requested to disseminate the information among their school community, including students, parents, and teachers. Prospective interviewees responded to the invitation by reaching out to me directly using the contact information provided in the PILs. They were then provided with the PILs/Child PLs and Consent Forms. I addressed any inquiries they had about the study or their involvement before scheduling their interviews. All materials, including PILs, consent forms, questionnaires, interview questions, brochures, and posters, were available in Polish and English to ensure linguistic accessibility. No compensation was provided for participation in the research for either individuals or school participants, as outlined in the PILs.

Participants' Identification

I conducted semi-guided interviews with pupils, parents, and teachers from Polish complementary schools. I intentionally chose a mixed group of participants to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the same issues from three distinct perspectives. This

approach allowed me to compare their views to determine whether they aligned or contradicted one another.

To participate in the study, certain criteria needed to be met. For parents, the criteria included being Polish nationals residing in Ireland, having at least one child aged 6-16 who was attending a Polish complementary school, and for teachers, being Polish nationals residing in Ireland and currently working as a teacher in a Polish complementary school. As for the children, they were required to live in Ireland, be between the ages of 6 and 16, attend a Polish complementary school in Ireland, and have at least one Polish parent. During the study, there was a situation where two siblings, Mateusz and Marysia, along with their mother, Milena (all pseudonyms), had initially expressed their interest in participating in the study while they were still attending a Polish school in the summer of 2021. However, by the time their interviews were scheduled for autumn 2021, they had made the decision to no longer attend the Polish school. Despite this change, I proceeded with their interviews as planned since their initial interest was expressed while they were still enrolled at the school, and their decision to discontinue attendance occurred after the interviews were scheduled. Furthermore, considering they had been part of the Polish school for more than 5 consecutive years at the time of scheduling the interviews, their insights into the studied phenomena were likely to be valuable. Additionally, their reasons for leaving the Polish complementary education were of interest, as this study did not involve individuals who had this experience.

Participants' characteristics

Fourteen children, including 6 boys and 8 girls, participated in this study. The children's ages ranged from 6 to 16. Out of the 14 children, 8 were born in Ireland (2nd generation), while 5 were born in Poland and migrated to Ireland in their early childhood (generation 1.5). One of the girls, Kornelia, was born in England and moved to Ireland with her parents three years before the interview. Seven out of 14 children had parents from different countries. Four of those seven had an Irish father or stepfather and a Polish mother, while the other three had an Indian father and a Polish mother.

Table 9: Children participants

Pseudonym	Age	Years in Ireland	Role	Additional information	Language Portrait
Max	7	Born in Ireland	Pupil	Ola's son and Robert's brother. Attending his 1 st class in Polish school located in an urban area.	YES
Robert	9	Born in Ireland	Pupil	Ola's son and Maksymilian's brother. Attending his 1 st class in Polish school located in an urban area. Previously attended another Polish school that was located in rural area.	YES
Kornelia	8	3 years	Pupil	Pupil in a Polish school located in an urban area. Born in England to a Polish mother and an Irish father. Moved to Ireland 3 years prior the interview.	YES
Damian	16	12 years	Pupil	Pupil of a Polish school located in an urban area, attending secondary school level. Migrated to Ireland with his Polish parents when he was 4 years old.	YES
Aine	6	Born in Ireland	Pupil	Pupil of a 1 st class primary school level in a Polish school located in an urban area. Daughter to a Polish mother and Irish stepfather.	YES
Kasia	10	5 years	Pupil	Daughter of Agata, in attendance of Polish school in an urban area where Sabina works. Her father is Irish (not interviewed). Born in Poland, moved to Ireland at the age of 5.	NO
Weronika	10	Born in Ireland	Pupil	Daughter of Alina, in attendance of 5 th year of primary school level in Polish school in an urban area where Alina works. Has an Irish father (not interviewed).	YES
Mateusz	12	5 years in Ireland	(Former) pupil	Was attending a Polish school based in an urban area since the age of 6 till 5 th class, and recently resigned. Born in Poland, moved to Ireland when he was 6	NO
Marysia	13	6 years in Ireland	(Former) pupil	Mateusz's sister, was attending a Polish school based in an urban area since the age	NO

				of 7 till 6 th class, and recently resigned. Born in Poland, moved to Ireland with her parents when she was 7	
Izabela	11	Born in Ireland	Pupil	In attendance at a Polish school in an urban area. Previously attended a Polish school in a rural area. Sister of Ada and Ewa.	YES
Ada	9	Born in Ireland	Pupil	In attendance of a Polish school in an urban area. Previously attended a Polish school in a rural area. Sister of Izabela and Ewa.	YES
Ewa	7	Born in Ireland	Pupil	In attendance of a Polish school in an urban area. Previously attended a Polish school in a rural area. Sister of Izabela and Ada.	YES
Norbert	16	9 years in Ireland	Pupil	Krystyna's son, Marcel's brother, attending a secondary level in Polish school located in an urban are. He has been in attendance in the school for 10 years.	NO
Marcel	7	Born in Ireland	Pupil	Krystyna's son, Norbert's brother, attending 1 st year primary level of Polish school located in a city about 50km from their hometown	NO

Out of the 20 adult participants, eight were parents, and 12 were teachers. Among the teachers, nine had children and three held dual positions as both teacher and principal in their Polish schools. Of the 20 participants, two were male (one being a teacher and a father), and 18 were female. The adult participants all belonged to the first migrant generation, having been born in Poland and migrated to Ireland as adults. The length of residency in Ireland varied among the participants. Barbara had the shortest residency period, having lived in Ireland for three years but spent over 15 years living in England before moving to Ireland. On the other hand, Maria and Ilona had the longest residency in Ireland, which was 16 years. The average length of residency in Ireland among adult participants was 10.1 years.

Table 10: Adult participants

Pseudonym	Years in Ireland	Role	Short Description
Bronek	15 years	Parent	Father of two children (5 years old and 6 years old, not interviewed) who were born in Ireland, both attending a Polish school located in an urban area
Ola	10 years	Parent	Robert's and Max's mother. Single parent.
Milena	6 years	Parent	Mateusz' and Marysia's mother. Married to a Polish husband.
Krystyna	7 years	Parent	Max's and Norbert's mother. Married to a Polish man from the Silesia region (not interviewed)
Monika	12 years	Parent	Mother of Ada, Izabela and Ewelina. Married to an Indian immigrant in Ireland.
Lila	15 years	Parent	Mother of two, her son has recently started attending a Polish school located in a suburban area. Married to a Polish husband (not interviewed).
Paulina	11 years	Teacher, parent	Mother of Weronika and Szymon (he was not interviewed), teacher in a Polish school located in an urban area. Married to an Irishman.
Renata	5 years	Teacher, parent	Teacher in two Polish schools, one located in urban, one in rural area. Mother of two boys (not interviewed) who are in attendance of Polish school where she works.
Maria	16 years	Teacher, principal, parent	Teacher in Polish school located in rural area. Polish teacher in mainstream post-primary school in rural area. Mother of two who previously attended a Polish school in an urban area.
Ewelina	5 years	Teacher, parent	Teacher in Polish school located in rural area. Mother of a child attending another Polish school in a suburban area.
Agata	5 years	Teacher, parent	Mother of two (her daughter Maja was interviewed in this study). Teacher in Polish school located in urban area.

Honorata	11 years	Teacher, Parent	Teacher and principal of a Polish school located in urban area. Mother of a pupil attending the same school (not-interviewed).
Martyna	10 years	Teacher	Teacher in a Polish school located in an urban area.
Berta	5 years	Teacher, parent, principal	Teacher and principal in Polish school located in an urban area. Mother of a pupil attending 6 th year of primary level in the same school (not-interviewed).
Lidia	10 years	Teacher, principal	Teacher and principal in Polish school located in an urban area.
Sabina	5 years	Teacher	Teacher in Polish school located in an urban area.
Kamila	10 years	Parent	Parent of two attending Polish school located in an urban area.
Ilona	16 years	Teacher, parent	Teacher in Polish school located in a rural area. Mother of a former pupil of the same school.
Krzysiek	10 years	Teacher, parent	Teacher in Polish school located in an urban area. Father of a pupil attending the same school (not interviewed).
Barbara	3 years	Parent	Mother of Kornelia, married to an Irish husband. Almost 20 years of migration history, 15 years in the UK, prior to settling in Ireland.

Data collection time and sample collected

Data was collected over a six-month period, spanning from June to November 2021. During this timeframe, a total of 34 individual interviews were carried out. These included:

- Fourteen individual interviews with pupils from Polish complementary schools (this also involved two interviews with former pupils).
- Eight individual interviews with parents of pupils who were enrolled in a Polish complementary school, including one parent of a former student.

- Twelve individual interviews with teachers were conducted, nine of which were with teachers who were also parents of children attending a Polish school and three of which were with teachers who, in addition to teaching, held the role of Polish school principals.

Each participant was interviewed once; interviews took place in person or online (depending on the Covid-19 restrictions at the time of the interview). In-person interviews were conducted in a location chosen by the interviewee, while online interviews were conducted using audio-video conferencing software. The estimated time commitment for an interview was up to one hour. While for adult participants, some of the interviews exceeded the estimated time to an hour and a half, for all under 18s participants, the interviews took less than an hour.

3.6.4 Language Portraits

Body mapping and body silhouettes are methods frequently employed to delve into an individual's personal experiences, emotions, and feelings associated with language and language practices. These techniques not only enhance self-reflection but also bolster self-empowerment (Busch, 2018). The concept of language portraits (LP) gained increased attention following Krumm's and Jenkins' (2001) research on language learning and language awareness among multilingual primary school pupils, and it was further popularized as a research method in studies on linguistic diversity and language repertoires by Busch (2006, 2012, 2018) and others (for the use of LP with sign language users, see: Kusters & De Meulder, 2019). Since then, LP has also become a valuable tool for educators and volunteers working with multilingual, migrant, and refugee populations across different age groups (see: *Council of Europe Toolkit*; *My Language Passport* by Post-Primary Languages Ireland; *One school, many languages* toolkit by Mother Tongues Ireland). As a multimodal research method in applied linguistics, LP facilitates the exploration of linguistic repertoires of bi-/multilingual speakers as 'the totality of [their] linguistic resources' (Gumperz & Hymes, 1986, pp. 20-21). Recently, a digital LP method has emerged, allowing remote LP completion and a computer-aided analysis (Mu et al., 2023). Both traditional and digital LPs facilitate capturing participants' real-life linguistic experiences and the way they

understand their own language development, language learning, and language practices (Kusters & De Meulder, 2019; Mu et al., 2023).

In this study, LPs were obtained only from child participants during semi-guided individual interviews. The task of creating an LP was optional to ensure the voluntary participation of minors and to minimise any pressure. The purpose of using language portraits was twofold: 1) to creatively capture the perspectives of young participants on their own language repertoires and language use, and 2) to serve as a reference point for the semi-guided interviews with these children. The creative and self-reflective nature of LP allows young participants to explore and express their bi/multilingual language practices and identities through colours, symbols, and words of their choice (Busch, 2018; Mu et al., 2023).

Administration and Design

Children received an A4 template with a body silhouette (Figure 12) before scheduled interviews. Those who participated in the interviews online received a PDF with the template through an e-mail sent to their parents with instructions to print it horizontally and send back their language portrait picture to me when it was completed. Participants were asked to create their LP themselves, without the help of parents, siblings, or mine.

In order to enhance children's creativity and non-restricted visual/textual expression, the design of language portraits in this study has been slightly modified compared to some studies which instructed participants to use one colour per language (see: Kusters & De Meulder, 2019). As this study focuses on both language and identity, children were instructed to picture all languages and cultures as they were present in their everyday lives within or around the body silhouette, while using colours, drawings, symbols, shapes, and words of their own choice. Such a modification facilitated space to develop rich language portraits that portrayed both everyday language(s) practices and various contexts (such as with close and extended family, with friends, in both educational settings: mainstream and complementary schools, etc.) in which children perform their cultural identities.

Figure 12: Language Portrait Template (A4 size)



The enriched language portraits collected in this study show the embodied languages and cultures of bi-/multilingual children as they intertwine in different domains of their daily lives. As LP is a highly multimodal research method (Busch, 2018), the in-depth interviews that followed complemented children's LPs with narratives revealing their lived experiences of language(s) in different environments, emotional values attached to their language practices, and children's language-based agency (Schwartz et al., 2021) in various contexts.

Sample collected

Data was collected over a six-month period from June to November 2021, during which time nine (n=9) language portraits were collected. Five LPs are presented in Chapter 5, and four are attached in Appendices A, B, C, and D.

3.7 Data Analysis Approaches

Combining a quantitative and qualitative analysis has been chosen to facilitate a richer insight into the investigated phenomenon, as these two approaches complement one another (Creswell, 2008). Quantitative and qualitative data were analysed separately, using different data analysis approaches described below. Then, findings from both datasets were correlated in the Findings and Discussion chapters.

3.7.1 Descriptive Analysis of Quantitative Data

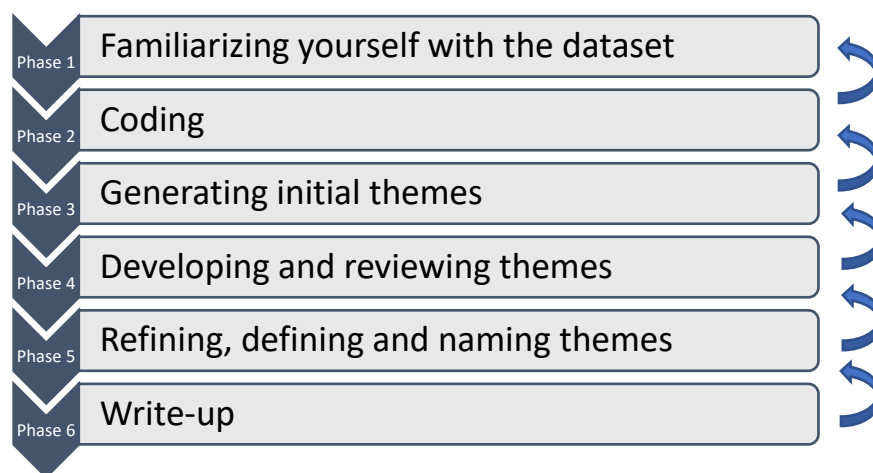
“Quantitative descriptive analysis characterises the world or a phenomenon by identifying patterns in data to answer questions about who, what, where, when, and to what extent” (Loeb et al., 2017, p. 1). The role of description is crucial in the scientific process and particularly in education research (Loeb et al., 2017). Therefore, descriptive analysis has been selected to analyse the statistical data in this study. This approach offers an understanding of the current status of Polish as a HL within and outside the Irish educational system, by outlining the objectives and provision in mainstream and complementary schools. The aim is to provide an overview of the national language policy context in Ireland and to provide detailed insights into Polish complementary schools nationwide. Specifically, this involves examining the curriculum, teaching staff, qualifications, student demographics, parental involvement, extracurricular activities, funding sources, and collaborative efforts. As a result, the descriptive analysis in this research enhances the understanding of HL provision within and outside the Irish educational system, contributing to a better comprehension of the experiences and perceptions gathered from qualitative interviews and language portraits. Furthermore, graphical figures and tables are employed to illustrate the collected data.

3.7.2 Reflexive Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Data

Thematic analysis (TA) is a text-based qualitative research method that deals with the collected data by coding interesting and relevant pieces, generating themes across the codes and finding a deeper meaning that emerges from the story they tell (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA) places a strong emphasis on the researcher’s subjectivity

in the process of extracting meaning from data. I selected this approach because of its adaptable and reflective nature, which provided me with the opportunity to present the research findings as stories that emerged from the experiences of the participants organised into themes. Braun and Clarke (2022) outline a six-phase model for thematic analysis (Figure 13) as a set of guidelines, emphasising that the process is not strictly linear and may involve revisiting previous phases or taking sideways paths. I applied this model to engage with data from semi-guided interviews and children’s narratives about their LPs.

Figure 13: Phases of Thematic Analysis by Braun and Clarke (2022)



Note. Created based on Braun and Clarke (2022).

The process of familiarising myself with the data began with taking notes in the form of comments and thoughts written in my research journal after each interview and upon completing the data collection. Transcribing and translating the gathered data further enabled me to delve into the meanings in greater detail. The primary goal of familiarising myself with the collected data in a reflexive manner was to comprehend how participants’ perspectives were developed and shaped during the interviews (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). I revisited the transcripts multiple times - shortly after each interview and then again after a few months - to gain varied perspectives on the data and enhance my reflexivity.

The next step, in line with Clarke’s and Braun’s (2022) framework, was coding. This included re-reading the translated transcripts and my research journal’s notes in order to

organise the data in a meaningful manner. The codes were chosen using Braun and Clarke's (2022, p. 35) approach, which defines codes as “segments of data that appear potentially interesting, relevant, or meaningful” in relation to the research questions. Initially, all interesting and relevant data across the entire dataset were included in the coding process. Selected codes included semantic codes that reveal surface or explicit meanings: ‘Most of the time, I speak Polish because it's my first language, which was taught to me by my mother and my grandmother’, and latent codes that lead to implicit, hidden beliefs and ideologies, such as: ‘At the moment, definitely in Poland. Although... I once heard that your home is where your husband and your child are, so maybe not at all... So... actually, yes, I think, perhaps my home is here [in Ireland]. For now.’

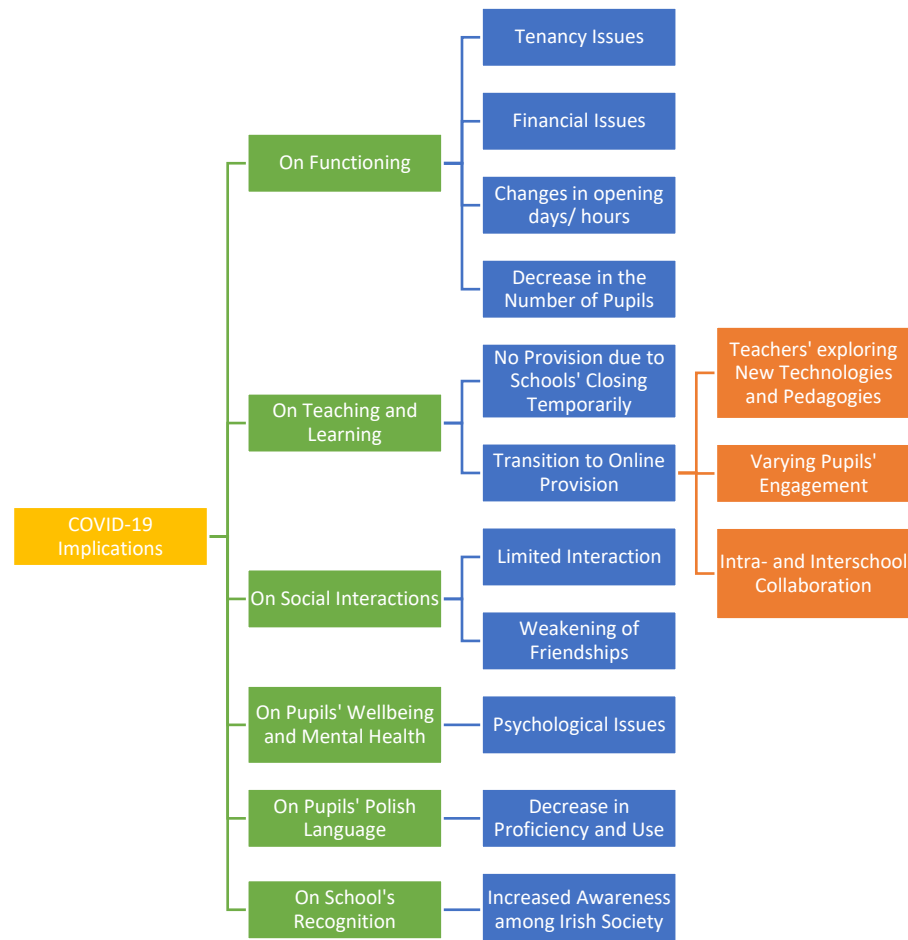
In the examples provided above, semantic codes are limited to what the participants explicitly stated, while latent codes uncover underlying ideologies. The instance of a latent code demonstrates the participant's deep reflection on the underlying epistemology that informs her conceptualisation of where her ‘home’ was during the interview process. In such instances, latent codes facilitate recognition of the participant's reflexivity and enable me to convey the significance of the participant's statements more effectively through “the researcher's reflective and thoughtful engagement with their data and their reflexive and thoughtful engagement with the analytic process” (Braun & Clarke, 2019, p. 594). Some pieces of data were attributed multiple codes to achieve more comprehensive interpretations.

In the third phase of thematic analysis, I focused on generating potential themes and organising all the codes into initial ‘candidate themes’ (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p.35). According to Braun and Clarke, generating themes is an active process in which the researcher organises codes into broader themes representing shared meanings. Throughout this process, I emphasised the recurrence of codes across data sets and their relevance to the research questions (Byrne, 2021). The research journal served as a space where I could write down my considerations about ‘candidate themes’ as I was generating them.

Moving on to phase 4, ‘Developing and reviewing themes’ involved assessing the themes in relation to the coded extracts and the entire dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2022). This phase required a systematic review of the themes and, if necessary, refining them considering the selected codes, the entire dataset, relevance to research questions, and my reflections

previously noted in the research journal. Consequently, some themes needed to be renamed, sub-themes were added, and some codes were reorganised into different themes to convey their story better (Braun & Clarke, 2022). I created thematic maps (see Figure 14) to visually represent the relationships between specific themes and sub-themes within the entire dataset.

Figure 14: Map of theme *Implications of Covid-19 on Polish schools*



The map of all the themes is included in Appendix E.

In phase 5, also known as ‘fine-tuning’ the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p.36), I delved into further analysis of the themes by reconsidering them in terms of their alignment with the theoretical framework and relevance to the research questions. This involved revisiting the thematic map generated in phase 4. The analysis of the themes involved a combination of inductive and deductive approaches. Inductive analysis was employed to let themes reflect the meanings created by the participants, while deductive analysis helped ensure that the analysed data was relevant to the research questions and theoretical framework (Byrne, 2021).

The last part of the TA process (Phase 6) involved final finessing the data analysis and producing Findings and Discussion chapters that “present a coherent and persuasive story about dataset” and address the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p. 36).

3.7.3 Data Translation

All but one (Kornelia) interviews were conducted in Polish as this was the preference of most participants. Recordings of all interviews were first transcribed in total. I translated codes from Polish into English. Both the transcription and translation processes were done carefully with great attention to detail while also considering the research journal notes I took after each interview. This approach aimed to help me capture how participants negotiated meaning during the interviews and allowed her to stay sensitive to these notions that are commonly taken for granted or assumed to be ‘common sense’ (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

3.8 Limitations of the Methodology Used

“It is evident that any research attempt inevitably carries limitations and delimitations (...) Limitations of any particular study concern potential weaknesses that are usually out of the researcher’s control, and are closely associated with the chosen research design, statistical model constraints, funding constraints, or other factors” (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018, pp. 155-156). In this section, I openly acknowledge and address the potential shortcomings of the methodology employed in this project.

The limited time period for data collection (01/06/2021-30/11/2021) was determined by the timeframe of the 3-4 year PhD program, as well as by the disruptions caused by the ongoing national lockdowns in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These lockdowns negatively impacted both my and the participants' family situations, professional lives, mental health, and access to education (including the closure of mainstream and complementary schools due to government restrictions), resulting in distress and delays in the research process. This was addressed by utilising a cross-sectional design, meaning that data was collected only once to capture the snapshot of the situation in the Polish schools and migrant communities at that specific time. While this approach may be susceptible to prevalence- incidence bias, it offered valuable and unparalleled insights into the experiences of Polish families and complementary schools during the Covid-19 pandemic in Ireland.

In order to account for the limited time available for data collection, the methodology was thoughtfully designed to address this constraint in the following five ways:

- i The study was designed as a mixed methods research, allowing for the simultaneous collection of qualitative and quantitative data. This approach enabled the acquisition of comprehensive data in a timely manner while facilitating the correlation of findings from both data sets.
- ii The project involved triangulation of data sources by inviting Polish migrant pupils, parents, and teachers to reflect on the same topics. This approach contributed to enriching the data by exploring diverse perspectives on the issues under investigation.
- iii Both the questionnaire and interview questions invited participants to consider the implications of the pandemic on their lived experiences with participation in complementary schooling. This distinction enabled the identification of experiences influenced by the pandemic and those representing participants' typical experiences with Polish complementary schools prior to the pandemic.
- iv Interview participants were given the opportunity to review and propose modifications to transcripts of their own interviews in order to flag any potential inadvertent bias. Additionally, participants in the online questionnaire were provided with a text box to add their comments at the conclusion of the questionnaire.

- v The quality of the study was monitored at each stage of the research process by using a research journal.

Hence, despite varying levels of national restrictions, school closures, and interruptions in operating times, I consider the data collection successful thanks to implementing these steps.

Another aspect that could be viewed as a limitation of this study is the generalisability of its findings, a consequence of both the sample collected and the qualitative research methods utilised. Generalisability, also known as external validity, refers to “the extension of research findings and conclusions from a study conducted on a sample population to the population at large” (Barnes et al., 1994-2024). According to the literature (Carminati, 2018; Schofield, 1990; Toma, 2011), it has limited applicability in qualitative research as its main purpose lies in an in-depth exploration of the studied phenomenon rather than seeking results that can be universally generalised. Instead, qualitative research can facilitate transferability, which is “a process of abstraction used to apply information drawn from specific persons, settings, and eras to others that have not been directly studied” (Drisko, 2024, p. 2). To enhance transferability and allow readers to assess similarities (Campbell, 1986) in people, context, and settings, this study provided comprehensive details about Ireland’s language and education context by analysing substantial data obtained from desk research, as well as providing specifics about Polish complementary school settings drawing on the online questionnaire conducted (responses received estimated to represent 20% of all Polish schools in Ireland). Consequently, while this study does not aim to uncover universal truths (which aligns with the pragmatic paradigm underpinning this project), it significantly contributes to the current knowledge on complementary schools in Ireland and internationally. Therefore, this project promotes the transferability of findings by encouraging readers to draw connections and comparisons between this study and the various global contexts in which complementary schools operate. Nevertheless, the readers must assess for themselves which insights from this study can be applied to the individuals, communities, and settings of their interest (Drisko, 2024, p. 7).

3.9 Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of the study's focus and the methodology used to address the research questions. Section 3.1 outlined the focus of the study, while Section 3.2 presented the chosen methodology and design. The research paradigm, as well as philosophical and epistemological stances, were detailed in Sections 3.3 and 3.4. Section 3.5 discussed ethical considerations related to the involvement of adults and children in the study, including the role of the gatekeeper, procedures for securing participants' informed consent, and potential risks and benefits of participation. Section 3.6 carefully described four research methods and the identification of participants. The frameworks underlying both quantitative and qualitative data analysis were presented and discussed in Section 3.7. Finally, the limitations of the methodology used in this project were addressed in Section 3.8.

Chapter 4: Polish among languages in Irish education

4.1 Introduction

Until the recent publication of the new *Primary Curriculum Framework* (NCCA, 2023) in March 2023, there was no requirement for studying a modern foreign language (MFL) at any level of the Irish education system. The newly introduced curriculum now mandates one hour per week of MFL classes for children in 3rd to 6th classes of primary school, with implementation beginning in 2025. Although the syllabuses are still in the developmental phase, this promising initiative raises significant questions about the place and role of all languages (English, Irish, ISL, foreign, and heritage languages) in Irish curricula, classrooms, and society. In order to contribute to the ongoing debate, this chapter takes a closer look at the situation of MFLs and HLs in Ireland's mainstream schools, with a specific focus on the presence and recognition (or lack thereof) of the Polish language as a HL of Polish migrant pupils attending Irish primary and secondary schools. This includes exploring the use of HL in mainstream schools among pupils of migrant background, their identity negotiation, cultural awareness, and their future plans related to learning and using languages both within and outside the education system, which are particularly relevant in an increasingly diverse Irish society and a globalised world.

The first half of this chapter (Sections 4.2 and 4.3) draws on an analysis of grey literature and national statistics to provide an overview of the recent curricula and educational initiatives that aim at supporting and addressing increasing linguistic diversity and the provision of foreign languages in Irish schools. It also offers valuable insights into the attitudes of teachers, parents, and students toward recent developments in language education in Ireland. This is drawn from national reports (see Table 11 below) and sets the context for introducing data from in-depth interviews.

In the second part of this chapter (Section 4.4), data from semi-guided interviews with Polish migrant children, parents, and teachers is presented. This section showcases their experiences and expectations of language education in Irish mainstream schools, teachers' and schools' approaches to linguistic diversity pupils' bilingualism. Additionally, it delves into the efforts of Polish parents and children to maintain and promote their HL while at the

same time learning and using other languages both within and outside the education system. It also provides an example of successful community and institutional collaboration aimed at advancing the recognition and provision of the Polish language in the mainstream sector.

To facilitate reflexivity, the analysis of data presented in this and the two following chapters (Chapters 5 & 6) was accompanied by my own reflections on the aforementioned issues, taken from my perspective as a Polish migrant mother and Polish language teacher in Ireland. These insights were recorded in my research journal throughout the data collection and data analysis processes (see Appendices S, T, & U).

Table 11: List of grey literature consulted for Desk Research

Title	Publisher and Year of Publication
<i>Final Report on the Modern Languages in Primary School Initiative</i>	DES & Kildare Education Centre, 2012
<i>Consultation on the Draft Primary Language Curriculum. Junior Infants to Second Class</i>	NCCA, 2014
<i>Primary Developments: Primary Language Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile. Report on the Consultation for the Draft Primary Curriculum Framework</i>	NCCA, 2018
<i>Primary Language Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile</i>	DES, 2019
<i>PPLI Annual Report 2022</i>	PPLI, 2022
<i>Report on the consultation on the Draft Primary Curriculum Framework.</i>	NCCA, 2022
<i>Final Report on the Consultation with Children on the new Draft Primary Curriculum</i>	MIE & NCCA, 2022
<i>Phase 1 consultation by Maynooth University, Stranmillis University College and Early Childhood Ireland</i>	NCCA, 2022
<i>Frequently asked questions on the Draft Primary Curriculum Specifications.</i>	NCCA, 2024

4.2 MFLs and HLs in Irelands' Primary Schools

4.2.1 Primary Language Curriculum

The *Primary Language Curriculum* (PLC) was first published for consultation in April 2014, and the new Primary Language Curriculum for stages 1-2 was released in 2015 (implemented in September 2016). The new Primary Language Curriculum for stages 1 to 4 (covers all primary school years) was released in 2019 (DES, 2019) as a revised response to teachers' experience with the Primary Language Curriculum 2015. In contrast to the 1999 Primary School Curriculum, which provided one curriculum for English and two curricula for Irish (as a L1 and as a L2), the new PLC's structure (strands and learning outcomes) was designed as integrated for both English and Irish and it has been designed to meet the needs of pupils in all school contexts in Ireland, including English-medium schools, Gaeltacht schools, Irish-medium schools, and special schools. As such, it is available in two versions: English for English-medium schools and Irish for Gaelscoileanna and Gaeltacht schools. The curriculum recognises the need for differentiated outcomes for L1 speakers and L2 learners of Irish, as well as supporting home languages other than English and Irish. Based on the NCCA report prepared by Ó Duibhir and Cummins, particular attention was drawn to the cross-linguistic transfer as outlined in the interdependence hypothesis (Ó Duibhir & Cummins, 2012, p.11) to facilitate integrated language learning in the new PLC:

when children develop skills in one language, they are not just learning the skills of that language, they are also developing a common underlying proficiency which enables them to transfer language skills and learning strategies to other languages. (DES, 2019, p.10)

Transfer of conceptual knowledge (i), specific linguistic elements (ii), phonological awareness (iii), and metacognitive and metalinguistic strategies (iv) were the four types of cross-linguistic transfer identified by Ó Duibhir and Cummins (2012, p. 11). The NCCA website provides Information Leaflets for Parents in eight languages, including English, Irish, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Mandarin Chinese, Lithuanian, and Latvian, explaining the benefits of language transfer for all children.

The PLC has carefully incorporated recent research on language learning and teaching (Ó Duibhir & Cummins, 2012) and the social aspect of this process. It aims to adapt

to changes in Irish society and classrooms since the publication of the 1999 primary curriculum. However, reports from consultations on the draft versions of PLC held by NCCA in 2014 and 2018 revealed much confusion and lack of coherence regarding implementing the new curriculum in classrooms. According to both reports, the *Consultation on the Draft Primary Language Curriculum. Junior Infants to Second Class* (NCCA, 2014) and the *Report on the consultation on the draft curriculum for Stage 3 and 4/Céim 3 agus 4* (NCCA, 2018), various stakeholders that took part in the consultation process, including teachers, parents, and children, held different opinions about the classroom strategies presented in the new curriculum regarding languages other than English and Irish.

In the 2014 report, 86% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the rationale of the new PLC. However, written submissions made by respondents proposed a range of other ideas to be included in the PLC rationale. These included recognising English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners as having particular language needs, more support for the language needs of Traveller children, as well as highlighting the importance of schools and teachers availing of the support and resources already made available to them, such as access to speech and language therapy; assistance from the Health Service Executive (HSE) and the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS); the return of EAL teacher posts; and provision for children with special needs (NCCA, 2014, p.18). It was also pointed out as necessary to ‘*make EAL children more visible*’ (NCCA, 2014, p.19) and to recognise the benefits of plurilingualism and intercultural awareness in teaching and learning languages (ibid.). Some respondents emphasised that teachers needed more specific guidelines and strategies to support parents, particularly parents of EAL speakers, and that, in general, successful implementation of the new PLC would only be possible if supported by tailored Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities for teachers.

The 2018 report revealed teachers’ concerns regarding the classroom approaches to pupil’s home languages. While the initial section on linguistic diversity in the context of the Primary Language Curriculum was well-received, and schools claimed to have already implemented practices to celebrate linguistic and cultural diversity, there was, however, substantial uncertainty around the practical implementation of suggested classroom teaching

and learning methods (NCCA, 2018, p.32). Teachers expressed concerns about managing pupils' use of their home languages in the classroom:

This activity of the child writing in their own language can be beneficial to explore the process – there needs to be more clarification in the curriculum on HOW? WHY? etc. this can be done. Also, how it can be assessed. (NCCA, 2018, p. 32)

Good to see the addition of texts in their home languages. But make explicit the extent of use of their home language – e.g. use Polish in the yard? During Aistear? Group work? (NCCA, 2018, p. 33)

Teachers' primary concerns about implementing the PLC draft strategies, as seen in the past (NCCA, 2008), revolved around time management, curriculum overload, and resources to support high-level learners in the classrooms.

I don't see the merit in allowing EAL children to speak their own language on occasions. EAL children most often need the 5 hrs 40 mins of the school day to speak English. (NCCA, 2018, p. 32)

Maidir le 'teangacha eile' - An mbeidh teangacha iasachta á múineadh sna scoileanna, nó na hacmhainní curtha ar fáil chun a leithéid a dhéanamh? / Regarding other languages-will foreign languages now have to be taught in schools, or will resources be made available to do this? (NCCA, 2018, p. 33)

Curriculum overload possible if more than half the class have variety of languages. (NCCA, 2018, p. 33)

As the report suggests (NCCA, 2018), the above concerns might have arisen from perceiving the phrase 'other languages' in the PLC draft as an implied necessity to comprehend and possibly instruct in those languages. Consequently, educators expressed uncertainty regarding managing a variety of languages in the classroom that they lack familiarity with and deemed it unfeasible and impractical.

Some suggestions were also made to support Traveller's culture and language, as well as to include more recognition towards Irish Sign Language (ISL) as Ireland's native language in the PLC. However, the findings from the online questionnaire conducted by NCCA in the spring of 2018 showed further uncertainty regarding the feasibility of teachers

supporting children's home languages in school settings. Almost 74% of the nearly 300 respondents (of which almost 90% were primary school teachers) disagreed with the statement that 'it is realistic to expect teachers to support children's home language development' (NCCA 2018, p. 38).

The revised PLC published in 2019 aimed to respond to teachers' needs and suggestions. The main goal of the Primary Language Curriculum is to accommodate all languages spoken by pupils in school, including minority and home languages other than English and Irish. The structure of the PLC acknowledges children's diverse linguistic backgrounds beyond their primary schools and recognises the linguistic diversity in Irish primary school classrooms as an asset for creating a multilingual context for language acquisition and learning (NCCA, PLC, p. 10). The PLC (2019) emphasises that all children come to school with a level of competence in one or more languages, which may or may not be the first language of the school:

All children come to school with a level of competence in one or more languages, which may or may not be the first language of the school. The language curriculum supports teachers to value the language experience of all children (DES, 2019, p. 10)

PLC aims to value the language experience of all children and encourages teachers to view it as an asset rather than an obstacle in order to enhance their pupils' learning journey and to help students see the multilingual reality around them as a valuable resource. In this way, PLC not only acknowledges the linguistic and cultural diversity present in Irish society and the education system but also promotes its appreciation by all stakeholders. Building bridges between schools and the home/community is seen in PLC as a crucial component of supporting EAL provision:

For children with English as an Additional Language (EAL), partnerships between the primary school and their homes are critical for planning for and supporting their language learning; developing their first school language while maintaining their home language. (DES, 2019, p. 10).

This approach is in line with *Aistear: the early childhood curriculum framework* that was first published 12 years ago and is currently being updated by the NCCA. The aim of *Aistear*

is to support the learning and development of children from birth to six years old by creating an educational environment where children can learn through play. There are four areas, or themes, of children's development that *Aistear* focuses on (1) Wellbeing, (2) Identity and Belonging, (3) Communicating, and (4) Exploring and Thinking. The 'Identity and Belonging' theme encourages parents, practitioners, and children to include all languages during everyday interactions, activities, and play, both in early years education settings and at home. This helps to enhance positive attitudes in children towards themselves and their cultural background:

Positive messages about their families, backgrounds, cultures, beliefs, and languages help children to develop pride in who they are. These messages also give them confidence to voice their views and opinions, to make choices, and to help shape their own learning. (NCCA, 2009b: 25)

The consultation with babies, toddlers and young children to inform the updating of *Aistear*, the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework (NCCA, 2022a), aimed to inform the process of updating of *Aistear*. Researchers from Maynooth University, Stranmillis University College Belfast, and Early Childhood Ireland conducted consultations with 136 children of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds (aged 9 months to 6 years) to identify the approaches to children's multiple identities as an area of focus for *Aistear* update. The report points out that *Aistear* could benefit from making the relevance of culture for practice more explicit, explaining the meaning of multiple identities (such as language, gender, disability/neurodiversity), and providing examples of authentic, meaningful, culturally responsive pedagogy in practice (NCCA, 2022a, p. 210).

4.2.2 Primary Curriculum Framework

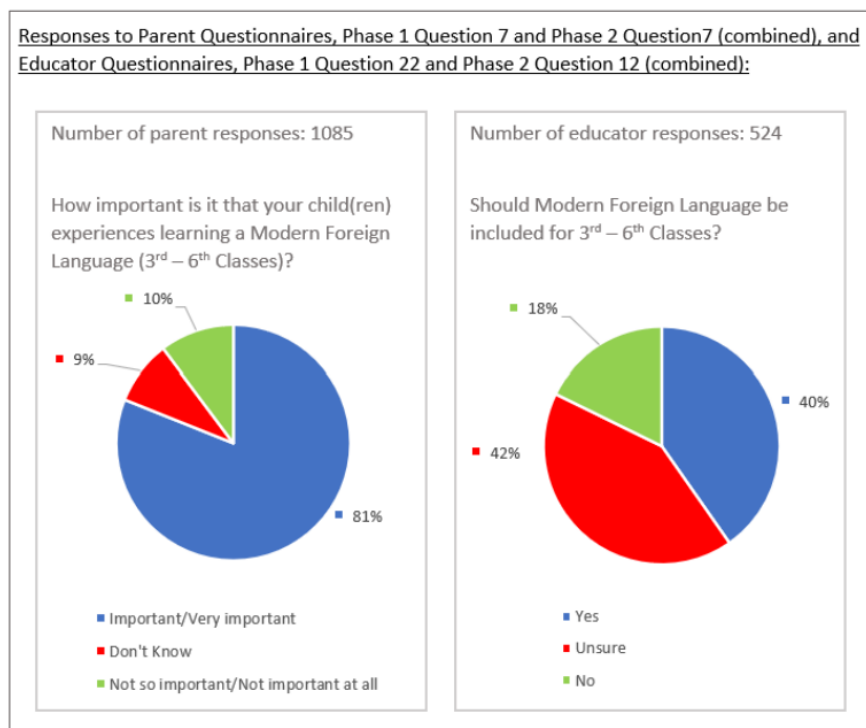
In 2020, the NCCA released the *Draft Primary Curriculum Framework* (NCCA, 2020) for public consultation. Then, in March 2023, the Minister for Education officially launched the new *Primary Curriculum Framework* (DE, 2023). This curriculum marks a significant milestone in Ireland's education system as it proposes mandatory modern foreign language lessons for all students in 3rd to 6th primary classes nationwide. The teaching and learning of

MFLs will be integrated into the PLC. The new curriculum recommends one hour per week dedicated to a MFL. In Stage 3 (3rd and 4th primary classes), the focus will be on developing language and intercultural awareness, building on children's existing knowledge and celebrating linguistic and cultural diversity within the school and community. Stage 4 (5th and 6th classes) will further enhance students' language awareness and include the development of communicative competence in a MFL (NCCA, 2024). The classroom teachers will be teaching MFLs at both stages and professional development supports will be made available for primary school teachers (ibid.).

The proposals for a redeveloped primary curriculum framework were shaped by four broad areas: research, networks, deliberations, and findings from consultations with parents, educators, and children. Data gathered during the consultation processes conducted by the NCCA revealed a discrepancy between stakeholders' views on introducing MFLs into the primary curriculum. The *Report on the Consultation for the Draft Primary Curriculum Framework* (NCCA, 2022b) showed that a large majority of parents and guardians (81%) agreed that learning an MFL is important or very important during primary school; however, 42% of educators were unsure if children should learn an MFL in 3rd to 6th classes (see Figure 15 below). Such attitudes among primary school teachers were related to two major concerns reported by them over the last decade, as appears from consulted in this chapter reports (Harris & O'Leary, 2012; NCCA, 2018; NCCA,2022). Firstly, there was a fear that introduction of MFLs might reduce the time allocated for teaching English and Irish. Secondly, there was a concern among teachers regarding proficiency in MFLs.

To address these concerns, some teachers suggested strategies, including having classroom teachers teach 'core subjects', and others to teach MFLs as their area of expertise. Additionally, utilising the skills of community members and parents who are native speakers of the designated languages was another suggestion. (NCCA, 2022b, p.28).

Figure 15: Attitudes towards MFLs in the primary (NCCA, 2022b)



Note. Retrieved from NCCA. (2022b). *Primary Developments: Primary Language Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile. Report on the consultation on the Draft Primary Curriculum Framework*, p. 44.

These findings show similarity to the results of the final evaluation of the MFLPSI project, which was conducted by Harris and Conway (2002) and Harris and O Leary (2009), which revealed that despite a high level of enthusiasm towards the MFLPSI project among class teachers, principals and MFL teachers, nearly 40% of class teachers stayed cautious about the idea of expanding the MFLPSI to ‘all’ schools (comparing to (Harris & O’Leary, 2012).

The *Final Report on the Consultation with Children on the new Draft Primary Curriculum* (MIE, 2022) reported on children’s attitudes towards learning, including their views on learning about different languages and cultures, and how they perceived the importance of being able to speak another language. According to the findings of this report, children across all schools (Irish-medium and English-medium) generally considered

learning about cultures and languages as an important priority, placing it at the sixth position in the overall ranking of emerging priorities (MIE, 2022, p.54). The report revealed that children in Irish-medium schools seem to rate the importance of learning about cultures and languages significantly higher than their peers in English-medium schools, which might be linked to their linguistic and cultural awareness already developed through the process of Irish-medium education. Moreover, the Irish language was found to be a liked subject among children in Gaelscoileanna, while many children in English-medium schools expressed dislike towards it.

Table 12: Children’s attitudes towards MFL in primary school

Respondents % Answers	Children attending Irish-medium schools ⁹	Children attending English-medium schools ¹⁰
Very important	71%	55%
A little important	20%	25%
Not important	4%	17%
Answer missing	5%	3%

Note. Adapted from MIE (2022) Figure 7 & Figure 8

Despite a higher number of children in Irish-speaking schools rating learning another language as important in the overall ranking of emerging priorities for learning, it still achieved a relatively low ranking compared to other priorities, such as wellbeing and the environment (MIE, 2022, p. 53). The relatively low emphasis placed on the ability to speak other languages among the primary population in English-medium schools might result from several factors. These include the historical lack of nationwide compulsory provision for modern foreign languages (MFL) in primary schools, the abolition of the Modern Languages in Primary Schools Initiative (MFLPSI) in 2012, and the low diversity among teaching staff in the Irish education system, which does not reflect the diverse pupil population (Mc Daid & Nowlan, 2022). Therefore, in line with the national *Languages Connect* strategy, the

⁹ Based on 56 responses collected by NCCA.

¹⁰ Based on 130 responses collected by NCCA.

introduction of MFLs into the new Primary Curriculum Framework aims to increase interest in lifelong learning of foreign languages (see Section 2.4.2).

4.2.3 Say ‘Yes’ to Languages Primary Sampler Module

To inform and support the introduction of MFL classes at the primary school level in line with the new *Primary Curriculum Framework* (DE, 2023), in 2021, the government of Ireland introduced the Say ‘Yes’ to Languages Primary Sampler Module that was since rolled out in the following year on a project basis by Post Primary Languages Ireland (PPLI). The module is available to all primary schools in Ireland, including English-medium schools, Irish-medium schools, and special schools. The number of schools and participating students has significantly increased each year (Table 13), and many of them took part in the module for the second year. The overarching goal of the module is to support inclusion and linguistic diversity in Irish society and increase the uptake of MFL at the post-primary level by promoting languages used in schools and communities, as stated in *Ireland’s Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026*. This module provides primary schools with the opportunity to select one hour per week of MFL or ISL classes over a period of eight weeks (in 2021/2022, it was six weeks, and in 2024/2025, ten weeks). Participating schools are free to choose the language they prefer and to choose a teacher/tutor who can provide the lessons, such as a classroom teacher, a foreign language post-primary teacher, or a member of the school or wider community, including parents of their pupils.

Table 13: Participation in the Say ‘Yes’ to Languages Module in 2021-2024

School year	Number of participating schools nationwide	Number of participating pupils nationwide
2021/2022	Over 500 schools	40,000
2022/2023	Over 700 schools	50,000
2023/2024	Over 1200 schools	80,000

Note. Based on PPLI Annual Reports (PPLI, 2022, 2023, 2024)

In the 2021/2022 school year, the participating schools were offered up to €1000 grant from the Department of Education, depending on the number of classrooms registered to take part; since 2022/2023, the grant for schools has been increased to €400 per classroom, up to €1,600 per school. PPLI (Post-Primary Languages Initiative) offers resources and training to teachers and tutors who will be teaching a sample module in schools. These resources include lesson plans (not specific to any language), My Language Passport (for students to keep track of their language learning journey), Say 'Yes' to Languages fold-outs (which use games to help students learn basic vocabulary), Language Explorers (an activity book for primary school students that promotes understanding and appreciation of linguistic diversity in Irish society), and a guide for teachers and tutors called Language and Languages in the Primary School. This guide provides sample activities based on the experience of Scoil Bhride in North Dublin. Additionally, posters, stickers, and badges are sent to participating schools to promote language learning within their communities.

The number of languages chosen by schools increased from 2021 to 2023. It included Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Irish Sign Language, Italian, Japanese, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Spanish, Dutch, Tamil, and Ukrainian. Some schools chose more than one language. Over the three years since the introduction of the module in 2021, French and Spanish continued to be the most frequently chosen languages by schools participating in the project, which remains strongly linked to their provision at the post-primary level in Ireland. ISL was also a popular language schools chose and saw a growing interest, particularly in the 2023/2024 school year. The number of schools offering immigrant and community languages, such as Polish, Romanian, and Ukrainian, remained relatively low despite the increase since 2021 (see Table 14 below).

Feedback collected by PPLI from participating pupils, parents, class teachers, and language module tutors shows that the module was found to enhance students' understanding and appreciation of languages and linguistic diversity (PPLI, 2023). Teachers pointed out that participation in this module was advantageous for both English-native pupils and those who were learning English as an additional language (EAL) as it helped them increase their understanding of different languages, cultures, and beliefs present in school communities and Irish society.

We have children from different countries (Poland, Germany, Ukraine) and this opportunity gave them a chance to speak about their native languages. It also gave the children who have English as a first language the experience of what it is like to have to learn a new language from scratch, this gave them an awareness of what it is like for our pupils with EAL. (PPLI, 2023, p. 66)

Children have become more aware of different people speaking different languages and appreciate they may have different beliefs and cultures. (PPLI, 2023, p. 66)

Additionally, some respondents highlighted that participation in the primary language module allowed pupils to consider languages they may wish to learn in the future (PPLI, 2022, p. 66), which can support the uptake of MFLs at the post-primary level.

Table 14: Say ‘Yes’ to Languages: Languages chosen in 2021-2024

Language chosen	Number of schools in 2021/2022	Number of schools in 2022/2023	Number of schools in 2023/2024
French	183	256	525
Spanish	159	170	399
ISL	75	78	118
German	31	45	100
Italian	8	11	27
Chinese	3	4	3
Polish	2	10	15
Japanese	1	2	15
Portuguese	1	2	6
Romanian	1	6	4
Arabic	1	3	2
Tamil	1	2	-
Ukrainian	1	9	8
Hebrew	-	1	-
Russian	-	2	1
Dutch	-	-	1
Lithuanian	-	-	1

Note. Based on PPLI Annual Reports (PPLI, 2022, 2023, 2024).

As described in more detail in my research journal entry (Appendix S), the feedback gathered by PPLI did not fully align with my experiences of delivering the Say ‘Yes’ to Languages Polish classes in the 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 school years at two primary schools in Ireland.

4.3 Polish among Foreign and HLs in post-primary schools

Within Ireland's post-primary education, students have the opportunity to study a foreign language during both the 3-year Junior Cycle (JC) and 2-3-year Senior Cycle (SC), as well as during an optional Transition Year (TY) that can be taken at the beginning of SC. While English and Irish are compulsory language subjects throughout the entire post-primary school, including the culminating Leaving Certificate examination, studying Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) is optional. This section aims to shed light on the provision and uptake of MFLs (including HLs) in Ireland, focusing on the teaching and learning of Polish as a post-primary subject.

4.3.1 Junior and Senior Cycles

One of the aims of the Languages Connect - Ireland’s Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026 is to diversify the MFL provision and increase the uptake of key foreign languages the number of schools offering two or more foreign languages along with the number of students sitting two languages for state Leaving Certificate examinations. As per the *Education Indicators* report published by the Department of Education in February 2023, the number of post-primary schools that offer at least two foreign languages increased from 72% to 76% between 2017 and 2021. The table below provides an insight into the number of schools teaching foreign languages, including non-curricular languages, over the last decade (2012-2022). French remains by far the most commonly taught foreign language in Irish post-primary education. The number of schools teaching French and German remained stable, while there has been a significant increase in the number of schools providing Spanish, as well as teaching foreign languages commonly spoken within the diverse Irish society, such as Polish, Romanian, and Portuguese. Notably, there has been an increase of over 100% in the number of schools offering Polish language between 2012 and 2022. The only fall was

observed in 2020, due to the outbreak of the pandemic, while the most remarkable increase occurred between 2020 and 2022, indicating a growing enthusiasm for studying Polish at post-primary level following its integration in the post-primary curriculum in 2020. The first exam to take Leaving Cert Polish as a curricular subject was held in 2022.

Table 15: Number of post-primary schools teaching MFL between 2012 and 2022

Year Language	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Arabic	9	13	11	8	7	10	18	19	16	15	17
Bulgarian	2	1	1	4	3	4		3		3	1
Croatian				2	2	8	8	11	9	13	10
Czech	1		2		2	3	2	2			2
Danish	1	1						1	2	2	
Dutch	4	2	6	8	6	11	9	4	9	7	6
Estonian			1		1		1	1			
Finnish	3	1		1			1	2			
French	690	685	689	692	694	693	700	701	705	700	700
German	434	425	435	441	438	441	427	429	430	427	435
Hungarian	5	5	3	7	6	8	6	7	6	8	11
Italian	60	63	73	77	81	81	77	78	78	81	96
Japanese (LC)	35	37	40	40	36	44	33	36	39	38	41
Japanese (Non-Exam)	49	47	25	24	26	23	16	17	22	22	21
Latvian	6	8	8	10	8	7	8	7	6	6	12
Lithuanian	14	17	20	24	29	22	23	16	19	16	17
Mandarin Chinese		29	88	94	92	84	81	74	62	23	36
Modern Greek	4	2	1	3	2	4	1	2	2	1	
Polish	46	54	57	59	73	75	77	74	66	71	99
Portuguese	9	5	11	13	11	12	17	20	15	23	24

Romanian	11	7	8	9	15	16	20	21	15	21	21
Russian	31	27	14	16	18	19	16	17	17	18	18
Russian (LC)	21	20	22	24	31	31	34	43	32	44	41
Slovakian	3	4	3	5	4	6	4	9	2	3	4
Slovenian						2	1				
Spanish	321	334	349	355	360	391	402	418	430	431	442
Swedish	3	3	6	3	3	3	4	7	2	1	3

Note. Table obtained from the Department of Education via email correspondence.

Between 2010 and 2020, there were significant changes made to both the junior cycle and senior cycle curricula in Ireland. These changes were made in line with broader language and education strategies, such as the 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language (2010), the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (2011), the Policy on Gaeltacht Education (2016), and Languages Connect, which is Ireland's strategy for Foreign Languages in Education (2017). The new *Junior Cert Framework* (DES, 2015b) was released in 2012 (then it was revised and published again in 2015) and introduced to schools on a phased basis between September 2014 and September 2021. The new JC specifications for English were released in 2013, new JC specifications for MFL in 2015, and new JC specification for Gaeilge T1 and T2 in 2017¹¹. Based on the new JC Framework introduced, PPLI has since developed a number of short courses specifications for MFLs such as: Japanese language and culture, Polish as a HL, Lithuanian as a HL, Russian language and culture and a generic short course in MFL Language and Culture¹². The JC course in Polish as a HL began to be rolled out in 2015, which explains the increase in the number of schools providing Polish between 2015 and 2016 (see Table 15 above). The PPLI Annual Report 2022 (PPLI, 2022) sheds light on their continued offering of the Polish Short Course to about 300 students across six post-primary schools they work with. Further three post-primary schools located in Galway, Portlaoise, and Cork have offered Polish as a full JC course. Moreover, over a thousand students have availed of learning Polish during their transition year in 2022, according to the PPLI 2022 report (ibid.). It is worth noting that schools are not required to work with PPLI

¹¹ <https://ncca.ie/en/junior-cycle/subjects-and-short-courses/>

¹² <https://ppli.ie/curriculum-support/>

to offer foreign language education, the total number of schools providing each foreign language according to data from DES could be greater than the figures presented in PPLI Annual reports (which only reflect the number of schools where MFLs are taught by teachers employed by PPLI).

The Junior Cycle Short Course in Polish as a HL contains approximately 100 learning hours and it aims to “maintain and develop students’ proficiency levels in Polish, to explore the interdependence between language and culture and to foster an appreciation for the culture, traditions and values of their HL. It also aims to consolidate and deepen their literacy skills and make them more self-aware as learners” (PPLI, p.3). This JC short course is designed to support students who already have knowledge of Polish, regardless of their language abilities. The aim is to improve their linguistic competence, communication skills, and intercultural awareness through interactive tasks that allow them to track their progress (PPLI). The course has three key strands centred around building their communication language skills, intercultural awareness, as well as language awareness: strand 1) Communicative Competence, strand 2) Reflection on Polish Culture and How I Relate to It, strand 3) Reflection on How Polish Works and How I Learn. With such design, JC Polish short course provides an opportunity for young people of Polish background to gain insights into their linguistic and cultural heritage in their mainstream educational setting. The program enables learners to appreciate cultural diversity in Ireland and may positively influence their motivation to learn and maintain multiple languages, English, Irish, HL as well as foreign languages.

At the Senior Cycle level, Polish, Lithuanian, Chinese and Portuguese were added to the national post-primary curriculum in 2020, which means that before that, many students of Polish background needed to prepare for their Leaving Cert Polish examination outside the mainstream school hours, i.e. through attending Polish complementary schools on the weekends or taking group/individual lessons/grinds with tutors. The Leaving Certificate specification for Polish¹³ is based on a framework approach that has also been used in designing LC specifications for other foreign languages (Lithuanian, Portuguese, Mandarin Chinese). Unlike the JC Short course in Polish as a HL, the LC Polish course is designed for

¹³ See: <https://curriculumonline.ie/Senior-cycle/Senior-Cycle-Subjects/Polish>

students of all levels, including Polish HL speakers. It is broadly aligned to A2/B1 levels of CEFR. The aim of the Leaving Certificate in Polish is to offer students the opportunity to learn the target language through developing communicative language competence as well as plurilingual and pluricultural competencies in an integrated way. Students are encouraged to interact in Polish with others in and outside of their classroom hours, using multiple communication strategies depending on the context, task and situation in order to develop their language awareness and foster their understanding of languages and cultures interdependence. The LC Polish specification places value in linguistic diversity and strongly promotes appreciation of lifelong language learning and its value for one's lifetime, not only in the education context but also in the personal, professional and leisure areas of the student's life.

Introducing HLs to the post-primary curriculum gave a green light to teaching and learning these languages in state post-primary schools at a larger scale. However, whether they will be offered in schools depends on many factors, such as the number of students interested to attend it in each school or teachers' availability. The results of an *Audit of Foreign Languages Provision in Post-Primary Schools 2017* conducted by PPLI showed an increase in school's interest in Mandarin Chinese, Spanish, German, Polish, Italian, Japanese and Russian, and 58% of consulted principals said they would need an increase in teacher allocation in order to increase the provision of foreign languages in their schools. To support the provision of the lesser taught languages, in January 2020, DOE issued Circular 0006/2020 *Diversification of Foreign Languages Provision in the Curriculum* that informed schools about the availability of additional allocation of hours for post-primary schools that were introducing new curricular languages under the Diversification of Foreign Languages in the Curriculum scheme (DES, 2019c). In the academic year 2020/2021, additional hours were offered for Italian, Japanese or Russian for schools that show availability of fully registered post-primary teachers and for Mandarin Chinese, Polish, Portuguese and Lithuanian (new Leaving Certificate Curricular languages). Schools that provided hours in the new curricular languages were temporarily provided with a teacher by PPLI until the Teaching Council published new teacher registration criteria for those languages. Two schools received an additional allocation in Polish, 4 in Japanese, 4 in Italian and 1 in Russian (PPLI, 2021, p.44). There was also positive feedback and an increased number of schools offering Polish,

Lithuanian and Korean as Transition Year subjects. The Portuguese TY module was successfully introduced in six schools in Dublin in September 2020 (ibid.).

In addition to post-primary schools' foreign languages provision, PPLI also runs Saturday language classes for students who wish to sit their Leaving Cert in Polish, Japanese, Mandarin Chinese, Romanian, Portuguese or Russian. The Department of Education fully funds these classes and students do not need to cover any fees¹⁴. In 2022, 72 students attended Polish Saturday classes organised by PPLI. Moreover, in 2024, the European Language Label was awarded to the Polish for Leaving Certificate Blended Learning Project for its innovative contribution to Polish language teaching and learning in Ireland. This project was the result of a collaboration between Cavan and Monaghan Education and Training Board (CMETB), Post-Primary Languages Ireland (PPLI), and H2 Learning¹⁵.

4.3.2 Polish among Leaving Certificate Language Subjects

The latest Education Indicators (DE, 2023) revealed that the percentage of 6th-year students doing at least one foreign language decreased among all post-primary pupils, girls (from 87.2% in 2017 to 82% in 2021) and boys (from 72.3% to 64.3%). Among factors that influence this trend, we can observe MFL teacher shortages in Ireland and the dropping of foreign language matriculation requirements for many third-level courses over the last few years. However, the percentage of LC students taking a foreign language other than French has grown from 41.4% to 49.6%. Table 16 below shows the uptake of foreign languages at the LC examination over the last five years. Despite French continuing to be the most popular foreign language choice, the number of students taking French in their LC examination has decreased each year. On the other hand, the number of students taking Spanish or one of the most commonly spoken community languages, such as Polish, Portuguese, and Romanian, has significantly increased since 2012. It is worth noting that despite showing higher uptake than Portuguese and Lithuanian in the state LC examination over the last six years, Romanian has not been introduced to the post-primary curriculum in 2020 along with other minority

¹⁴ <https://ppli.ie/languages-classes/>

¹⁵ <https://ppli.ie/bulletin/blended-learning-project-wins-european-language-label/>

languages. This is surprising, considering that the Romanian community is one of the fastest-growing non-national groups in Ireland (CSO 2016, 2023).

Table 16: Curricular and non-curricular MFLs at LC Examinations in 2017-2023

Language	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
French	15934 A 9449 G	15485 A 8225 G	15654A 7707 G	16519A 6361 G	16666A 5403 G	15454A 5696 G	14701 A 5130 G
German	5618 A 2319 G	6194 A 2309 G	6247 A 2297 G	6779 A 1922 G	6908 A 1695 G	6275 A 1851 G	6129 A 1729 G
Spanish	4916 A 2170 G	4967 A 2060 G	5646 A 2065 G	6330 A 2025 G	6678 A 1908 G	7104 A 2436 G	7574 A 2520 G
Italian	387 A 110 G	363 A 99 G	361 A 112 G	338 A 70 G	359 A 97 G	461 A 80 G	409 A 64 G
Russian	310 A	350 A 17 G	458 A 12 G	395 A	474 A	407 A 12 G	505 A 16 G
Arabic	99 A 19 G	133 A 15 G	168 A 24 G	163 A 16 G	164 A 24 G	172 A 28 G	229 A 22 G
Japanese	236 A 60 G	236 A 60 G	208 A 66 G	232 A 35 G	250 A 48 G	219 A 52 G	256 A 56 G
Polish	693 N	687 N	780 N	508 N	684 N	789 A 29 G	916 A 40 G
Mandarin Chinese	-	-	-	-	-	280 A	335 A
Lithuanian	213 N	156 N	177 N	96 N	144 N	174 A 12 G	193 A 13 G
Portuguese	84 N	84 N	116 N	63 N	109 N	131 A	187 A
Romanian	193 N	267 N	340 N	237 N	325 N	379 N	367 N
Czech	16 N	13 N	12 N		16 N	13 N	15 N
Slovakian	22 N	25 N	18 N	17 N	16 N	24 N	20 N
Dutch	15 N	29 N	17 N	17 N	21 N	27 N	28 N
Modern Greek		18 N	13 N	11 N			
Latvian	75 N	63 N	62 N	25 N	40 N	68 N	59 N
Hungarian	53 N	38 N	51 N	30 N	47 N	49 N	51 N
Bulgarian	12 N	15 N	16 N	13 N	22 N	31 N	27 N

Croatian	36 N	47 N	61 N	44 N	72 N	92 N	95 N
Swedish						11 N	

Note. Based on data obtained from State Examination Commissions (www.examinations.ie) and excluding data on subjects taken by less than ten candidates. Curricular languages are marked with an ‘A’ for higher level and ‘G’ for ordinary level. Non-curricular languages are marked with an ‘N’.

As Table 16 reveals, Polish has shown the highest uptake among non-curricular languages at the Leaving Cert Examination for seven years. Since 2022, SC students have been able to sit the new LC examination in Polish as a curricular subject. As with other curricular language subjects, students were offered the assessment at both Ordinary and Higher levels. Most of the students sitting Polish Leaving Certificate opt for the Higher level. The new Polish Leaving Cert Examination includes oral and aural examination components (in addition to a written component), which were not available before 2022. This includes presenting the student’s Language Portfolio prepared during their 2-year course in Polish, consisting of a minimum of 180 hours of class contact time (NCCA & DES, 2020). The percentage breakdown of students’ results in Polish has been shown in Tables 17 and 18.

Table 17: Leaving Certificate Higher Level Results. Polish 2006-2016

Year	Total number of candidates	Percentage breakdown of candidates by grade awarded													
		A1	A2	B1	B2	B3	C1	C2	C3	D1	D2	D3	E	F	NG
2005	8	62.5	12.5	12.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2006	20	35.0	0.0	30.0	5.0	10.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	0.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2007	53	9.4	24.5	11.3	11.3	18.9	11.3	3.8	1.9	0.0	1.9	3.8	1.9	0.0	0.0
2008	171	9.9	13.5	9.9	14.6	26.9	9.4	8.2	2.3	1.8	1.8	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.0

2009	328	4.0	8.5	5.8	15.2	24.1	15.5	11.6	5.8	3.7	2.1	1.5	1.5	0.6	0.0
2010	451	10.2	9.3	12.0	14.9	21.1	18.6	7.5	2.2	2.0	0.7	0.7	0.4	0.4	0.0
2011	574	5.9	9.6	4.0	8.2	25.6	5.1	18.5	11.8	5.6	2.8	0.9	1.0	0.5	0.5
2012	707	8.8	9.3	10.6	12.3	19.9	9.2	14.3	7.4	3.0	0.7	0.7	2.5	0.7	0.6
2013	769	8.8	7.9	11.3	15.5	17.8	14.8	8.2	6.9	1.6	1.6	2.7	1	1.6	0.3
2014	750	11.3	10.5	12	11.9	16.5	15.2	9.1	6.0	2.1	1.1	1.7	1.6	0.7	0.3
2015	671	7.5	6.4	8.2	9.1	13.9	17.9	15.1	7.3	5.1	2.8	3.3	2.1	1.3	0.1
2016	717	7.3	6.6	9.6	12.6	15.2	19.9	12.1	6.4	3.2	1.8	2	1.8	1.1	0.4

Note. Statistics for 2006-2012 retrieved from national statistics reports published by the State Examination Commission on www.examinations.ie [accessed on 20.12.2021]. Statistics for 2013-2016 based on information received from the State Examination Commission upon request [received on 16.02.2022].

The initially high results in Polish Leaving Cert (non-curricular) in 2005 and 2006 are likely to be connected to the fact that those LC students who migrated from Poland to Ireland with their parents in 2005 and 2006 received most of their education through the means of the Polish language while in Poland. Since Polish was introduced to the curriculum in 2020 (the first LC examination in 2022), the percentage of students receiving H1 in Polish grew significantly. This aligns with a common trend as the percentage of LC students attaining H4 or better in any foreign language grew from 31.5% in 2017 to 42% in 2021 (DE, 2023).

In 2020, the significant decrease in the number of students taking their LC in Polish (along with a significant increase in their results) can be attributed to the LC Examinations cancellation in 2020 due to the pandemic.

Table 18: Results of Polish Leaving Certificate Higher Level: 2017-2023

Year	Total number of candidates	Percentage breakdown of candidates by grade awarded							
		H1	H2	H3	H4	H5	H6	H7	H8
2017	693	11.7	23.1	29.0	21.1	6.2	4.9	1.9	2.2
2018	687	9.2	15.3	27.4	24.2	15.0	5.4	2.0	1.6
2019	780	8.2	16.7	28.3	25.8	12.4	4.5	2.4	1.7
2020	508	34.1	35.2	20.1	7.1	2.6	0.8	0	0.2
2021	684	28.4	23.1	23	13.9	6	3.2	1	1.3
2022	789	36.9	36.0	19.1	4.4	1.8	0.8	0.6	0.4
2023	916	49	32.2	11.5	4.3	1.7	0.8	1.2	0.3

Note. Statistics for 2006-2012 retrieved from national statistics reports published by the State Examination Commission on www.examinations.ie [accessed on 20.12.2021].

In 2020, LC students were offered calculated grades based on the teacher's estimation of the student's percentage mark based on the student's performance over the course of study. The estimated marks were then overseen by the student's school principal to ensure fairness, equity and objectivity, and transmitted by the school to DES for national standardisation. As Polish was not a curricular subject at the time, many students had their estimated marks given by their Polish complementary schools' teachers based on their performance in Polish classes taken outside of their state post-primary schools. In 2020, PPLI organised online support for students taking their Leaving Certificate examinations in Lithuanian, Polish and Portuguese. Students who participated in this initiative were provided with an e-teacher who assessed their written work. Participation in the PPLI online written support was also used in providing students with estimated grades in 2021 instead of the usual LC examination that was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic (PPLI, 2021). PPLI was also involved in helping

students receive their estimated grades by contacting Polish schools and individual teachers (PPLI, 2021). In 2021, students' LC results were awarded based on the better of either a conventional LC examination or the SEC Accredited Grades system.

In the context of post-primary foreign and HL education in Ireland, it is worth noting the newest statistical data regarding the learning and uptake of the Irish language at the Leaving Certificate level over the last few years. Since the new arrangements introduced in 2019 by the Ministry of Education regarding exemptions from learning Irish, the number of students who were granted exemptions has grown by 33% among Junior Cycle students (from 6,696 in 2019 to 8,932 in 2022) and by 22% among Leaving Certificate students (from 6,931 in 2019 to 8,447 in 2022). Based on Circular 0053/2019 (DES, 2019b), a student can be granted an exemption from studying Irish in exceptional circumstances, such as: 1) if they studied outside Ireland until age 12 or re-enrol after 3 years spent abroad; 2) have persistent, significant learning difficulties in language and literacy; or 3) score at or below the 10th percentile in Word Reading, Reading Comprehension, or Spelling. (DES, 2019b: 3-4). Since 2019, psychological assessments and cognitive ability scores are no longer necessary for processing applications, the school principals now make decisions. The Ministry of Education saw an increase in the number of secured exemptions from the Irish due to the Irish education system welcoming refugees and migrant children and a better understanding of special needs. However, some principals view this change as a “stealthy plan to kill Irish by slow death” (O'Brien, 2023). Despite the increase in the number of pupils availing of exemption, Irish has seen a significant rise in the number of students taking it at their LC examination over the last two years. In 2022, 43,894 students (83% per cent of all Leaving Cert candidates) took the Irish LC exam (24441 at the Higher Level, 1933 at the Ordinary level, and 23520 at the Foundation level). In 2023 the number has climbed to 49,132 students sitting Irish (Higher level: 23,899; Ordinary level: 2,408; Foundation Level: 22,825). Additionally, the percentage of H1s awarded at Higher Level LC in Irish has risen from 11.9% in 2021 to 12.7% in 2022 and reached 15.5 % in 2023.

4.3.3 Linguistic requirements and opportunities at Ireland's Higher Education

Admission requirements for universities in Ireland vary. National University of Ireland¹⁶ (NUI) requires English, Irish, and four other subjects at the Leaving Certificate exam. A third language is necessary for most degree programs in Arts, Human Sciences, Law, Social Science, Commerce, Medicine, and Health Sciences, while it is not required for NUI Science or Engineering programmes. Trinity College requires six LC subjects, including English, Mathematics, and a language other than English. At most universities, a waiver of the Irish and/or modern language requirement is possible for candidates who were granted exemption from Irish or were diagnosed with a disability in their primary or post-primary school. The modern language waiver is not possible to be granted on the basis of poor standards of literacy¹⁷.

In Ireland, higher education institutions offer a range of language courses for students to choose from. These courses encompass different levels of study, from major to minor to elective subjects. Students can also opt to integrate language studies with other disciplines like Business, Law, Drama Studies, History of Art & Architecture, and more. Trinity College Dublin provides a wide range of degree and language courses in modern languages, including Business Studies and Polish. UCD Languages for Life initiative promotes language awareness and learning, allowing students to acquire language skills as part of their degree courses. French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese are some of the languages that students can take as either a full subject or a combination with other programs like Business, Education, and Music.

4.4 Languages in Irish education in the eyes of migrant pupils, parents, and teachers

4.4.1 'So, there is really a lot to learn': Pupils' interest in learning languages

Pupils of both primary and post-primary age participating in this study showed interest in learning foreign languages while developing their HLs and English and Irish as their school

¹⁶ NUI includes constituent universities (UCD, Maynooth University, NUI Galway and UCC), recognised colleges (Institute of Public Administration, Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland) and colleges linked with NUI constituent universities (Shannon College of Hotel Management, National College of Art and Design, St Angela's College, Burren College of Art, Institute of Banking).

¹⁷ See: Application for the exemption from the language and/or mathematics requirement for TCD Matriculation

languages. Many of them described their plans for using foreign language knowledge for their future educational and professional plans. I also noticed similar interests among pupils I taught Polish in two Irish primary schools participating in the Say 'Yes' to Languages module, as noted in my research journal entry (Appendix S).

Izabela, a trilingual girl aged 10 at the time of the interview, speaks Polish at home and learns English and Irish at her English-medium primary school. She maintains her proficiency in Polish by speaking it at home with her Polish mother and sisters and attending a Polish school on weekends. In addition, she uses Polish to communicate with her grandmother and extended family in Poland via phone or video calls. Izabela also has some knowledge of Panjabi, her father's native language, albeit limited to understanding basic phrases, as her father primarily uses English at home but sometimes introduces basic Panjabi utterances. While Izabela's multilingual identity is rooted in her diverse linguistic and cultural background and is also reflected in her family's language policy and daily practices of using three languages at home, she showed a lot of awareness about her language proficiency and future language education plans. In addition to maintaining English, Polish and Panjabi, she expressed a keen interest in learning French or Spanish to fulfil her future professional plans:

[In the future,] I will definitely still use English, Polish and Panjabi. I also want to learn French and Spanish. I'll have to know French if I want to read French books. I want to be an illustrator, and I want to live in France. So, if I'm going to illustrate French books, it would be good to know what they're about.

(Izabela, 10 years old, 2nd generation)

She also added that knowing foreign languages might be useful for her in the future when she travels around the world: "I'm going to have to learn them [foreign languages] if I want to travel around the world" (Izabela, 10 years old, 2nd generation). Mateusz also reflected on his plans to learn Japanese and live in Japan. He recognised the importance of knowing English for realising this plan and of knowing Polish so he would be able to communicate with his family in the future.

I want to learn Japanese and live in Japan. To get a passport and all the documents, money, etc., I need English. To talk to my family, I will still need Polish. So, I need to know languages. (Mateusz, 12 years old, gen. 1.5)

The connection between future professional success, and their aspirations to know multiple languages were also described by other participants. For instance, Damian (16 years old) has been learning languages both within and outside the educational system. He practised Polish at home with his parents, as well as in the Polish school on the weekends. As he was in attendance in an Irish-medium secondary school, where he also was learning English and German, he chose to take all of these languages at his Leaving Cert exam. Moreover, he planned to take the exam through the medium of the Irish language.

I would like to take my final exams through Irish. However, I also chose Polish as a subject. So you can really say that I will be taking 4 languages. Because it is Irish, which we also have as a subject, English as an additional language subject, German and Polish. (Damian, 16 years old, generation 1.5)

At the time of the interview, Damian was weighing his options and opportunities related to his choice of third-level education and future profession. As he grew up and other opportunities become available, his future plans about doing a degree in English and German in Poland have changed. However, Damian's confidence about the importance of proficiency in multiple languages in the political sphere remained visible throughout the conversation:

For a long time, I wanted to study English and German at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. And that was my plan for the future, and that's what I wanted to do. It's changed a little bit in the last few months because of my current opportunities. [...] I have received an invitation to the Irish Parliament in Dublin, and I was there yesterday. And I heard this sentence that there is a political potential in me for sure and that I should go in this direction. [...] Now I'm closer to this choice to study political sciences here in Ireland in Dublin. Here, too, knowledge of [foreign] languages will definitely come in handy.

(Damian, 16 years old, generation 1.5)

Like Izabela and Damian, other participants have also expressed a keen interest in learning foreign languages to achieve their future goals. Norbert, who speaks Polish at home, studied German and Spanish as foreign languages at the post-primary school level and has attended Polish complementary school since moving to Ireland at the age of 7. In his view, knowledge

of any foreign language guarantees a strong CV enhancement. It depicts his awareness of the importance of multilingualism in today's globalized world where English is commonly known, and shows that foreign language education is promoted in some educational settings as an asset at the job market:

(...) if you write in your CV – it was mentioned recently at school – that you can speak 3 languages, they will want you more than someone who can only say something in English. (Norbert, 16 years old, generation 1.5)

Moreover, Norbert expressed interest in learning Polish as a subject in his secondary school if there was such an opportunity. His motivation for this was his confidence in achieving good marks and the possibility of resigning from attending Polish school (albeit dependent on parental decision) and gaining free Saturdays.

Researcher: If there was a possibility that in your secondary school to take Polish as an LC subject, as a foreign language, do you think you would decide to take it?

Norbert: Of course. I'd get a lot of points from it, and I'd get good grades.

Researcher: Would you still be going to the Polish school then?

Norbert: Depends on the parents. Because if I had Polish at [mainstream] school, maybe they would let me not go to [Polish] school. Well, it would be nice to have Saturdays off, though. (Norbert, 16 years old, generation 1.5)

Following the discussion of the idea with an older peer of Polish background, Norbert decided to take Polish as a language subject for his Leaving Cert as allegedly the examination in Polish as a curricular subject is somewhat easier than before the language was introduced into the curriculum.

[...] They say it's easy. Yesterday, I was talking to a colleague who was doing this [Polish Leaving Cert] last year, and he said that something has changed now and that it will be easier. So I plan to take it. (Norbert, 16 years old, generation 1.5)

Norbert's decision depicted how introduction of Polish into the curriculum has been a topic discussed by post-primary pupils of Polish heritage and how this opportunity may influence

their decision to prioritize home language over other foreign languages they might have studied and considered as subjects for their Leaving Cert exam.

A year ago, I stopped doing Spanish in secondary school because I have Polish in a Polish school to learn it for the leaving cert exam. I need a third language for the university, so I think I will take Polish as a subject too. (Norbert, 16 years old, generation 1.5)

Like Norbert and Damian, many participants of this study showed an interest in taking Polish at their Leaving Cert examination. However, pupils showed different approaches towards the choice of languages they would like to study if Polish was offered in their post-primary school. While Norbert prioritized Polish over another foreign language subject, Mateusz (11 years old), said he would rather learn another foreign language in post-primary school as he said he already knew Polish from home and attended the Polish school.

I already know Polish, so I would choose German because I would like to learn a new language. (Mateusz, 12 years old, generation 1.5)

Along with their educational and professional goals, participants appear to integrate multilingualism and multiculturalism into their daily lives both in and out of school. Through everyday situations and opportunities, they engage in discussions about the diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds that surround them. Norbert, for instance, noted that despite not recalling any formal lessons on language diversity or multilingualism during his post-primary education, he regularly converses with his international peers who share a mutual interest in comparing their unique backgrounds.

Researcher: Do you talk with your friends about it?

Norbert: With friends, yes, a lot. I talk much about Poland; they talk so much about the Czech Republic or Ukraine.

Researcher: About their countries?

Norbert: Yes, we talk [about it] a lot.

Researcher: And in what context? Were you comparing, for instance, traditions and languages?

Norbert: Yes, this is what it's like: we eat, and one would take out pierogi [dumplings]. [I say:] "Oh, I eat pierogi, it's from Poland!" or something like that. And then we talk.

(Norbert, 16 years old, generation 1.5)

Inspired by the rich tapestry of cultural, linguistic, and national backgrounds within young generations growing up in today's Ireland, Damian has founded an international youth group. It is comprised of members from various nationalities, ranging in age from 11 to 16, as well as tutors, who meet on Saturdays free of charge in Damian's town. The group was established with the support of a local international organisation. Damian believed that "getting to know new cultures, getting to know new stories and new people is very important for developing yourself for the future", thus as a leader and tutor, he was trying to share his experiences and viewpoint with this diverse youth group.

At one meeting, we agreed that it would be good to create an international group, so we do not limit ourselves only to people from Poland. The more nationalities, the more cultures, the better. [...] So, it started with the Polish group, and then children from Croatia joined, then, children from African countries, from Romania, from Moldova, from the Balkan countries. The Irish, of course. We even have South African girls. So now we have this nice, close-knit group of 20 people. And, of course, our tutors, who are also of different nationalities. I am a tutor too, and you know, I'm Polish. We also have a girl who is from Lithuania, although she has Hungarian origins. So, there's really a lot to learn. There is Rafael, who is from Nigeria. He has gone through a very interesting story from workplaces in Africa, to us here. He is also currently doing his PhD in sociology. We also have John and Dónal from Ireland. And Adam from the States. (Damian, 16 years old, generation 1.5)

The linguistic and cultural diversity among individuals participating in a group is often evident in their discussions. This is particularly true when individuals introduce and share knowledge about words and customs in their respective native/home languages. While English may be the primary language used to discuss various topics, such as stress management, creating short movies, and depression, individuals' native languages often play a significant role in shaping the group's days.

The main language is English so that everyone can understand everything. [...] Polish language certainly appears, because we have a few people in our group who are of

Polish origin. I, as the manager of this group, also try to talk to these kids in Polish, so that this language is present. Sometimes, we have such classes that everyone presents a little bit of their native language, a bit of the history of this language, where this language comes from, how to pronounce something correctly in this language, etc. So, there are even such Saturdays that we speak many languages. (Damian, 16 years old, generation 1.5)

The above example illustrates youth agency in promoting intercultural exchange and inclusivity outside of mainstream school settings, where such opportunities vary depending on the teacher's or principal's approach, as participants described in the next section.

4.4.2 'My child was so (un)lucky': Irish schools' responses to linguistic diversity

To encourage reflexivity, participants' experiences regarding the inclusion of linguistic diversity (and/or its limitations) in the mainstream school classroom were contrasted with my own experience as a mother of a primary school-aged child in Ireland, using my research journal. Such a comparison showed that both my and the participant's experience indicated that applying the PLC approach to embrace all the languages pupils bring to school often depends on individual teachers' or principals' approach towards HLs maintenance and pupils' bilingualism. For instance, Kamila, a mother of two children of primary school age, described a tension she felt between what she described as 'Irish school's neutral approach to her children's bilingualism' (e.g. teachers inquiring only about her children's English knowledge), and her parental desire to cultivate the HL and culture at home. In her opinion, this causes children's bilingualism to remain unnoticed, also by the children.

I'm not thrilled with some of the actions of the Irish school. They try to be very neutral. Children do not notice that they are bilingual. When you have meetings with teachers, they always ask what the communication at home is like and whether the child speaks English [at home], and that it would be good if they would repeat some English words. I always say that I don't forbid my children to speak English, but I also don't encourage them to do so at home, and I cultivate Polish traditions rather than Irish ones. (Kamila, mother, 1st generation)

Berta, a Polish migrant mother to a boy of primary school age, a Polish language teacher and a principal of one of the Polish complementary schools in Ireland, experienced a similar

impression to that described above by Kamila. She and her Polish friend felt frustrated about the perceived lack of acknowledgement towards their children's knowledge of Polish combined with the school's expecting them to expose their children more to the Irish language.

When my [son's] last year's report said that I should expose my child to the Irish language more, and my Polish friend[s child] received the same note, we thought: "Great, but no-one notices that my child is exposed to his own language!" (Berta, Polish mother, teacher and principal in Polish complementary school)

In Berta's perception, despite the current policy acknowledging home languages, the weakness of the Irish school system is that a lot depends on a particular school's principal who can favour multilingualism or not.

If it's already in the core curriculum, it should be enforced somehow. The weakness of this system is that it depends on whether the principal favours or does not support such a multilingual, multicultural approach towards education. (Berta)

As a teacher and principal of one of the Polish complementary schools in an urban area, she heard many stories from parents, based on which she assumed two reasons for an inconsistent approach towards home languages in Irish schools. First, lack of appropriate teachers' training on embracing multilingualism in the classroom. Second, individual teacher's beliefs and attitudes towards foreign languages and cultures in the classroom:

I've heard a lot of stories from parents, and I think that the lack of training is one thing, but the other is a kind of freedom: you can respect other cultures or not. I have also met many Irish teachers who believe that because we are in Ireland, this is our identity. And we are supposed to leave our identities aside; they can be private at home, but here we are in an Irish school, so we are Irish. (Berta)

This has been seen as causing tension between parental efforts for their children to maintain their cultural heritage and the school's approach to helping children develop an Irish identity. As Berta reported, in her understanding, in many cases, this was not rooted in teachers' discriminatory approaches, but rather in their goodwill to help the migrant children integrate

into the Irish society, unfortunately at the risk of suppressing children's home country's identity.

This is the problem that the teachers I talked to who presented this view did not do it out of any discrimination. They believed they were helping these children gain an Irish identity. But by repressing the identity of the country of origin. First of all, you cannot build any identity based on discrimination or eliminating the identity that the child already has. (Berta)

Similar approaches also happen among other professionals who work with school-age children, e.g. afterschool staff. Aine, who was born in Ireland (age 6 at the time of the interview), reported that in the afterschool service she attended beside her primary school, she and a group of her friends of Polish origin often "sneaked around" to play together using the Polish language, because the afterschool staff asked them to switch to English when they saw that:

The afterschool lady says not to speak Polish but English. But me, Martyna and Kasia sneak around and play in Polish when she doesn't see us. (Aine, 6 years old, 2nd generation)

Other children of Polish origin also seemed to feel the willingness to use Polish when interacting with one another outside the home environment. Damian, a pupil at an Irish medium post-primary school, shared that he used to talk in Polish with his older friend, who was also of a Polish background and attended the same Irish-medium school. On some occasions, they heard unpleasant comments from peers asking them to stop using the Polish language and switch to English.

There was a period when I was close friends with this older boy who was from Poland, and we talked to each other in Polish. I even heard this sentence from my peers: "Don't talk in Polish. You are in Ireland and English is spoken here" (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5)

Initially, Damian had strong feelings about it. However, his way of justifying his right to speak Polish with another person of Polish origin illustrates his pride in preserving and safeguarding his linguistic heritage.

I definitely felt some kind of anger, even a bit of embarrassment, by this whole situation... OK, we are in Ireland, and we talk to people from Ireland, either in Irish or English. However, we should not be deprived of the right to speak our native language simply with people of our nationality. It was incomprehensible to me. And I had a verbal confrontation with such persons on this subject a few times. I personally don't like this behaviour. I believe that if we have a person who is of our nationality, who is from the same culture, we share history, we have Polish blood, we should have the right to speak to each other in Polish. (Damian)

Interviews with children and parents revealed that, at the same time, there are many mainstream schools where inclusive practices towards pupils' home languages and multilingualism are integrated into the teaching and learning, albeit with a different frequency or level of consistency. Izabela was born in Ireland to a Polish mother and an Indian father, and she was 10 years old at the time of the interview. Asked about activities or classes devoted to the topic of linguistic diversity, she could not recall any. Yet, her mother, who was present in the room at the time of the interview, shared an insight into some of Izabela's teachers' inclusive practices that she remembered:

Izabela's mother: Iza, you had a situation where you told the children how to celebrate Christmas Eve in front of the whole class.

Izabella: When?

Izabela's mother: When you were at Mrs. McDonald's class and Mrs. O'Brien's, you also talked about an Indian holiday. There was also a story about Christmas Eve, where the children were surprised that there were 12 dishes and that we already received gifts after Christmas Eve. Irish colleagues said they would like to come.

Her mother also recalled a situation when Izabela was able to help her peers to read a text which included elements written in the Polish language:

There was such a nice situation that the teacher probably went out and let them read the text and the text was in English. [It was] about a girl Ela who went to Poland for

Christmas. And, as the only one in class, Izabel could read “wigilia” [Christmas Eve] and “Kraków”, right? And “Piotrek” [Peter], right? So that was such a nice touch in the Irish school. And Izabela was the one who helped her friends to read [in Polish].

Despite the absence of Izabela's teacher in the classroom while she assisted her peers in reading Polish words in the assigned text, it seemed to be a great opportunity for her to demonstrate her literacy skills in Polish, one of her HLs. Izabela admitted she felt proud after being able to utilise her Polish skills within her primary school context. Moreover, Izabela's mother praised the teacher's decision to assign a multilingual text, describing it as “such a nice touch in the Irish school”. This, along with the fact that Izabela could not recall these situations without her mother reminding her, suggests that talking about different languages and cultures might not have been a common practice taken by her classroom teacher but rather a rare or an occasional event.

Another example of a positive approach towards pupils’ multilingualism comes from Marysia’s primary school. This time, it illustrated the primary teacher’s consistent interest and encouragement when addressing HLs and cultures in the classroom. Marysia was born in Poland, moved to Ireland with her parents in her early years, and has attended her Polish complementary school in Ireland ever since. During the interview, she talked about her 6th class primary school teacher’s welcoming approach towards languages and cultures and how she and her fellow peers positively received it. He would praise their students for their language skills in any language and encourage them to explain traditions from the country of origin that they celebrated at home:

Our teacher said a lot about if someone speaks another language then “put your hand up”. Then [he said] “oh you, it’s nice that [you speak] in Polish, how nice it is”. Or the other time, I told my teacher about mikołajki [Santa Claus’ Day celebrated in Poland on 6th of December] and that I said that today I got gifts from Santa Claus and he said that “oh, I’ve heard something about that”. And I got up and in front of the whole class and I had to talk about it. And it was fun. (Marysia, 13 years old, generation 1.5)

Marysia's narration shows that she felt proud, valued and happy when she could share a story linked to her family's Polish cultural practices at home. She emphasised the social aspect of this activity and the fun associated with it as she could see engagement and positive feedback from other peers who joined the discussion.

Well, it was fun. And my friend said "Well, I got this, too. And I got that". And others said it was fun. (Marysia)

Moreover, Marysia's teacher also showed interest in her attendance in complementary school:

once I had to do a project for the Polish school and he [the teacher] said that I should bring it there and show it to them, too. (Marysia)

The teacher's interest in their student's complementary education seemed unusual to me, as some of the interviewed parents reported that they have not seen much interest from the teachers even after approaching them with information about the child's complementary education. Ewelina, also a Polish migrant mother and a teacher in Polish complementary schools, said she spoke with her daughter's classroom teacher when she was attending Junior Infants, to explain that her daughter was also in attendance in the Polish school on weekends, and even showed pictures of some work she has done in Polish school. Despite the teacher's overall positive response, Ewelina did not remember the teacher showing more interest in her daughter's complementary education:

We were discussing the issue of maybe being overtired at school, and I simply explained that my child goes to another school and studies an extra day. It was during the lockdown, so we worked a lot at home. I also sent her [the primary school teacher] photos of work that my daughter completed for the Polish school. I think it was very positive, but she [the teacher] didn't ask any more about it. (Ewelina, Polish migrant mother and complementary school teacher)

On the other hand, Berta described a primary school in Ireland where the collaboration between an open-minded principal and actively engaged Polish parents led to the school providing Polish classes for their pupils of Polish origin after the normal school hours:

There is a very open principal, but he also has a school with 38 nationalities and because Polish parents asked for the possibility of conducting classes at the school. The director agreed but was a bit suspicious for the first year. He came to classes, watched what was happening, looked through the glass (Berta, Polish migrant mother, teachers and principal of a Polish schools)

Thanks to this collaboration and parental involvement, Polish children attending this school were offered to learn Polish free of charge and the insurance was paid from the funds of the school parents' council.

This is due to the fact that parents have a good influence on the principal, and the principal sees that he actually supports the Polish language and Polish-speaking families who have children at this school. The good thing is that, apart from the best possible room in the school, which was provided free of charge, teachers conducting classes were also covered by the parents' council insurance, which means they do not have to pay additional insurance. This is an example showing that the involvement of parents and the good will of the management, on the other hand, can work wonders, regardless of the legal solutions. (Berta)

Another example illustrates the positive influence of research on the whole school approach towards children's multilingualism and multiculturalism. A very fortunate situation of having a teacher conducting research on bilingualism happened to Berta and her son. Berta was involved in this research project as a participant of an interview. As she recalls, there was a very positive outcome of one teacher's research on the whole school approach towards bilingualism and HL speakers.

My child is so lucky! But this luck was not there from the beginning; it started at one point. One of his teachers was doing his master's degree at Trinity on the subject of bilingual children. I don't know what exactly this master's thesis was about, but I was also involved in the research and asked for an interview, such as the one I am giving now, about whether we speak Polish at home, or about the development of a small

child as a bilingual child in general. So since then, the school has been more aware of it, and it has actually improved a lot (Berta)

The above narrative shows an advancement and improvement in the school's understanding of pupils' bilingualism through the research. It also indicates how parents can be involved in various ways in their child's HL language(s) development and education, which is the topic of the next section.

4.4.3 'To make them aware': Polish migrants' involvement in promoting HL

Through interviews with Polish migrant parents and teachers, it became evident that parental influence on shaping their children's bilingual journey was especially visible through their engagement in their children's learning process and discussing their children's language development during parent-teacher meetings. The active involvement and confidence in promoting their children's bilingualism in their child's primary school environment have been noticed, especially among those parents who were at the same time teachers or principals at Polish complementary schools. For instance, Maria, a parent of two teenage girls and a principal of one Polish complementary school was also engaged in her daughters' language development process though discussing their needs to balance the English and Polish development with her daughters' teachers:

I was attending these one-on-one meetings with teachers in Irish schools. [...] And for example, when some of these teachers told me – every year there was a different teacher so every year there this topic was discussed – that 'girls are [doing] great, but if they read a little more in English, they would definitely have a better vocabulary'. And I was saying: 'I don't let them. They have to read in Polish, because I know that otherwise they will lose this Polish language'. I was fully aware of that. As long as they still want to, I'll do everything to keep as much [Polish] as possible, to not freeze the language so quickly. (Maria, mother and Polish complementary school principal, 1st generation)

Maria also shared a story about her daughters attending a creche, where a staff member proposed the OPOL strategy despite both Maria and her husband being Polish. She strongly

disagreed with this idea, calling it ‘fooling around’ to speak a foreign language to their own children as she believed doing so would limit their ability to freely express emotions as parents.

In preschool, when the girls were there, there was one lady who told us to speak... so that one parent spoke Polish and the other English. I explained then that this is not a strategy that I believe in, because in our [home] the language of emotions is Polish. We will speak only Polish to the children. We're not going to fool around. (Maria, mother and Polish complementary school principal, 1st generation)

Similar to Maria, the interview with Berta revealed her parental efforts to ‘make the teacher aware’ of her child’s bilingualism and why it was important to her to use Polish as a home language for her child's bilingual proficiency and bilingual identity development:

I took great care to ensure that my child was recognized at school as a Polish child and as a bilingual child. From the beginning, during parent-teacher meetings, I talked to the teacher and asked whether my child needed any support in English. I said that we speak Polish at home, that I am interested in my child speaking Polish, knowing Polish culture, reading Polish, so that he feels Polish here, in Ireland, too. Understanding that it would be some kind of double identity due to growing up in two cultures in parallel. But this Irish culture is of course represented at all times. So, first of all, I made the teacher aware of this topic. (Berta, mother and Polish complementary school principal, 1st generation)

Berta also asked her child to prepare cards for their teachers in the Polish language. While reluctant to this idea, her son eventually wrote the cards in Polish and this met with a positive response from the class teacher:

[...] when, for example, children were preparing cards for teachers, I asked my child to write in Polish. With great reluctance, but it was written in Polish. (Berta, mother and Polish complementary school principal, 1st generation)

In both cases, Berta’s and Maria’s, their children’s teachers responded positively. Notably, Maria supported her stance by research. She emphasized her firm belief it was a successful

approach to the maintenance of the Polish language as her currently teenage daughters can speak it fluently without a foreign accent:

The effect was very nice, because on the certificate, on the report that the school gives at the end of the year, the teacher also wrote “Dziękuję” [Thank you] in Polish (Berta, mother and Polish complementary school teacher and principal)

I have to say that I've never encountered any unfavorable attitude to it when I calmly explained, using research, using information about what is important to me. I think... I also consider it a huge success that the girls are 13 and 12 years old now and in Poland no one has identified that they are not from Poland. They speak without an accent, using beautiful Polish. (Maria, mother and Polish complementary school principal)

Another form of parental engagement in promoting HL bilingualism included taking part in school-organised events. Berta described how she always tried to prioritise school events as a parent and use them as an opportunity to promote Polishness. She even introduced some basic Polish words to pupils of different nationalities, which was met with enthusiasm among the children.

At school, there are sometimes requests for involvement from parents, most often on Saturdays, to work in the garden; although I can't be involved on Saturdays, when there are other options, I try to prioritise this and go. So, I've been with the kids, for example, to the cinema; I've been to a sports field as part of Sports Day. And I'm talking to them. It happens that I teach them some basic Polish words. A boy once came to me and said, "I know, it's 'jabłko' [an apple] in Polish". He was Irish. (Berta)

One of the events she also took part in was an open day when parents were invited to come to school to talk about their professions. Berta took this opportunity to promote the Polish language, Polishness, and show to children the profession of a language teacher as a rewarding one that may combine teaching your own language with travelling:

When there was an open day at school and parents came and taught children about various professions, I talked about the profession of a Polish language teacher. I worked as a Polish language teacher at universities, and I talked about this work, how I worked in Budapest, how I worked in Prague - to show children that you can teach

your own language as a foreign language and you can also travel, which was very interesting for them. At the same time, you also have to learn other languages, because you have to somehow communicate with the people you want to teach. And it seems to me that this was also a kind of an accent on our Polishness and emphasizing it. (Berta, mother and Polish complementary school principal)

Another way of promoting Polishness and cultural integration outside the mainstream school hours was described by Renata, a Polish mother, who works as an SNA in an Irish primary school and teaches Polish in one of the Polish complementary schools on the weekends. She is also involved in the Polish Scouts group that is officially registered within the structures of an umbrella Irish association. While they cover activities outlined in this association's guidelines, all of them take place through the medium of Polish. By taking part in locally based events, meeting with other groups belonging to this organisation, and organising joint trips to Poland, children and community members have an opportunity to learn how blending Polish and Irish cultural activities can support integration within an international community:

We are trying to translate the whole program of the Irish group into the Polish language. And all the [Polish] culture and customs, we add it for free, that is, we organize the Polish Christmas Eve, we organize the blessing of food, we decorate eggs for Easter with the kids. [...] Apart from the fact that we are building this Polishness, we have integration with the Irish groups, through meetings with Irish groups [...] We integrate, we go camping together, we organize international camps, and we invite Irish groups to go with us to Poland. (Renata, mother and Polish complementary school teacher)

In fact, collaboration between Irish and Polish communities and institutions emerged as the core element in the process of introducing Polish into the post-primary school curriculum, which had started many years before the language was established as a curricular subject in 2020. Honorata, who came to Ireland in 2007, described the process as long and gradual, beginning with building the awareness about the need for the Polish language to be a curricular subject for preserving the Polish language among the younger generations.

When I came here, it had already begun, that is, the awareness that the Polish language could be a foreign language [in Irish schools], one of the curricular foreign languages for the Leaving Cert exam. Because then it would make it easier for our

students to take their final [LC] exams. And besides, it would also be a sign of respect to the [Polish] language itself, wouldn't it? This is also very important for the preservation of our national language. And it [the process of introducing Polish to the curriculum] lasted a very long time. It took a very long time, but it was done in steps. (Honorata, Polish mother, teacher and principal of a Polish school)

She emphasised the collaboration and the initiatives taken at the time by the Polish Educational Society, the oldest organisation representing Polish teachers and Polish complementary schools in Ireland, and the Embassy of Poland in Dublin. During several meetings of the Education Advisory Council at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Dublin that were organised and held by the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Ireland since 2012, the members of the Council (the principals or managers of all Polish schools operating in Ireland) discussed issues related to Polish provision in Ireland, both in mainstream and complementary schooling, e.g. introducing Polish LC to post-primary schools, short course in Polish as a HL, Polish Leaving Cert preparatory courses organised by the Embassy of Poland and Polish complementary schools, registration of Polish teachers with Teaching Council in Ireland, among others. Representatives of Irish educational institutions such as PPLI and DES were also invited to these meetings to discuss future steps towards the development and support of Polish education in Ireland.¹⁸.

All the time, these precursors of this, I mean the then president of the Polish Educational Society in Ireland first of all, because she started it. She started talks with the Ministry of Education on this very subject and with the embassy. The Embassy supported this, that is, [organised] these mutual meetings, between the teachers' representatives and the Embassy, later also with the Embassy and the Irish Department of Education. And that was the collaboration. This pressure was put by both the Polish Embassy and Polish [complementary] schools to recognise this national language as a foreign language. So, it didn't happen on its own; it was under the pressure of the teachers, and it must be emphasised. The first step was this short course [JC Short course in Polish as an HL], which was the first step that the Irish Department [of Education] took. (Honorata, principal of a Polish HL school)

¹⁸ A summary of the meeting of the Education Advisory Council at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Dublin held in 2020: <https://www.gov.pl/web/irlandia/spotkanie-rady-konsultacyjnej-ds-oswiaty-przy-ambasadzie-rp-w-dublinie>

Honorata saw the Embassy's involvement and dedication as an act of assigning significance and seriousness to the initiative raised by Polish teachers in Ireland and, at the same time, as a strong partnership between the Embassy and the Polish teachers' community. She suggested that this collaboration, the dialogue between the teachers' community and diplomatic institutions has significantly facilitated the development of Polish education in Ireland.

Everything moves forward when there is cooperation, so if institutions cooperate with each other and have one goal and know what this cooperation is for, then a lot of good will certainly come from it. An example of this is the embassy's cooperation with teachers, especially with the umbrella organisation Polish Educational Society in Ireland, which has always been very dynamic and still is. Conversations, this is very important because at the embassy level, it is also important that this embassy turns to these Irish institutions so that they see that this is not only "a performance" of Polish teachers, but also a more serious initiative if the ambassador starts talking about it, if he supports it. I think this is of enormous importance and it must also be said that this cooperation, because I know that this is not the case in all countries, this cooperation of the Polish embassy in Ireland with the representatives of Polish education here, is very good, it is very good. (...) This cooperation resulted in what happened, that is, the Polish language finally entered the [Irish education] system (Honorata)

Berta and Honorata, both Polish teachers and principals of Polish schools, enthusiastically welcomed the long-awaited integration of Polish as a foreign language into the Irish post-primary curriculum. They saw it as a chance for the Polish language to be treated equally to other curricular languages and an opportunity for Polish migrant students to perform better at the new Polish LC due to the oral component of the exam.

What does it mean [that Polish entered the Irish curriculum]? This means that it is subject to the same rules as other foreign languages. [Before] it was only the written exam, so on this basis, it was very difficult because we know that writing is the most difficult for our Polish migrant students. Now it is introduced on the same principles as all other foreign languages, i.e. speaking, listening, and writing, which means that these students are given a greater chance (Honorata)

This new Polish LC exam is... honestly speaking, I am delighted with the changes that have been taking place recently. The fact that the Polish Leaving Cert exam has become more accessible and that anyone can take it in Polish. (Berta)

In-depth interviews revealed that despite many positive outcomes and changes in the Polish language provision in Ireland, some old issues persist within the Irish education system. Several Polish teachers interviewed for this project shared their concerns about the challenges faced when trying to acquire the Teaching Council number. Maria, who managed to register with TC, described the process as “*very frustrating*”:

[Polish] was introduced [to Irish post-primary curriculum] last year, and it [registration] still couldn't be done, and there is simply no possibility, and it was really very frustrating... I know that many of my colleagues simply gave up because somewhere there was this pile of papers that had to be sent... and the way people were treated... I also talked to Irish people who also had similar problems with the Teaching Council, because I would be inclined to say that it is an issue of a national nature, but no, they just feel like they must make someone's life harder. For example, I was asked for a student internship diary from 1997, and I had to translate it. Not to mention the descriptions of every subject I took when doing my degree back then. (Maria, Polish mother, Polish teacher and principal of Polish school)

As described by Maria above, the experience of frustration caused by the inefficiency and length of the bureaucratic process of registration with the Teaching Council has caused discouragement among many foreign teachers who were considering or started collecting the documentation needed for the process. For instance, Krzysiek, who graduated with two degrees in Poland, history and physical education, and for more than ten years has been teaching history in one of the Polish complementary schools in Ireland, was considering applying for a TC number several times, especially when he learned about teachers' shortage in Ireland, yet, he was discouraged at the initial stage of collecting documentation.

I ended up thinking... I was collecting these documents (...) it wasn't easy to get it from Poland... Here, they require some description of what is taught in each subject. And, I don't remember which department - because I graduated in history and completed a postgraduate diploma in PE – one department did not want to give it to me (...) I just left it and didn't pursue the process. (Krzysiek, father and a history teacher in Polish complementary school)

Although Polish language teachers can still commence work in Irish post-primary schools, Honorata suggested that they are not treated equally. In fact, those who still need the TC number are paid less. She suggested that there is a visible resistance towards welcoming immigrant teachers within the teaching population of the Irish education system that contributes to the challenges observed by her among Polish migrant teachers in mainstream schools,

I know several such teachers [teaching Polish in Irish mainstream schools without TC registration], but they are employed on rubbish contracts, which means they are not given the same opportunities. They're not treated equally yet. It's all so... a bit sad, I mean, that's how I perceive it; there's so much struggle, but you're still 'worse' as a foreign teacher; you're not at the same level as an Irish teacher. It is very difficult for the Irish to admit immigrants into their system. They don't want to allow it. (Honorata, teacher and principal at Polish complementary school)

She also underlined the systemic limitation for teachers of other foreign languages qualified in Poland to have their qualifications recognised by TC:

We [the Polish community in Ireland] also have, for example, teachers who could teach foreign languages such as French or German, but they are not allowed. Their qualifications from Poland are not recognised. (Honorata).

Agata, a Polish history teacher in one of the Polish complementary schools, also experienced financial and bureaucratic challenges in collecting documentation from Poland to support her TC application.

I've been studying for years and this is my passion and, for example, what irritates me and Garry is the Teaching Council here in Ireland. (...) I have the qualifications to teach in school; in Poland, I actually taught in a kindergarten, 1-3 primary classes, and in a junior cycle of secondary school. Having this experience, I am not able to find a [teaching] job here due to bureaucratic obstacles. The teaching council is the main obstacle. The costs [associated with the application and required translations of documentation etc.] are quite high; we had to spend several hundred euros. (...) On the other hand, I have difficulty finding and obtaining some of the documents they require (...) (Agata, Polish migrant mother and history teacher in Polish complementary school)

She received encouragement from her Irish husband and is willing to pursue it in the future. However, at the time of the interview, she had begun an SNA course, which she believes will assist her in securing work in a mainstream school and may help her obtain the TC registration number in the future.

I left it [TC application] for now. I'm in the process of taking an SNA course (...) Garry is also encouraging me a bit to push it forward and somehow... You know, we'll see. I will try to push it [TC application] forward, but for now, I want to do this SNA, and maybe this way, as you know, I will get into school somewhere, maybe, maybe later, it will be easier for me [to register with TC]. (...) I would not ultimately like to be an SNA teacher, and I would like to work as a teacher. (Agata)

In addition to bureaucratic challenges faced by Polish teachers, Berta recognised a low awareness about the possibilities of learning Polish within Irish schools, such as through the Primary Language Module, JC short course in Polish, or Polish LC course, among Polish migrant parents combined with a lack of confidence to approach school principals to seek information:

Parents don't know this. And even if they do, they won't go to the Irish school principal to ask, because often a Polish parent doesn't feel in a position to go to the head of an Irish school, and often the [English] language barrier is a problem. Here we need a leaflet, a printout from PPLI, with which the parent can go to the principal and say: "I'm interested in this" (Berta, Polish migrant mother, teacher and principal of a Polish school)

In addition to her suggestion of printed leaflets to be distributed among migrant parents, she also described how, in her Polish complementary school, she and other teachers are educating parents about the possibilities of learning Polish within the Irish education system and taking it as a LC subject:

I could not run the school meeting with parents according to the plan because I needed to first explain to them what the current opportunities in Irish schools are to learn Polish and to take Polish at the Leaving Cert. They did not know anything and asked me very basic questions. (Berta)

As shown in this chapter, many Polish teachers, parents and pupils perceived the possibility of acknowledging children's bilingualism and learning HLs within the Irish education system as beneficial for their children's HL development, cultural identity, and future educational and professional trajectories. Some parents, mostly those engaged in teaching Polish in complementary schools, tried to stay involved in promoting the Polish language and culture in the mainstream sector. I found this willingness similar to my motivation when I approached my daughter's primary school to ask about the possibility of teaching Polish there as part of the Say 'Yes' to Languages module (see Appendix S).

4.5 Summary

This chapter examined the provision, uptake and promotion of the Polish language within the Irish education system while considering a larger perspective and situating it among other heritage and foreign languages in Irish primary and post-primary schools in Ireland. The analysis of quantitative and qualitative data provided by desk research and semi-guided interviews illustrated an increasing interest of both primary and post-primary level pupils of Polish background in Polish as their home language and other foreign language, as they perceive it as an investment in their future educational and professional ambitions. The increase in the number of mainstream schools teaching Polish nationwide appears to be a result of increasing awareness among Polish migrant pupils and their parents about the opportunities that have recently become possible within the Irish education system, such as the JC short course in Polish as a HL introduced in 2015, and the possibility of taking Polish as a curricular subject for LC since 2022. Participants perceived these changes as positive outcomes of the grassroots initiative started by Polish migrant teachers and supported by the Embassy of Poland in Dublin, aimed at sharing awareness about Polish language education for Polish migrant pupils and introducing them to the Irish education system. On the other hand, this chapter showed that even without systemic provision of Polish in primary schools, providing HL classes was possible based on successful collaboration between a primary school's principal and engaged migrant parents within the school community. The above data indicate that in addition to providing HL classes, Polish complementary schools might serve additional roles for Polish migrant families in Ireland. Despite growing opportunities for

learning the Polish language in Irish mainstream schools, Poles in Ireland maintain a high level of interest and involvement in transmitting their HL and culture, particularly through Polish complementary schooling. The ways and reasons for such involvement will be portrayed in Chapter 5 to investigate why and how Polish migrant children and their parents develop and maintain links with their heritage through participation in Polish schools while simultaneously finding themselves at different stages of the processes of acculturation in Irish society.

Moreover, this chapter revealed some long-standing challenges within language education in Ireland that still need to be addressed. I identified two main systemic challenges persisting in the Irish education system: 1) inconsistency in approaching language education and linguistic diversity in classrooms, and 2) the inefficient processing of migrant teachers' registration with the Teaching Council in Ireland. Individual class teachers, principals, and whole schools use different approaches towards linguistic diversity and children's bilingualism, especially in the primary sector. Analysed narratives portrayed an inconsistency between approaches towards pupils' home languages recommended in recently introduced policies, such as *The Primary Language Curriculum* (NCCA, 2019), and actual policy and practice in the primary classrooms. Many Polish migrant families are finding it challenging to balance the maintenance of their native language and learning English and Irish (Machowska-Kosciak, 2020; Crean, 2020). While some teachers acknowledge and appreciate the children's home language, others only focus on developing their English and Irish skills. This illustrates that despite newly developed language education policy that aims to embrace multilingualism, 'monolingual habitus' (Gogolin, 2002), mainly visible in many class teachers' emphasis on pupils' English development with little to no encouragement for pupils' home language use, is still part of many classroom practices in Ireland (Horn, 2015; O'Rourke, 2011; Wallen & Kelly-Holmes, 2006). This approach causes tension between parental expectations and the schools' or teachers' approaches to developing pupils' home and school languages. While parental involvement, especially among those who are Polish teachers, in advocating for home language maintenance and integration, both at home and in the school environment, can be a successful means of supporting children's HLs, it is the class teacher's engagement in embracing home languages on a daily basis that should support this process when the child is at school. Another beneficial solution presented in this chapter

included engaging teachers in research as a way towards integrating research into the whole school approach and individual teachers' practice and building awareness (Ellis, 1997; Sato & Loewen, 2019).

Teaching Council requirements for migrant teachers were perceived as complicated and time-consuming, a view also reported in other studies conducted in Ireland (e.g. Mc Daid & Nowlan, 2022). The discouragement that the process results in may be interpreted as a systemic constraint, again illustrating the 'monolingual habitus' in which teachers should only represent the dominant, native group of Irish society (ibid.). With the increasing linguistic diversity in Irish classrooms and the shortage of foreign language teachers in the state (Bruen, 2023), the pressure to find ways to make the teaching profession more accessible for migrant teachers in Ireland is now more visible than ever. Therefore, 'the challenge of promoting intercultural education not only requires a change in the ethos and culture of schools, but also a rethink of management, administration and resourcing, which, to date, have been structured and organised to suit the dominant culture' (Wallen & Kelly-Holmes, 2006). This includes allowing greater diversification among the body of teachers in Ireland. In fact, many of these teachers possess extensive teaching qualifications and experience, not only from their home country but also from teaching pupils of migrant background in Polish complementary schools throughout Ireland. Therefore, recognising their expertise as an asset could benefit the development of good practice in increasingly diverse Irish classrooms nationwide.

This chapter illustrates that the interplay of language, identity and power in multilingual classroom settings can either hinder children's opportunities to use their multilingual repertoires and develop bi-/multicultural identities, or it can empower them and equip them with confidence and joy towards using foreign/home languages in the school settings and beyond. Therefore, it seems essential to understand that "the relationship between first, second and foreign language learning should be made explicit not just in the curriculum but in classroom practice" (Little, 2003, p. 6). This seems crucial, especially now that MFLs are about to be taught in primary schools nationwide and might help to increase the currently low number of pupils studying foreign languages at the third level in Ireland. Thus, there are two important questions arising. First, how can we leverage the knowledge about diverse

pupils' needs to provide language education built on instilling an interest in lifelong language learning in both mainstream and community settings? Second, how can we enhance collaboration between these two settings to improve children's overall language education? To contribute to our current understanding of these issues, the following two chapters provide us with an opportunity to delve into the links between language, heritage, and belonging as they underpin HL complementary schooling.

Chapter 5: ‘Miles apart but close at heart’: Language, identity and belonging in the context of migration

5.1 Introduction

This chapter investigates the complex interplay between language, identity, and belonging in the context of Polish migrant families in Ireland. Drawing on thematic analysis of data from language portraits created by children and interviews conducted with children, parents, and teachers who participated in Polish complementary schooling, this chapter aims to explore how Polish migrant children and parents negotiate the dynamics of their (bi/multi)cultural identities and their connections with Polishness while living in Ireland. It also explores how attending Polish complementary schools may further influence these processes. To enhance reflexivity, throughout analysing the data, I delved into my own understanding of ‘home’ and Polishness as a migrant, which I illustrated in the thought map in Appendix T.

Section 5.2 focuses on portraying how bi-/multilingual migrant children adapt language use across different contexts, including home, mainstream school, and Polish complementary school, and how they see the roles of the family and the Polish language in shaping their connections to their Polish heritage. It also reflects on children’s perceptions of other languages, mainly English and Irish, as they navigate their positions globally and within Irish society. Section 5.3 examines the complexity of defining where ‘home’ is from migrant children’s and parents’ perspectives. Moreover, it looks at how parents’ aspirations to pass on Polish cultural heritage to their children are underpinned by their language ideologies, which further influence the HL maintenance management and linguistic practices at home. It also shows how this parental desire to pass on the Polish heritage, language practices and management, and their perceptions of benefits associated with HL bilingualism further influence their decisions to enrol their children in Polish complementary schools. Section 5.4 portrays Polish complementary schools as ‘a response’ to migrant families’ needs as they become sites of social and cultural capital, where internalisation of Polishness happens through the experience of Polish culture and ‘togetherness’. The chapter ends with exploring the implications of Covid-19 pandemic on social interactions in Polish complementary schooling in 2020-2021.

5.2 Language and Identity

5.2.1 Migrant children adapting language use across contexts

Children showed different patterns in adjusting language use across contexts, such as home, mainstream school, and Polish complementary school, and when engaging in communication with different speakers, e.g., parents and friends. Aine (6 years old), who was born in Ireland and is growing up with her Polish mother and her Irish stepfather, portrayed on her LP how she balanced Polish and English use in different contexts (Figure 16).

Figure 16: Language Portrait by Aine (6 years old, 2nd generation)



As she portrayed in her LP, she speaks Polish with her Polish family and in her Polish complementary school, while English was the language she used in primary school and with non-Polish friends. In the bottom right corner, she also drew a book she recently read in Polish with her mother. She also reflected on reading books in English before bed with her Irish stepfather, Noel. To include all members of her closest family, Aine also drew her puppy to whom she uses both languages, English and Polish.

Aine: This is a book about a sock. It's really funny. This book is in Polish. (...) [I read it] with my mom. Because I am not that good at reading in Polish yet and Noel can't

read in Polish. I read books with Noel too but in English before bedtime sometimes.
(Aine, 6 years old, 2nd generation)

The above illustrates how language use in Aine's family was adjusted to the abilities and preferences of family members who spoke different languages and how both parents acted as support in developing her literacy skills: the mother in Polish and the stepfather in English.

The language portrait created by Ada (9 years old, 2nd generation) also discussed her preference for using different languages across contexts and with different family members (Figure 17). Ada was the middle child of three sisters born in Ireland to a Polish mother and an Indian father. Ada divided her picture into three separate areas, each marked with a national flag (of Poland, India, and Ireland). Each area portrays people and activities that are connected to these three countries and that Ada has experienced in her life.

Figure 17: Language Portrait by Ada (9 years old, 2nd generation)



The area representing Ada's connection to Irish culture involves friends, baked beans and Donegal. The area representing Ada's connection to Poland lists items such as books, grandma, mom, summer, *pierogi* (dumplings), sisters, and *wigilia* (Christmas Eve). The area depicting Ada's connection to India features images of Diwali (an Indian festival of lights), henna, and Papa (her father). This illustrates that Ada's attachment to these cultures is formed through both linguistic practices and extra-linguistic experiences, e.g., culinary experiences, participation in cultural events, developing literacy skills, travelling, and relationships with different family members.

Furthermore, interviews conducted with Ada and her sisters, Ewa (7 years old) and Izabela (11 years old), indexed how they adapted language use across contexts and with different speakers. The extracts below portray how Ada and both of her sisters perceived the use of different languages (Polish, English, Panjabi) as a practical tool for communication and building social connections with family members and friends across different contexts, such as home, school, playground, shop, and Polish complementary school. They used Polish with each other, with their mother, with their grandmother, and with Polish friends and in a Polish complementary school. English was used to communicate with their father when they were in primary school. With their father, they also used Panjabi sometimes.

I speak three languages, but I speak English the most. At home, I speak only Polish with my mother and my sisters. I speak English with my dad, but I know a few words of Panjabi. (Ada, 9 years old, 2nd generation)

I speak Polish with my sisters, mother, grandmother, cousins and friends. I read and write in Polish. I hear English most often: at school, on the playground, when I'm playing with my friends. I think in both Polish and English. I speak English and Panjabi with my dad. I understand a lot in Panjabi, but I only speak a few words. (Ewa, 7 years old, 2nd generation)

[In Polish] I talk to my mother, sisters, family in Poland, and friends at the Polish school. At home and in Polish school, I think in Polish. The Irish flag on my head means that I live here, so I speak English at school, in the shop, in the yard. At my house, my dad often speaks Panjabi to us because that's his language. I understand a little, but I can't speak it. (Izabela, 11 years old, 2nd generation)

It is important to highlight here the role of Monika, the mother of the three sisters, in instilling their habit of speaking Polish to each other. Monika believed that their Polish language use was a result of her speaking it to them since birth. Through daily interaction and exposure to the Polish language, these sisters found it natural to communicate in Polish with one another.

In general, it is very natural in our home, I spoke only Polish to them from the beginning. I don't reprimand them: "We don't speak English", they just speak Polish among themselves (Monika, mother, 1st generation)

Other children participating in this study showed different strategies regarding language use with their siblings. Robert (9 years old) and Max (7 years old) were both born in Ireland to Polish parents (see their LPs in Appendices B & C). They took into consideration their own and other speaker's language proficiency and emotions when making their everyday language choices. Robert admitted that it was easier for him to speak Polish with his younger brother; he also found Polish his favourite language. Robert admitted that occasionally, he would use English in conversations with Max. However, this would happen when their youngest sister, Lena (4 years old), was not present; as Robert (9 years old, 2nd generation) pointed out, "She doesn't understand it [English] very much, and I don't want her to be sad". A further example of adjusting language choice across contexts and speakers comes from Marysia (13 years old) and Mateusz (12 years old), teenage siblings who were born in Poland to Polish parents and migrated with them to Ireland as preschoolers. Marysia and Mateusz discussed how they usually speak Polish to all their family members, but one another. As Mateusz explained, he found it easier to converse with Marysia in English due to his better vocabulary knowledge and shared experience of attending school together.

With everyone [I talk] in Polish, and with my sister in English. It's just easier that way because I know more words [in English]. We used to go to school together, she's in her first year [of post-primary school] now, and I'm in the sixth [grade] now, so when we went [to school] together, it was all in English, because it was in the same school, everything that was going on, that was in school today was in English. (Mateusz, 12 years old, gen. 1.5)

Marysia perceived Polish as a more challenging language compared to English. However, she expressed plans to use more Polish in conversations with Mateusz as they grow older.

Polish is more difficult. And English, well, I could always learn it faster (...) But I think that when I'm older, we'll be able to speak Polish [more]. Or even if we stayed in Ireland, I think that if I was 16 or something, we would have started talking in Polish more and more. (Marysia, 13 years old, gen. 1.5)

Maria, a mother to two teenage girls, Paulina (13 years old) and Sylwia (14 years old) who were born in Ireland, shared that her daughters' use of Polish with each other is greatly influenced by her presence and correcting them to do so. Maria also reported that her daughters, like Marysia and Mateusz, use English when discussing school-related matters, indicating that it might be easier for these teenagers to communicate in the language in which the experience occurred. This illustrates how the conversation subject itself is a factor influencing language choices among bilingual adolescent siblings.

If they were allowed to speak English, they would speak English, but because I am standing and correcting them, they speak Polish [to one another]. Of course, when they turn to school matters, games or what they watch on the Internet, they automatically switch to English. It's just the way it is. (Maria, mother, principal and teacher at Polish School, 1st generation)

Polish was often seen by parents (Maria, Monika) as the desired language for their children's communication with siblings, while some children preferred English (Mateusz, Marysia). However, in many families, Polish still played a crucial role as a family language when communicating with parent(s) and grandparent(s), which is the subject of the following section.

5.2.2 Central position of Polish language and family in navigating Polishness

As highlighted in the previous section, language and family played a significant role in shaping children's perceptions of their identities. Izabela, whom we have already met in the previous section as a sister of Ada and Ewa (all born in Ireland to a Polish mother and an Indian father), used national flags to illustrate her everyday linguistic practices.

Figure 18: Language Portrait by Izabela (10 years old, 2nd generation)



On her LP (see Figure 18) Izabela drew a Polish flag at her heart, central body, hands and feet to illustrate that it was '*the closest* [language]' for her (Izabela, 11 years old, 2nd generation) and used for communication with her Polish family and friends, as well as a means of thinking when at home and in Polish school, whereas English was a language used in mainstream school.

On my language portrait, I drew myself and used flags to show which languages I use. There is a Polish flag on my heart because Polish is the language closest to me. (Izabela, 11 years old, 2nd generation)

The interview with Izabela revealed that having a Polish mother and celebrating Polish traditions were among the factors shaping her attachment to Polish culture.

My mum is from Poland and we celebrate [Polish] holidays and such days like Grandmother's Day, Children's Day, Saint Nicolas' Day. (Izabela, 11 years old, 2nd generation)

However, she considered knowledge of the Polish language crucial in defining her sense of Polishness, saying, “If I didn't know the Polish language, I wouldn't really feel Polish” (Izabela, 11 years old, 2nd generation).

Beside the silhouette, Izabela drew a map of India representing her connection to Indian culture. Despite the lack of productive skills in Panjabi, Izabela found Panjabi ‘*a language close to her*’ as it was the language of her Indian father and her extended family members who lived in India

At my house, my dad often speaks Panjabi to us because that's his language. I understand a little, but I can't speak it. However, it is a language close for me, because my grandparents and family live in India and I like going there. (Izabela, 11 years old, 2nd generation)

This suggests that, unlike her attachment to Polish, her emotional attachment to the Punjabi language was formed based on her relationship with her family rather than her proficiency in the language. A very similar positioning of Polish at the heart of one's silhouette was illustrated in Damian's LP (Figure 19). Damian was born in Poland to Polish parents and migrated with them to Ireland in his preschool years (as a 4-year-old). At the time of the interview, Damian was 16 years old, and attending both a Gaelcholáiste (an Irish-medium post-primary school) and a Polish complementary school in his town. He created his language portrait (Figure 18) by choosing different colours representing each language that was part of his life in order to “best portray these languages to how I use them daily” (Damian). On his LP, green represented Irish, blue English, red Polish, orange German, and pink Croatian.

Damian coloured much of the silhouette's central body with red, representing the Polish language. While we could connect his use of red as one of the colours of Poland's flag, he explained that it was the emotional attachment to this language that guided his choice of red and its place (*‘on the heart’*) in his language portrait. Polish has always been the home language in his family, and the language he used with friends, as the majority of his friends in Ireland would also have Polish origins:

Then I marked Polish, and I marked a majority part of the portrait with the Polish language, because it is the language the closest to my heart. This is why it is red on the heart. Most often, I use it at home; I use it with friends because most of my friends

are from Poland. Whether in the Polish [complementary] school, or with family, this language is always present. (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5)

Figure 19: Language Portrait by Damian (16 years old, gen. 1.5)



Damian reflected on home language practices and his own agency in maintaining Polish language and cultural connection through developing literacy skills, listening to Polish music, and maintaining Polish friendships.

Polish was always the dominant language at home. We always spoke Polish with our parents at home. I always tried to have friends from Poland. (...) I decided for myself that I wanted to interact with this language and I wanted to speak Polish at home, I wanted to read Polish literature, and then it came to listening to Polish music or simply having more contact with this language (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5)

He expressed a strong personal feeling that he was “closer to Polish culture and the Polish language” in contrast to Irish and English mentalities which he strongly believed were never part of his self-perception.

As a person, I am closer to Polish culture and the Polish language than to English culture, or even to Irish culture. I always say that I have a Polish mentality. And this mentality of the Irish is very different from mine. (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5)

It is interesting to note that Damian frequently used the Polish language for his mental processes. As he mentioned, “I always think in Polish under all circumstances” and “I mostly think in Polish” (Damian). However, on his language profile, he coloured his head green, which, as he explained, represented the Irish language. This contradiction was approached by Damian, who said:

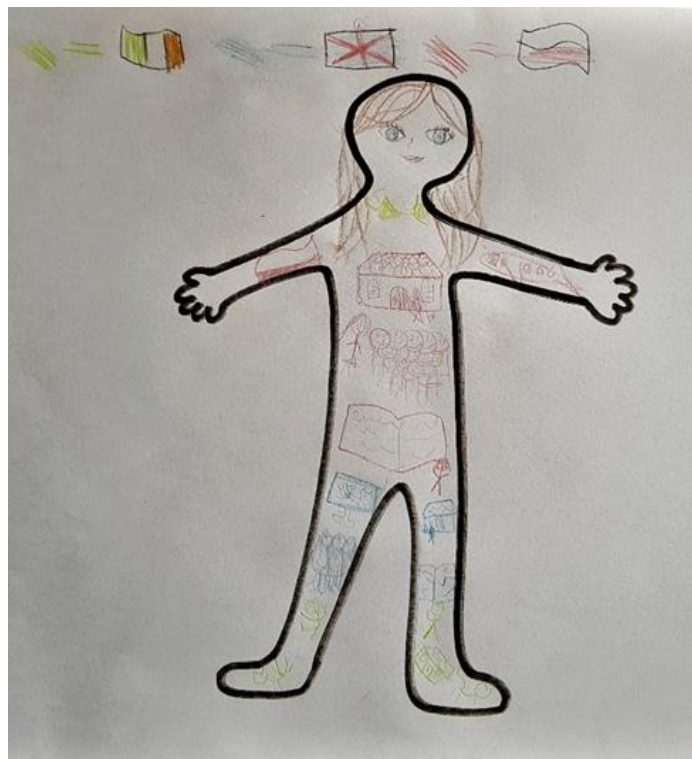
I specifically marked the head in green because it is the language I use most often, and I use it most often when thinking. With friends at school, with teachers, I've been going to an Irish-speaking school for the fourth year now, so I use this language most often when thinking (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5).

His accounts suggest that when he is physically at his Irish-medium post-primary school, he predominantly uses the Irish language for communication and education. However, when he is outside of school, in his personal life, Polish is his preferred language for thinking and constitutes a central component of Damian's perception of self and his cultural identity. Indeed, Damian's attribution of great emotional attachment to the Polish heritage manifested through his agency in keeping his connection to the Polish language and culture on a daily basis. This was portrayed by colouring the central part of his LP body silhouette in red, representing Polish, because, as he said, “it is the language closest to my heart and that is why it is red on the heart” (Damian).

In a similar way to Damian's LP, Weronika's silhouette also had a red central area that represented objects associated with the Polish language and culture (Figure 20). Weronika (10 years old, 2nd generation) was born in Ireland to a Polish mother and an Irish father who had also experienced migration (as a child, he lived in England, where he received his primary level education). While Weronika used different colours to mark languages and cultures, her LP design differed from Damian's and Izabela's. She divided the silhouette into three areas and filled them in with multiple tiny pictures showcasing languages and cultures as they are present in her life. Weronika chose different colours to represent each language/culture: red represented objects connected to the Polish language, culture, and

Poland; blue represented the English language, and green represented objects associated with Irish culture and Ireland.

Figure 20: Language Portrait by Weronika (10 years old, 2nd generation)



The red-coloured area of her silhouette includes a group of pictures representing the Polish language and culture when she attended a Polish school, travelled for holidays to Poland, and interacted with her Polish family members. Weronika drew a picture of herself in red, beside her family in Poland and her mother, which indicates that her ties to her Polish family members remained strong markers of her connection to Polishness.

So red is Polish and I drew a plane. And that is, sometimes I go on holidays to Poland. I also drew my Polish [complementary] school here. And the Polish flag. And there are a lot of people here, this is my family in Poland. And here, among these people, it's me, because I can speak Polish (...) Red is also my mum. (Weronika, 10 years old, 2nd generation)

Further interviews with other 2nd migrant generation children of Polish background revealed that for many participants it was the use of Polish as a family language and their parents' Polish nationality that influenced their perceptions of their own cultural identities. For Max, Polish was more important than English because it was the language spoken at home, while Ewa emphasized that she was taught this language by her mother and grandmother, which also reveals the role of extended family in shaping children's perceptions of their HL.

The most... I use so much Polish. It seems like a more important language. It's like... I speak less English at home, so it's not that important. (Max, 7 years old, 2nd generation)

Most of the time, I speak Polish because it's my first language, which was taught to me by my mother and my grandmother. (Ewa, 7 years old, 2nd generation)

The data above shows that many children interviewed emphasised the importance of the Polish language and expressed their emotional attachment to it with words such as 'the closest language to my heart'. Therefore, we can observe that the Polish language continues to play a significant role in shaping these children's (bi-/multi-)cultural identities. It is worth noting, however, that in the process of negotiating the children's connection to their Polish heritage, Polish was important because it was passed down by family members whom the children felt close to (such as their parents and grandmothers) and therefore it was essential for maintaining strong bonds with them.

5.2.2 Knowledge of English and Irish as forms of cultural capital

As highlighted in the previous sections, English was perceived by children as a language of schooling and the primary language of communication in Ireland. This was illustrated on Izabela's LP, where she drew an Irish flag above her head to demonstrate that she lives in Ireland and communicates through English:

The Irish flag on my head means that I live here, so I speak English at school, in the shop, and in the yard. (Izabela, 11 years old, 2nd generation)

For a 7 years old Marcel (2nd generation) who planned to become a Youtuber in the future, his knowledge of English was crucial for his YouTube channel to gain popularity around the world. Marcel viewed English as a global language and associated it with online success.

Researcher: Is it important to you that you know English?

Marcel: Yes, because everyone in the world knows English. (Marcel, 7 years old, 2nd generation)

On Damian's LP, English was represented with the blue colour on both of his hands, which might symbolise that he perceived the English language as '*handy*' for everyday communication with people in Ireland, with his English-speaking friends, and in public places.

Then there is English, as I have indicated here with blue. I simply use English, whether with English-speaking friends or just daily, in shops, etc. When communicating with the urban population in Ireland. (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5)

Furthermore, when at work in a store, he would switch to English which he perceived to be 'an automatic thing', which indicates his fluency in this language and easiness to adapt his language use among different contexts. Like he said, "It's obvious that it's an automatic thing, so when I'm in a store - because I also work in a store - it changes to English" (Damian, 16 years old, generation 1.5). For Weronika who grew up in a bilingual home where she used both English and Polish to communicate with her Polish mother, Irish father, and bilingual brother who spoke both English and Polish, the blue area of her LP, she showed the domains of her life associated with the English language, such as books, school, television, and friends. However, despite being proficient in English, she did not position herself in the English-related part of her silhouette. This suggests that she saw English in a similar way to Damian and Izabela, as a means of daily communication in an predominantly English-speaking Irish society.

Blue is English, and I didn't draw me here, but I can speak English. Well... this is television, I drew my school and my book and my friends' (Weronika, 10 years old, 2nd generation)

While English has been perceived as a form of symbolic capital enabling children to take education in Ireland and participate in Irish society in various contexts, children showed differing views on the role of the Irish language in their life. For Marysia, it was a difficult subject she did not enjoy learning. However, she acknowledged knowledge of Irish as a gateway for her future professional opportunities:

I would like to be a teacher in Ireland, but in a primary school. That's why I need to know Irish too. (Marysia, 13 years old, gen. 1.5)

For Damian, knowledge of the Irish language was a gateway to better understanding Irish culture and ways of thinking, as he positioned himself outside Irish society as a Polish person with a Polish way of thinking and who “always felt Polish”. As he said, “There has never been a time in my life when I felt Irish” (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5). The self-positioning as a *person from abroad* and his ambitions as a *challenge-seeker* guided his agency in deciding to start an Irish-medium post-primary school.

I wanted to go to this school myself. I wanted to set myself... a bit of a challenge, because I am a person who likes challenges. For me it was such a challenge: ok, I will learn this language, I will learn a little about their culture, I will learn a little about their history, maybe it will help me understand them better. (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5)

Damian’s investment in learning the Irish language was strongly underpinned by his belief in the Irish language as a social capital crucial for one’s social integration into Irish society:

Because it's not just the language itself. It is also about getting to know the culture of this language. Learning about its history: how did it all start, why do so few people use this language now. (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5)

Moreover, he saw migrants’ recognition and appreciation of the language(s) and culture of the host country as a sign of respect for the host society. While this reflected his desire to

integrate into Irish culture, it also highlighted his understanding of the importance of language and culture learning for building links between people of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

I think that as people from abroad coming here, out of respect for the Irish, for their culture, we should learn about their history, learn their language, learn about their culture. (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5)

He recognized the importance of immersion in the language and its culture in the Irish-medium school context for advancing his linguistic and cultural skills, becoming a confident speaker, and boosting his intrinsic motivation to use this language:

I've been going to an Irish-speaking school for the fourth year now, so I use this language most often when thinking (...) I do not yet speak the language as fluently as I would like. However, I understand everything that is said to me. I can answer. I can have a slightly more advanced conversation in this language, so everything is going in the right direction. (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5)

Damian's interest in learning languages was underpinned by his strong belief in the importance of learning the culture and history of any language in order to increase intrinsic motivation to use it. As he said, "The more you learn about the culture of this language, its history, the more you delve into this language and want to use it" (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5). This belief has also underpinned his choices to explore German and Croatian languages with the interest in cultures and building relationships with friends who are from Germany or Croatia.

I also marked [legs] German because it is a language very close to my heart. I really like this language; I really like German culture. I speak German at school, but I also have friends from Germany and I'm in Germany very often, so the German language is also very close to me. (Damian)

Croatian language, which I have tried to learn, because some of my friends are from Croatia and I like this language very much. In general, I really like this Balkan, Croatian culture. And it is also a language very close to me. However, I marked the least part of the portrait with it, because I use this language the least on a daily basis.

I understand most of what people say in Croatian, although I can't speak it yet. So that's why the Croatian language is highlighted here. (Damian)

Damian's accounts highlighted the importance of close social relationships, such as friendships, in shaping his daily use of languages and influencing his emotional attachment to the languages he learns. His decision to use Croatian as the foundation of his language portrait (feet) is particularly notable and may suggest that his interest in learning new languages and cultures is closely linked to his identity as a language learner.

When it comes to learning the Irish language, Damian relied on the Irish education system. In his perception, English-medium schools were not effective in teaching Irish language and culture. His belief that one will “never learn Irish in English-speaking schools” was built upon his experience of poor learning outcomes in the Irish language when learning it in an English-medium primary school:

‘I always say that you will never learn Irish in English-speaking schools, because it’s a completely different kind of learning. (...) When I came to the Irish-speaking school four years ago, I only really knew how to say hello and ask if I could go to the toilet [laughs]’ (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5)

Damian highlighted the transfer of language knowledge as he reflected on how the experience of learning English as his 2nd language in the early years influenced his experience of 3rd language acquisition in his early adolescence:

Certainly my experience of learning English from an early age, learning about the culture of this language and the history of this language, helped me a little in learning and simply speaking Irish. (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5)

In Weronika’s LP, objects related to Irish were placed on her feet, which suggests that they constituted the foundations of her identification as Irish. These included Weronika’s immediate family members, her brother and her father:

Maciek and my dad are in green because they are also Irish. And this is my home because I live in Ireland. (Weronika, 10 years old, 2nd generation)

On her LP, she had already drawn herself with red colour among her Polish family but had added a green necklace to represent her Irish heritage. As she said, “On the neck... it's green, because I'm... Irish” (Weronika, 10 years old, 2nd generation). This portrays how English and Irish play different roles in migrant children's processes of self-identification while growing up in Ireland. For some, English was a means of communication, while others saw it as a universal language. The Irish language is considered by Damian as a form of cultural capital that enhances understanding of Irish society. For Weronika, her Irishness was not tied to speaking Irish, but to having Irish ancestors.

5.3 ‘Home’ and Belonging

5.3.1 ‘I often think about what I could call my home’: Children’s views on home

During interviews, Polish migrant children and parents expressed different perspectives on where ‘home’ was as they reflected on their past, present and future. The children's responses highlight their complex and multifaceted understanding of ‘home’ and how they navigate their belonging with references to parents, extended family, and friends. For instance, Aine, Ewa, and Marysia saw Ireland and Poland as their homes. Their connection to Poland was typically formulated based on seeing Poland as their parents' country of origin or a place where their extended family lives, whereas Ireland was seen as a place where they grow up, attend education and have friends.

Ireland is my home. Poland is a home too, but in a different place (Ewa, 7 years old, 2nd generation)

I am from Ireland and from Poland like my mom (Aine, 6 years old, 2nd generation)

I think [home] it's both Poland and Ireland, because in Poland I have my whole family, and all my grandmothers and everything, and my parents speak Polish. And when [I am talking to], for example, to aunties and uncles, it is also in Polish. And also, for example, when we do Christmas or something, it's like in Poland. But in Ireland, I go to school here and I have all my friends [here] (Marysia, 13 years old, gen. 1.5)

Children's responses also revealed the challenges they face when trying to define their sense of 'home'. Some children found countries to be 'like home' or 'a little bit at home'. Damian revealed that he would often think of the question 'where home is', yet he could not find a precise answer to it.

I don't know, because they're both like my home. (Weronika, 10 years old, 2nd generation)

I feel a little bit at home in Ireland and a little bit at home in Poland (Max, 7 years old, 2nd generation)

I often think about what I could call my home. This question is really often in my head and I can't answer it. (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5).

For Damian and Norbert, both 16 years old and representing generation 1.5, connections to Poland seemed associated with their past (as Poland was their country of birth and early childhood) and Ireland was viewed as a place of their current residence. However, both teenagers had plans to move back to Poland as adults.

As far as the standard of living is concerned, I feel better in Ireland. However, when it comes to the feeling that I am at home and that freedom, it is in Poland. And these are two things that clash a little bit and I can't answer the question of where or which country is my home. As for the future, my plan has always been to go back to Poland. Return to Poland after doing my Leaving Cert. (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5)

I would say both because I lived in Poland for the first few years of my life, but I then moved here [to Ireland], and I have been living here for the last 10 years. But well, Ireland is... I have my whole family in Poland, so I'd rather live there when I grow up. I don't want to live in Ireland, and Poland... Poland is home. (Norbert, 16 years old, gen. 1.5)

Interviews revealed a strong transnational bond between some participants and their extended family members overseas. For instance, Marysia stays connected with her extended family in Poland not only to communicate about their everyday lives but also to consult her future plans with her mother's brother. She revealed that her decisions about returning to Poland or staying in Ireland were closely related to her future friendships and relationships.

Researcher: What are your future plans? Do you consider returning to Poland or staying in Ireland?

Marysia: I was just talking to my uncle about it. Well, I don't know yet, because that's what I told my friends, we planned to move together, but I don't know if in Poland or in Ireland, because Ireland is nice and everything, but in Poland I have my family there and my language, and everything. But I also think we'll see because, for example, if I married someone, and if he was a Pole, I think that we would return to Poland. (Marysia, 13 years old, gen. 1.5)

Marysia's brother, Mateusz (12 years old, gen. 1.5), despite having friends here, perceives Poland as his home, because "that's where I have my home, that's where I have all my stuff, that's where my whole family is. And it's nice there". He also said that he feels "normally" in Ireland because all of his friends are here and he likes it here too. However, when asked if this would mean he has two homes, he clarified that his only home is in Poland and he does not consider Ireland to be his home.

It is also worth noting that children adopted different strategies in the act of self-presentation or introducing oneself to other people. Robert, 2nd generation, explicitly referenced Ireland as a place of his birth and Poland as a place of parental heritage. Weronika, also 2nd generation, always mentioned Ireland first as her country of birth and added information about her Polish background once she became familiar with someone.

I say that my parents are from Poland, and I was born in Ireland. (Robert, 9 years old, 2nd generation)

I say I'm from Ireland. And... But then, when we are friends, I say that I am also Polish. (Weronika, 10 years old, 2nd generation)

Mateusz (12 years old, gen.1.5) admitted he only says he is from Poland when asked specifically about his origins. Norbert (16 years old, gen. 1.5), admitted he introduces himself as Polish, because, as he said, “I don't sound like an Irish or look like one, so I say I'm from Poland”. (Norbert, 16 years old, gen. 1.5)

The above findings highlighted the complex and multifaceted nature of migrant children's navigating their sense of ‘home’ and belonging. The following section explores the challenges faced by first-generation migrant parents as they try to define ‘home’ and reflect on their children's sense of belonging.

5.3.2 ‘How much time does a person need to settle in?’ Parental perspectives on home

At the time of the interview, Ilona, who had been living in Ireland with her son and husband for 16 years, reflected on how her and her son’s perceptions of where ‘home’ is have changed over these years. According to Ilona, for her and, in her view, also for other Polish migrants who came to Ireland shortly after Poland’s accession to the EU in 2005, visiting Poland for holidays back then felt like: “going home (...) Poland was our home” (Ilona, mother and teacher in a Polish complementary school). Back then, she also organised her son’s 1st Communion in Poland in Poland as it seemed a ‘normal’ and common practice among Polish migrant families in Ireland.

So when Patryk went to communion, seventy per cent of the kids had communion in Poland. And now maybe two per cent have communion in Poland (...) parents still kept in touch with that class in Poland (...) they let them go to communion with that class in Poland, with that group that the children still knew. It seemed so normal that communion was done in Poland (Ilona, mother and teacher in a Polish complementary school)

However, her beliefs about ‘where home is’ changed after she and her husband purchased a house in Ireland. As Iwona describes, it was a slow process of Ireland ‘becoming home’ and a place where she feels safe. A sign of slowly changing attitudes to home was a change in Iwona’s and her husband’s approaches to celebrating religious practices. Patryk’s confirmation has been already organised in Ireland.

But after some time, it has changed... We own our house here, so when I get off the plane, when I am on the plane stairs in Ireland, when I am coming back, I feel happy. I like going to Poland very much, of course, I am trying to be there as often as possible, but slowly here has become my home. Here is where I feel safe” (Ilona, mother and teacher in a Polish complementary school)

Ilona reported that for all these years growing up in Ireland, her son, Patryk, who migrated with them as a 6-year-old, remained emotionally closely attached to Poland, which he associated with his extended family, especially his grandparents. For many years he could not accept nor understand his parents’ decision about their migration.

Poland was his country, his world and all his love. And he blamed us for leaving our family and that we didn't choose the family, and why are we talking about family if we have family in Poland and we left it. He didn't understand why we came here (...) simply, he did not accept it (Ilona, mother and teacher in a Polish complementary school)

Patryk’s feelings about home and belonging changed once he returned to Poland as an adult, after completing his post-primary education in Ireland. He was working full-time in Poland, while doing online studies in Ireland. As this was during the pandemic period, he could not visit his parents in Ireland due to international travel restrictions at the time. Experiencing Poland as a working adult, not a child visiting family for holidays, might have re-shaped his perception of where ‘home’ was.

He was [in Poland] not on holidays as before, and because of that, greater demands were placed on him’ (...) So he studied [online] in Ireland while [working] in Poland. We didn't see each other for a long time, because it was almost half a year, such a long break. He came and said that he was longing and now he knows what he has here. And that Poland is no longer the country he chooses, but he wants to be where we are. So if we ever move to another country, he will follow us. It made him finally love our home (Ilona)

Patryk's strong connection with Poland can be largely attributed to his close relationship with his grandparents who lived there. According to Iwona, Poland was always a time of

celebration for Patryk, as his grandparents went above and beyond to make his visits there enjoyable. However, during his stay in Poland during the pandemic, Patryk's beloved grandfather passed away, which may have impacted how he perceived his connection with both Poland and Ireland from then on.

He [Patryk] was there until his [grandfather's] last moment and was helping when he was very sick. So he saw this suffering, passing away, and it made him realize that holidays are not the most important, but home is. And he began to treat what is here as his home finally. We started to be as important to him as Poland (Ilona)

Honorata, a Polish mother and headteacher of a Polish complementary school in Ireland, shared her thoughts on how her perception of 'home' has evolved over time. For her, home and a feeling of belonging are connected to the place where one's current affairs are, such as children and work.

Ten years ago, maybe I would still say [home was] in Poland, but not anymore. It has changed a long time ago. I wonder, how much time does a person need to settle in? Two years? To settle into what's new. Well, 2 years, unless you are such a personality that you are simply here in body and there in spirit. Well, that doesn't make sense, because your home has to be where you are, where you are at the moment. If your life is here, your children go to school here and you go to work here, then to say that home is in Poland would be simply some sort of split personality. (Honorata, Polish mother and a headteacher in Polish complementary school)

While she felt her home was in Ireland, Honorata held a strong emotional attachment to Poland. The significant position of Poland in her life stem from her perceptions of Poland as her homeland, understood by her as a place of her origin, a place where she was born and grew up. It was reflected in her family living their life in a way that celebrates Polish heritage, and herself being a founder and principal of a Polish complementary school. Despite the difficulties and challenges of emigration, such as navigating the connection to both, the homeland and the new home, she celebrates Polishness by using the Polish language, celebrating Polish traditions both at home and in her work in the Polish school.

Poland is my homeland, it is the country where I was born and raised, so of course it holds a very important place in my life, a very important place. We still live our life

in a Polish way here. We are connected to Poland, of course. But it's hard, you know. Emigration is something very difficult. (Honorata, Polish mother and a headteacher in Polish complementary school)

While some parents, like Honorata and Ilona, were confident about where their home was, others considered different viewpoints. Paulina, who lived in Ireland for nearly 6 years before the interview, expressed some uncertainty about what to consider when defying her home.

At the moment, definitely in Poland. Although... I once heard that your home is where your husband and your child are, so maybe not at all... So... actually yes, I think, perhaps my home is here [in Ireland]. For now (Ewelina, Polish mother and teacher in Polish complementary school).

The above extract illustrates the self-reflective nature of Ewelina's consideration of the concept of 'home'. Initially, she said that Poland was 'definitely' her home. However, after a moment, she included the opinions of others, who would claim that 'home is where your husband and your child are'. This illustrates how individual perceptions of home may be impacted by other people's views. At the same time, her Polish husband who had lived in Ireland for over 15 years, was 'happy in Ireland, doesn't want to come back to Poland' – as she reported. Furthermore, her 6-year-old daughter, born in Ireland, also did not want to move to Poland, signifying the differences in perceptions about where 'home' was in Ewelina's household. Lastly, as she added 'for now' at the end of her statement, this suggests a temporary definition of 'home' which might be prone to changes upon different life circumstances in the future.

For my child, her home is here, and I assume it will be here. This year, during the summer holidays in Poland, I asked her if she would like to move back to Poland to her grandmother, to both grannies. She said that she doesn't, that she wants to go back to Ireland to her friends (Ewelina, mother)

Berta, who had lived in multiple European countries before moving to Ireland six years before the interview, shared her unique perspective on home. Her migration experience seems to influence her identity, as she describes herself as 'a no-home person' or 'a person on the

move'. Moreover, she expressed a desire to continue changing countries of residency, which was not possible due to her husband and son's preference to stay in Ireland.

I don't consider any country as home. I feel like a 'bezdomovec' as they say it in Czech, or a person on the move. (...) Generally, I chose such a gipsy life. I'm ready to go somewhere else. It got complicated because of the child who probably doesn't want to go anywhere else, and definitely because of the husband, who said he wasn't ready to start everything from scratch again. (Berta)

In Berta's opinion, based on her experience as a migrant parent, young children consider home where the parents are. However, as they grow up in the host country and develop friendships, their perceptions of home and belonging change along with their priorities:

My child was 5 years old when we came here. At this age, home is where parents are. Now, at the age of 11, home is where friends are. This solves everything (Berta)

Basia, who had prior experience with migration (having lived in England with her Irish husband and two children born in England before moving to Ireland three years prior to the interview), feels the strongest connection to Ireland. Her family has put down roots there as they have purchased a house, and her children are happy.

Yes, we plan to stay here. I feel fulfilled here, because we have a house, we have our arranged, established life. We live without stress. (...) I think that I am most connected to the country where my children find themselves happy. (Barbara, mother)

While Barbara's belonging was based on her current family life and their future plan of staying in Ireland, other parents who plan to return to Poland or move to another country in the future saw Ireland rather as a temporary place of residence. This was often related to their initial reasons for coming here, which were primarily economic. Even after spending a considerably long time in Ireland and having their children attend education here, some of the interviewed parents did not want to settle permanently. For instance, Milena, after 8 years since she came to Ireland with her family, considers her home to be in Poland, like her son Mateusz whose opinion on home was presented in the previous section. Milena underlines

that their decision to migrate to Ireland had a strong economic aspect, and hence, she does not consider Ireland to be her home, despite having a family life here. Her husband and she plan to return to Poland once their children complete their education in Ireland.

Milena: Of course, we left Poland for financial reasons, so it wasn't a choice that we would come here because we liked it there.

Researcher: How do you feel like here in Ireland now?

Milena: Well, just like, maybe a bit of vegetation, which is too strong of a word, but something like that. I know that I will come back [to Poland] one day. I don't feel at home here. (...) In general, we tell ourselves that if we educate our children here, they will graduate, and then we just come back. In the sense of what is the so-called retirement in Poland, we have such a plan to spend retirement in Poland, and maybe, please God, it will be possible sooner. (Milena)

To secure possibilities of future return migration, Milena and her husband encourage their children to sustain transnational ties with extended family in Poland through online communication platforms, like WhatsApp.

Researcher: Your son also said that his home is Poland. Does it surprise you?

Milena: No, because I had spoken to him about it. (...) Where my parents and their grandparents live – this is their home. And as Mateusz said, they have bicycles there, some clothes of theirs. Well, I can't say they have half of their lives [there], and half here, because no, but... they have something to return to. I care very much about it. They stay in touch with my siblings on Facebook or Messenger, with my mother on WhatsApp, well almost every day. So yes, we really care about this. (Milena)

Some Polish migrant parents often engaged in organising family trips to Poland, usually around the summer or Christmas holidays, or having Polish family members visit them in Ireland regularly. Olga stated that they visit Poland once a year, but “if it fails, Poland comes to us” (Ola, mother). Milena described that often, if a friend from Ireland was travelling to Poland, she would send her children under their supervision, and her mother would collect them at the airport in Poland. These frequent movements between Ireland and Poland and regular and daily communication with extended family using new technologies further

strengthen their bond with Poland as a home country and make it present in the family's everyday life.

It was always like that, for summer holidays or Christmas. It was always once a year before the pandemic, plus sometimes more as it just happened during the year. Because, for example, when it happened that someone, I don't know, a friend of mine was flying [to Poland], I said, take them for me, because, you know, it's a plane, and then, for example, my mother takes them from the airport. But I must also say that my mother comes here very often, very often, I would say on average every two or three months, to visit us, because she is already retired. They have this continuous, everyday contact with Poland. (Milena, mother)

Connection with Poland felt differently to Maria, who migrated to Ireland 16 years prior to the interview and reflected on her difficulties with self-identification. She initially came to Ireland for holidays only and does not declare to stay in Ireland for the rest of her life. At the same time, she questioned whether, after the time she had spent in Ireland, she could still say 'she was *from Poland*'. This reflection has brought her to see herself as a European citizen.

I have a problem with clearly identifying myself with any of the countries. Because it's simply difficult, after 16 years here, to say that this is my home because I came here for holidays, and I don't declare that I will stay here forever. I just don't know. I think I feel mostly European. It's hard for me to say. However, it is difficult for me to call Ireland my home because I am from somewhere else. *But am I from Poland?*[emphasis added] (Maria, mother and Polish teacher in an Irish post-primary school and a Polish complementary school)

Moreover, Maria reflected on the transformative power of migration, as it gave her a new perspective on Poland and Ireland. This new viewpoint would make her possible return to Poland a new experience.

I never know [what to say] when someone asks me: "Will you come back to Poland?" I say it will never be a comeback. This will not be a *comeback* [emphasis added]. The experience of living abroad changes us a lot. First of all, now, after 10 weeks of holidays in Poland, I started to notice things about Poles that I had not seen before.

However, that change of perspective is extremely important. I believe this is the most important value. And although it is known that sometimes it is difficult here without my family, without these roots. I am already on my own. At the same time, I am grateful for this opportunity to look at both countries from a different perspective. (Maria, mother and Polish teacher in an Irish post-primary school and a Polish complementary school)

When speaking about her teenage daughters who were both born in Ireland, she noticed a difference in the ways they would identify themselves. Her older daughter felt a strong connection to Poland, while the younger one identified with the town in Ireland where she was growing up, without specifying her nationality or cultural attachment.

For example, when my children were asked where they were from, it was quite interesting because the older one always answered that she was from Poland. Although, of course, she was born here, but somehow she had a deeply rooted feeling that she was Polish and, therefore, “from Poland”. The younger one claimed she was already from [name of the Irish town]. She said: “I’m from here”. No nationality. (Maria, mother and Polish teacher in an Irish post-primary school and a Polish complementary school)

Maria’s conclusion underlined the dynamics of a migrant’s identity, which remains influenced by personal experience and future plans associated with both the country of origin and the country of residence.

I think that as emigrants we will always have one foot there and the other here. (Maria, mother and Polish teacher in an Irish post-primary school and a Polish complementary school)

The evolving feeling of connection to both countries and cultures was also described by Monika, mother of Ada, Ewa and Izabela (whose perceptions on home and belonging were discussed in the previous sections). Monika came to Ireland 16 years before the interview, similarly to Maria, only for economic and linguistic reasons. Prior to migration, her parents supported her financially to complete a higher degree in administration in Poland, and she had a strong desire to work in her field of study. While in Ireland, she initially worked in

retail. After a year, she returned to Poland for two months and left her Indian partner in Ireland because of a crisis she experienced as she struggled to define her life purpose and direction, enhanced by distress due to cultural differences she experienced at her Irish workplace.

I came to Ireland to earn a living, I came to learn the language. I met Asan, and after a year, I came back [to Poland]. I left him; we were already a couple, I worked in a store, and I said “Damn, I graduated. My parents worked for my studies and I’ll be in a store with these Irish people that insult me? No, I’m going to look for a job. I finished administration, I’m going to look for a job in an office”. And I spent two whole months in Poland, I cried through them because I didn’t know what to do with my life. (Monika, mother)

She returned to Ireland to her partner and found an administrative job, yet she hesitated about her commitment to stay here permanently due to a language barrier.

So I came back and got some office work. Despite everything, we were thinking about buying a house, for me it was already "God, is this forever? No, this is not my country, maybe I will never work in the job I would like, because this language will always be a barrier" and so on. (Monika, mother)

Her process of finding a sense of belonging in Ireland was strongly influenced by becoming a mother. This experience shifted her perspective on both Poland and Ireland, and she started to consider Ireland her home, a safe place for her multicultural family.

But finally, after Izabela was born, we decided that we would buy this house, no matter what our life would be like. I guess my whole perspective changed when the girls [Izabela, Ada, Ewa] showed up. Because until Izabela was born, I was the one who cried every Christmas Eve, calling my parents, and so on. When this world started to revolve around girls, school, etc., I’m glad I chose a safe country for my children. That’s how I treat it: a country with good people. I like the approach of the Irish, I try to respect this culture and take what is there. When I look at Poland now, I think it is very much intolerant. (Monika, mother)

The presence of her daughters replaced her feeling of longing with a sense of belonging and creating a new home. Having children also enhanced her social networks in Ireland as she

met other parents. Monika described how her attitude has changed over time: after having her first child, she would focus on meeting other Polish migrant parents in Ireland, when having her third one, she focused on making friends with Irish parents, too. The process of developing social networks among migrant and native communities in Ireland facilitated Monika's social integration into Irish society and strengthened her sense of belonging.

I say that since the girls appeared, there is no such longing anymore, because I have already started to create this home here. I remember a French friend saying: "Marta, you will meet people, when the girls go to school, they will bring their parents and children to you." And in fact, I met Polish parents and they are my closest friends here. But I also try, I have a different approach now, I'm trying, for example, to connect with Irish parents, because I really care about it. Previously I focused more on Polish ones, naturally. (Monika, mother)

Reflecting on her experience as a migrant mother, she developed an approach of accepting challenges associated with living abroad, like missing her family in Poland. However, she perceives them as an opportunity to teach her daughters appreciation towards maintaining transnational relationships with extended family.

I physically miss my mother's help. I wish the girls would go for the weekend so I could rest. On the other hand, I also know that thanks to this, I have taught the girls to value and respect these relationships and that it is very important to have a family. (Monika, mother)

At the same time, she highlighted the importance of integration into the Irish culture. For this reason, she saw her daughter's GAA training as an opportunity for the entire family to socialise.

Her best friend's dad is their [GAA] coach, so she goes to these training sessions on Tuesdays. And it's very Irish. It's very important, our neighbours come there to watch the match, and we feel the same way, we want to show that we want to belong to your community. We do not isolate ourselves, we take from it, we want to integrate (Monika, mother)

This can be interpreted as her strong sense of pragmatism and responsibility in her family's process of integration. As she emphasized, she focuses on 'watering her own grass', symbolizing her own agency and ability to focus on the positive aspects of life in Ireland.

I tell myself that you can't have everything in life. I try to look at the positive sides of it. I'm not alone, there are plenty of Poles here, I chose a two-hour flight, so it's not such a tragedy. So, I say: the grass is green where we water it; I water mine here. (Monika, mother)

This section explored the complex transnational identities of 1st generation Polish migrant parents and portrayed their perceptions of 'home'. While many viewed Ireland to be their home, some struggled to define where and what a 'home' was as they considered returning to Poland or moving elsewhere. Participants' perspectives, along with my own insight into this topic as presented in Appendices T and U, indicate that the concept of 'home' is multifaceted, fluid, and evolving along with an individual's life circumstances abroad. Therefore, migration can be perceived as a transformative experience that equips people with new perspectives on both their home and host countries. The following section explores whether these perspectives influence how migrant parents transmit Polish cultural and linguistic heritage to their children.

5.3.3 Parental 'desire' to keep children connected to the Polish heritage

Interviews conducted with parents revealed their beliefs and practices as they transmit the Polish language and culture to their children in the home environment. Some parents, like Monika, recognised the significance of embracing children's heritage to support them in developing confidence about their bi-/multicultural identities and building resilience as people of migrant background in Ireland.

I always tell them that if you are aware of where you are from and that there are values associated with it, you will not be embarrassed if someone tells you that you are from Poland. Then you will answer: 'Yes, I am from Poland, it is a nice country, it has mountains, it has such nice traditions'. And it won't hurt you. (Monika, mother)

Developing literacy skills in Polish emerged as an important aspect of parental attitudes towards HL maintenance. Mothers like Monika and Milena showed a strong belief in the importance of literacy skills for their children's overall language development in Polish and for their communication skills.

Then I explained to them that if they don't read [in Polish] independently, we won't be able to talk [in Polish] as adults, so for them, it's like, "Oh my, I won't be able to talk to my mom" (Monika, mother)

I would really like them to continue reading in Polish, as I say, one book a month, just to read. (Milena, mother)

Parents believed in their important role in encouraging children to read in Polish. Ola reflected on her practice of initiating a family reading time with her children, Robert (9 years old), Max (7 years old), Lena (4 years old), and James (2 years old).

Sometimes I grab a book and when I start reading, the kids come by themselves and sit around me. Robert, I can already see that he is getting older, he no longer likes books that are for young children. He just likes to read something himself. James likes to turn pages. Lena stares at the pictures, and Max just listens to me reading. (Ola, mother)

Paulina, reflected on her use of audiobooks to enhance her children's skills in the Polish language. She shared that her son likes to listen to them on the way from school, while doing other activities, like drawing, or before bedtime.

I also try to play audiobooks to them. When he returned from school, he listened to "Karlson from Roof" because he liked it. You just have to find something that they would actually like. And he sat, drew something, and listened. Audiobooks are great. Even before going to bed last summer, I left my phone with them so they could listen to something. (Paulina, mother)

Paulina found audiobooks particularly effective for language learning and as she drew on her own experience of learning English, she saw herself as "a fan of audiobooks when it comes

to learning languages” (Paulina, mother). While some parents drew on their own experience, others searched for ways to develop their knowledge about raising bi/multilingual children. For instance, Monika (mother of Ada, Ewa and Izabela) attended a workshop for Polish migrant parents organised in Dublin's Polish library when her daughters were little. She reflected it helped her understand the process of nurturing her daughters' language skills in Polish.

I remember this; I learned it from a workshop on raising bilingual children in the Polish library. I remembered it because girls were little back then, and I didn't look into the future that much. The lady said that if they do not start developing [reading in Polish] on their own, they might be somewhere around the age of ten years old, and their Polish language development may slow down. And then, as twenty-year-olds, they may be unable to talk in Polish about work, their boyfriends, and so on. I keep telling them that (Monika, mother)

Monika's strong belief in language survival through its use within the family was also influenced by her grandfather's bilingualism. He was of Ukrainian background and kept using the local dialect (Chachlacki dialect) with his sister, which inspired Monika's attitude towards language use among her children.

I always tell them that I dream of them keeping the Polish language among themselves. Because if they keep it between themselves, this language will survive. (...) I come from the eastern part of Poland. My grandfather has somewhat Ukrainian roots, and, for example, at his home, they spoke Chachlacki. It is a language between Ukrainian and Polish. And I remember that whenever he met his sister, they always automatically switched to the Chachlacki language, even when they were already both 70-80 years old. And I simply never realised how important it was until now when I have multilingual daughters. (Monika, mother)

This illustrates how Monika's extended family's practices and her own agency in developing her knowledge as a parent to multilingual children have contributed to her belief that language is a crucial marker of one's cultural identity and that its active use by family members can safeguard the survival of this heritage. Milena expressed the importance of keeping the Polish language as a means of communication with extended family in Poland

by saying: “They write in Polish on WhatsApp with their grandmother, and on Messenger too. This is what I care about very much” (Milena, mother).

Data also revealed that Polish parents stayed engaged in empowering their children by discussing with them the potential of multilingualism as cultural capital, opening doors to various life opportunities.

I also repeat [to them] that language is something that they can use, I don't know, to go to a completely different country. I say: you can be a translator, you can be a correspondent for Poland, you can translate books, you can have such an independent job, even as an additional job, you can help someone on the street, because someone will be lost, and you know this language. So I give them these reasons in various situations, for example, if there is an issue that they have to go to the Polish school, I explain it to them (Monika, mother)

We talk, but it usually happens at some crucial stages of life, that is, when, for example, Marysia was going to a post-primary school and was wondering about the language, so I told her that look, you know Polish, you know English, now you will know Irish better, you will know another language, you know, the world is open to you, you can go wherever you want, you will get along, you can really live wherever you want, and so on. (Milena, mother)

My husband and I always told them that the Polish language would always be useful in their lives. We never know what will happen to us, we can return to Poland anytime. Even though we live here permanently for now, they can move at any time, either to study or continue their studies in Poland at primary school. We have always said that we would be very happy if the children did their Leaving Cert exam in Polish, which also benefits them by the fact that they can score points in the exam in a foreign language. With these points, they will go wherever they want in the world. We also thought about studying in Poland, but that will be the decision of our children at some point. Besides, I think there are always advantages. Maybe it will be useful for them in their lives and their careers. (Ola, mother)

Parents reflected on their parental role in ensuring the Polish language is used at home as often as possible. Milena reflected on the importance of family mealtime in maintaining the

HL among her teenage children, Mateusz and Marysia, who often speak English to each other.

First of all, I have to do everything to make sure there is a lot of Polish at home. We have this rule because we eat dinner together, it has always been like that, every day, we simply do not speak English during dinner. We know that this applies especially to Marysia and Mateusz, who speak English to each other, but they have to tell what happened at school in Polish. Okay, they get up right from this table and talk to each other in English, but at least at the table, they must speak Polish. (Milena, mother)

In some families, more languages, including dialects, were present in daily life. For instance, Krystyna's husband was a speaker of the Silesian dialect. As parents, they established that at home children would be mainly exposed to the standard variety of the Polish language, while they could acquire basic of the Silesian dialect when it was spoken on some selected days, usually Sundays.

At home, we only speak Polish and sometimes Silesian - my husband is from Silesia. We found out that they are confused anyway, so at home we speak Polish during the week and on Sunday we speak Silesian. They don't speak [Silesian], but they have heard it. They understand it. (Krystyna, mother)

Monika reflected on other practices of developing her daughter's language skills, cultural awareness and positive attitudes towards Polish, English, Irish and Indian culture through watching popular Polish TV shows, exploring Indian cuisine and traditional clothes, as well as playing board games in multiple languages.

Of course, books in Polish and in English, but also the fact that on Saturdays we sit in front of Polish television and watch "You Can Dance" or something like "Got Talent". I also try to make sure that the Polish language is not just fairy tales, but also something where adults are present. I give them what I know. It's the same with the Indian culture; maybe we failed linguistically, but at least the girls have Indian holidays, cuisine, and clothes. They are also aware of their Indian side. Yesterday, for example, I played Scrabble with the girls, and we played in 'no matter what' language; there were Irish words, Polish words, and English words. (Monika, mother)

She also expressed a feeling of satisfaction with her achievement as a migrant mother in keeping her children connected to their linguistic and cultural heritage. She acknowledged the amount of work she has invested in this, but at the same time, she viewed it as a ‘natural’ responsibility as a migrant mother.

I'm happy with what I've achieved. This is the result of loads of work, yet such natural.
(Monika, mother)

Several parents expressed a strong feeling of responsibility, or even an obligation, as Polish migrant parents to ensure the transmission of the Polish language, culture, and knowledge of the history and geography of Poland to their children. Lila and Milena emphasized that their choice to live in Ireland should not take away their children's opportunity to ability to establish and maintain their connections with their Polish heritage.

As a mother, I feel that [because] I enrolled him in this Polish school I am so at ease that I do not take anything away from him, that I do not take away his chance to learn this language. And I also feel calm, as a mother, that I have fulfilled my duty, that I am directing him towards the roots we have, which I respect very much, although I am not a patriot. (Lila, mother)

I rather think that, you know, that they will probably stay in Ireland, but you never know, so I have this [belief] that if I dragged them here, if I made such a decision, if we decided that we are moving to Ireland for financial reasons, then I would like them to finish this Polish school. And maybe because I somehow feel responsible for this decision. (Milena, mother)

To support home practices and fulfil this parental responsibility of keeping children connected to their Polish heritage, many parents decide to enrol them in complementary Polish schools, which were viewed as an external tool supporting home practices. As she said, “I never expected the Polish school to do the work for me. I treated it as an additional tool” (Monika, mother).

The above accounts highlight parental desire and efforts to ensure that their children recognise, establish, and maintain ties with their Polish heritage while growing up in Ireland. The following sections examine parental reasons for enrolling children in Polish complementary schools and present how these schools cater to the unique needs of migrant families in Ireland.

5.4 Polish complementary school as a response to Polish migrants' needs

5.4.1 Reasons for participating in Polish complementary schooling

Many parents reflected on the challenges of passing on the Polish language and cultural knowledge in the home environment. For example, parents like Lila reflected on the difficulties related to passing on literacy skills and challenges related to balancing other everyday responsibilities with transmitting the Polish language and traditions to their children. These perceptions contributed to their decisions about enrolling their children in Polish schools.

I know that me and my husband do not do many things here when living at the pace of life and the rush of Irish school and traditions. We don't read books in Polish at this stage when our daughter is almost four and our son is six. We don't do anything like that. (...) I had the feeling that my children were missing something, that we were not passing on this Polishness and tradition to them. (Lila, mother)

Even parents with teaching qualifications admitted that it would be difficult for them to teach the Polish language to their own children. Therefore, they believed it was better that their children were taught by other teachers, and they, as parents, could support the learning process at home.

I'm also a biology teacher, but I don't think I would have the patience. To teach other children, it's OK, but to teach your own children, those are emotions. They don't want to fully listen, and I don't think that would be a good idea. Of course, if I help them with their homework, it's OK, but somehow... I think it's a better idea to leave them under the teachers' supervision. (Ola, mother)

Moreover, data showed that both parents without plans for return migration to Poland and those with firm plans to return reported the possibility of children being at a disadvantage when not knowing their HL and culture. For the latter, the disadvantages were connected to parental concerns about how their children would fare in the Polish education system after the return.

My wife and I plan to return to Poland. I enrolled them [to a Polish complementary school] because I wanted them to have as little to catch up on at school in Poland as possible. This school is also something that will definitely help. (Bronek, father)

For those who did not express plans of coming back to Poland, the decisions to enrol their children in Polish complementary schools stem from their desire for their children to have a solid Polish identity and understanding of their origins:

It was certainly not my intention that I need this Polish school because I will return to Poland someday. (...) I would like him to know the Polish language and to have respect that Polish blood flows in his veins, that he could read and write in Polish and that he would learn our traditions. (...) that he will be aware, that he will feel Poland and feel in his heart that he is half [Polish] and half [Irish], because it is what he is. He was born here, but his roots, grandma, grandparents, and parents were born in Poland. (...) I trust that this Polish school will be a bridge to show him the world I come from, where I spent my childhood so that he will have a sense of belonging to it. (Laura, mother)

For Krystyna and Milena, the decision to enrol their children in a Polish school in Ireland seemed like an obvious choice at the time of their arrival to Ireland.

It was just so natural. We came to Ireland, and we wanted our children to also speak Polish so that they would have contact with this language not only at home with mom and dad but also with their peers. (...) It was so natural, we didn't think about it. It was just the time: seven years old, and we enrolled all our children in a Polish school (Krystyna, mother)

Even when we were flying here then, the first thing I was looking for was what Polish schools were like, because I had no idea that they were private [schools], that there was one at the embassy, so I looked for opinions, etc. I went with the attitude that they must go to the Polish school; there is no other option (Milena, mother)

They both saw an advantage of their children attending the Polish school as, in her perception, it extends home language practices by providing opportunities for children to use Polish with peers. In addition to learning the Polish language, parents also emphasised the importance of children learning about the history of Poland, in order to develop children's sense of Polishness. In this way, attending Polish complementary schools may complement, deepen and extend the home practices of Polish migrant families by providing children with historical knowledge and experience of celebrating Polish national days and traditions that are not always discussed or cultivated in Polish homes abroad:

So they get to know the history and geography [of Poland]. Because we don't talk about it much at home. These are not topics from our everyday life. (Krystyna, mother)

You know, it's different at home. Here, as far as we can, we also celebrate all these traditions, but it's really thanks to the Polish school. (...) Even all these [Christmas] dishes, we explain all that to them, the Christmas Eve, but in Polish school they have it taught, the specifics about it. Also other celebrations not commonly known, for example, the January Uprising or the Warsaw Uprising. You know, you forget it when you live here, don't you? And they learned that there about the "W" Hour, and so on. (Milena, mother)

At the same time, those migrant parents whose children were born in Ireland, emphasised other benefits of enrolling children to a Polish complementary school. Kamila, a mother of two children born in Ireland, both attending a Polish school, emphasised the importance of developing her children's skills in the Polish language for sustaining transnational relationships with family members in Poland (also see Diskin, 2020):

Our children can speak very well in Polish. It was always our desire that they learn how to write and read. We have a family in Poland, we want children to be able to communicate with them normally. [in Polish]' (Kamila, mother)

Data revealed differences between home language practices and the perceived role of Polish complementary education also among Polish mothers in mixed marriages. Paulina and her Irish husband who learned the Polish language, spoke mostly Polish to both of their children. Despite the efforts to keep Polish a home language, she realised that “at [mainstream] school they have English all the time. Here [at home], when they play with children, it’s in English too” (Paulina, mother). She recognised the discrepancy between imagined and actual efforts to maintain the Polish language in such circumstances. As she said, “I thought it would be easier to keep this Polish language; it is more work than I imagined” (Paulina, mother). She found Polish school “very important” (Paulina, mother) in supporting the home language maintenance.

For Barbara, a Polish mother in mixed Polish-Irish marriage, the choice of English as a dominant language in her bi-lingual family was dictated by her belief that it would benefit communication with her Irish husband (“I spoke Polish to Kornelia when she was little, but it has always been the case that when daddy comes, I speak English so that he can understand” – Barbara, mother). However, after years, she noticed that Kornelia did not understand much Polish, which became especially evident when they went on holidays to Poland when Kornelia was 7 years old:

She said she never wanted to go to Poland again. She told me she didn't understand Polish. I asked if she would like to learn it. She says she would like to speak this language, but it is difficult for her. (Barbara, mother)

Barbara’s reflection on Kornelia’s willingness to learn Polish, along with her reaction to Kornelia’s attempts to speak Irish with her father, resulted in her decision to enrol her in a Polish complementary school nearby.

I think I heard in January that she was trying to say something to my husband in Irish. I say, ‘Damn, she's starting to speak Irish, so won't she speak Polish? It can't be like that!’ And I decided that something had to be done about it. So I contacted the Polish school nearby, and they took Kornelia. (Barbara, mother)

In this case, having Kornelia enrolled in the Polish school was supposed to provide contact with the Polish language, which was not much happening at home due to English being predominantly used within the home environment (“Maybe not 100%, but there is a lot of English [at home]. I only talk to her in Polish about more basic things” – Barbara, mother). As Barbara said, she felt “alone in this [transmission of Polish to her child]”, and she admitted she “needed additional support”, especially since she had two other younger children and felt that “the situation would be completely different if I had one child and I focused only on her”. The overall goal of Barbara that the Polish school was expected to help with was that her daughter would develop basic communication skills in Polish. As she admitted, “To be honest, I would be happy if my child understood me [in Polish]. And I wouldn't even mind if she understood me in Polish and answered me in English” (Barbara, mother). This would allow Barbara as a mother to “express all concerns, feelings, thoughts, and orders in my own language because English is my second language” (Barbara, mother). For her, due to immersion in Polish while at Polish school, Kornelia could “hear this [Polish] language” and “do something more [with it] than at home” (Barbara, mother).

Other parents acknowledged the potential influence of their children’s complementary education in Polish on their future opportunities. For instance, Ola and Kamila reflected on how learning written Polish can provide an advantage to children who may wish to use it for educational or travelling purposes.

‘If the children decide to stay, study and live here, Polish will be a foreign language for them, because they will not use it every day, but they will be able to use it when they travel, maybe they will need it for some exams. I don't know. (Kamila, mother)

I wanted them to know another language, if they wanted to go back to their country or if they wanted to take an exam in it. I thought it might be useful to them in the future. They will decide whether they want to use it or not. (Ola, mother)

The awareness of future educational possibilities enhanced by a good knowledge of languages, including Polish, was also observed among interviewed teenagers (see Chapter 4). For many parents, an opportunity for children to take their third-level education in Poland seems appealing due to the high costs of third-level courses in Ireland. Even for those who would study in Poland through the means of the English language, the knowledge of the Polish language and culture was perceived as cultural capital needed for their integration into Polish society:

Some of our students are also children whose parents, mainly due to the financial costs of higher institutions in Ireland, assume that their child will not study in Ireland but in Poland. (...) Most often, it ends up like this: these young people go study in Poland, but they do their degrees through [the medium of] English. However, parents want them to have Polish education [beforehand] so that they are not alienated in terms of culture, knowledge of events, historical figures (Berta, mother and Polish complementary school principal)

While parents are usually the decision makers when enrolling children to Polish complementary schools, it is important to also highlight children's views. Among the young interviewees, there was one child, Damian, who asked his parents to enrol him to a Polish complementary school when he was 11 years old.

When I joined a Polish school, it was my decision. I came to my parents and suggested that maybe they could enroll me in this Polish school, so that I would be closer to this language, closer to our culture. (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5)

Like Damian, Kasia (10 years old, gen. 1.5) acknowledged that Polish complementary schooling offers the opportunity to “learn more about your homeland”. These accounts illustrate migrant children's awareness and agency to delve deeper into exploring their linguistic and cultural heritage through Polish complementary education.

5.4.2 Internalisation of Polishness through celebrating traditions and ‘togetherness’

The online questionnaire for Polish schools’ managers was conducted as part of a study to gain insight into the types of events and activities that Polish complementary schools organise in addition to teaching (Q27-31). The results revealed that the schools host a diverse range of events, including cultural events, educational fairs, literary events, sports events, and raffles. The table below provides a comprehensive overview of the Polish, Irish, and international holidays celebrated at the ten participating Polish schools. For holidays celebrated on different dates in Ireland and in Poland, e.g. Mother’s Day, Polish schools followed the dates celebrated in Poland.

Table 19: Holidays celebrated in Polish complementary schools

Name and date of a holiday	Number of Polish schools celebrating it
Poland’s Independence Day, November 11 th	10
Christmas, December 25 th	10
National Constitution Day, May 3 rd	9
Grandmother’s & Grandfather’s Days, January 21 st -22 nd	9
Children’s Day, June 1 st	9
Easter	9
Polish National Flag Day, May 2 nd	8
National Teacher’s Day, October 14 th	8
Mother’s Day, May 26 th	8
St Patrick’s Day, March 17 th	8
Father’s Day, June 23 rd	7
International Mother Language Day, February 21 st	7
Carnival, from January 6 th till the day before Ash Wednesday	7
All Saints’ Day, November 1 st	7

Polish Diaspora Day (Day of Polish Community Abroad), May 2 nd	6
Halloween, October 31 st	6
Polish Bilingual Day, 3rd weekend of October	5
International Children's Book Day, April 2 nd	5
European Day of Languages, September 26 th	3

In addition to the days highlighted in the table above, some schools also listed additional holidays they celebrated. These included: school's patron day, Family Day, Kindness Day, Valentine's Day, St. Andrew's Day, Teddy Bear Day, and Fat Thursday. These responses to the online questionnaire indicate Polish schools' deep commitment to enriching the educational and social experiences of the school's community by instilling a love towards Polish cultural heritage, promoting integration into Irish society, and celebrating literacy and language education. This engaging approach was also highlighted in interviews, which revealed that children, parents and teachers valued Polish complementary schools for providing both young and older generation migrants with opportunities to strengthen their connections to Polishness when living abroad through joint celebrations of Polish traditions. For instance, Milena and Ola believed that the Polish school played a significant role in shaping their children's Polish identity. As Ola (mother) said, "They discover this tradition and culture more by going to Polish school". Milena saw the Polish complementary schooling as shaping her children to become "real Poles" and patriots. She highlighted how the school's tradition of singing the Polish national anthem at certain celebrations helped her children develop an emotional connection to it. This suggests that the joint experience of 'togetherness' at the Polish school strengthened her children's connection to their Polish heritage.

The most beautiful thing was that these children, that the Polish school helps us raise children to be like real Poles, like patriots. It helps [them] to see this Polish identity in themselves. You know, observing traditions, national holidays, holidays in general. That's what I would say... the fact that they get touched when the entire school sings the national anthem before watching Poland playing football (...) they get emotional. And thanks to this Polish school, I see that they feel this Polishness because they

know, more or less, these dates, they know what Poland's Independence Day is, how it is celebrated (Milena, mother)

The importance of school events and celebrations was emphasised by Ilona, whose son Patryk came to Ireland at the age of six and attended a Polish complementary school until he finished his post-primary education. She stressed that participation in a range of events and activities in the Polish school supported the tightening of her son's friendships with pupils from a Polish migrant background:

So all these events, these events were so important. Thanks to them they became very close to one another. (Ilona, parent & Polish complementary schoolteacher)

Developing new friendships with other children of Polish background with whom they could speak in Polish was one of the social aspects of Polish complementary schools frequently mentioned in the interviews by the children themselves. For example, Kasia, who was born in Ireland and 10 years old when interviewed, stated:

I like going to Polish school because of new friends that I can speak Polish with. (Kasia, 2nd generation)

This illustrated how important it was for Kasia to meet children 'like her' and make new friends of the same background. Another angle came from Marysia, who explained that although other Polish children in her neighbourhood attended the same Irish school, they were not necessarily in the same class. At the Polish complementary school, it was different, as they all attended the same class which gave them the opportunity to be together:

I really liked going to Polish school, because I had such nice friends and everyone like, they live next to me, we would all go to the same class and we would go together, and it was fun. And also, when you were in the same class, because in the Irish school we are not in the same class. (Marysia, pupil, gen. 1.5)

Students who formed friendships at Polish complementary schools often identified these bonds as the most positive aspect of their attendance, pointing to the influence of peers on

their experiences. Similarly to Marysia, many children enjoyed the school for the diverse activities it hosted, such as cultural celebrations, educational fairs, literary events with Polish authors, sports events and raffles, which enriched the educational environment. Damian expressed appreciation towards the Polish school hosting various cultural events, like *andrzejki* (St. Andrew's Day), that he took part in as a pupil:

I really appreciate cultivating Polish traditions and such... Whether it is St. Andrew's Day, it is some kind of fun, or when it is Christmas, there are always nativity plays. I like it very much. (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5)

Damian reflected on his positive experience of a good atmosphere in his Polish school, among his classmates, which made him feel like part of this close-knit school community.

There is always a good atmosphere in the Polish school that makes people want to go there. I am still in the same class with most of my peers and we have always had a very good atmosphere together. As a class, we are like a family. (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5)

He admitted that attending Polish language classes in his regular post-primary school would not offer him the same experience as the complementary education he was receiving in the Polish school. He felt that the unique atmosphere created by the school's community was the reason he wanted to continue attending the Polish school, even if his mainstream post-primary school offered Polish language classes.

Knowing myself, most likely I would still be attending the Polish school though, for the atmosphere there, for the people, for the teachers. (Damian, pupil, gen. 1.5)

This strong bond between peers and their sense of belonging was additionally strengthened by using the Polish language within a group of friends, despite their proficiency in English.

We always speak to each other in Polish. Even though some of us are more comfortable using English, it is natural that we speak to each other in Polish. And that is really a plus in my opinion. (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5)

Although it was the first year of [Polish] primary school [when they met], it remained till now that in this circle of friends they talk to one another in Polish, call and text one another in Polish. (Ilona, parent & Polish complementary schoolteacher)

It is important to consider how children maintain their friendships beyond the classroom of a Polish complementary school. Many of them do not live in the same neighbourhood and can meet in person only once a week. Monika's 11-year-old daughter, Izabela, was born in Ireland and did not have much opportunity to see her classmates from the Polish school as it was not located near her neighbourhood. To overcome the time constraints and maintain friendships despite limited in-person contact, girls from her classroom created a WhatsApp group to stay connected daily.

After the last class [in Polish school], Izabela came back and I received a text message: 'girls from class 5b have set up a WhatsApp group'. Since she doesn't have her own phone, it's mine she uses, so I can immediately see this degree of commitment among the girls. After all, it's only one day a week, so it's really hard to keep the friendship going, and yet I can see that these girls are staying connected. And I will tell you that this is one of the strongest assets of this Polish school, the fact that there are friends. (Monika, parent, 1st gen.)

Moreover, interviews with teachers and parents showed that Polish schools also offer opportunities for 1st generation adult migrants, like teachers and parents, to deepen a sense of belonging through building connections with Polish school community members. Honorata, a principal and teacher in one of Polish schools in Ireland, recognised her group of fellow Polish teachers as providing important support for her emotional wellbeing as a migrant in Ireland. She highlighted the relevance of various activities they engage in together. She believes an Irish person may not be able to relate to her experiences in the same way as other Polish migrant women do. At the same time, she acknowledged that this need for having a Polish circle of friends may differ between younger and older generations of migrants.

I think it's good to have such a group of Poles, you know, the Irish won't understand you like that. (...) For me, such a very important group are, for example, my teacher colleagues from Polish school (...) We are close, and we do a lot of things together. Whether it's working on projects or even going to conferences together, it's great, it's

very nice. When you have such a group, it helps you live, especially when you are a migrant. But it doesn't mean that we are isolated, and we isolate ourselves, because that's not the case. But as I say, it's better for us to have such a group. I think this applies primarily to older people who have already arrived, because all this does not necessarily apply to young people. (Honorata, principal of Polish complementary school & mother)

Polish schools were also reported to act as cultural hubs for Polish migrant parents. This was especially evident in Ewelina's account, who said "Apart from the Polish school, we don't have such a Polish environment" (Ewelina, mother and teacher in Polish complementary school). Lidia, a Polish school principal and teacher, saw the Polish school as a cultural centre not only for the parents of the school pupils but also for the wider Polish migrant community.

The school is a cultural centre; it is not only a school where we teach children. It's also visible at school celebrations. When we celebrated the centenary of [Poland's] independence, we had almost seven hundred people in the gym. It wasn't just students and parents. They were friends of friends, grandparents. (Lidia, Polish school teacher and principal)

Moreover, Milena's account suggests that she and her husband's involvement in celebrating Polish traditions at school brings a feeling of togetherness and emotional fulfilment, which she will miss once her children no longer attend Polish school.

We were very involved in all Christmas Eves, everything, everything prepared, baking cakes, and so on. So, I have to tell you that yes, for the children primarily, but secondarily, for us: for me, for my husband, this Polish school was such a sense of Polishness here, especially during such events, holidays, and so on. And we will miss that. (Milena, mother)

Ola (mother) reflected on her time as class treasurer in her son's class and highlighted the social opportunities that came with this role, like increased recognition, having friends among parents, and baking cakes. These enhanced her engagement in the class activities and deepened her sense of belonging to the Polish school community.

I became the class treasurer. It was nice because everyone in the class associated me with it and I had a lot of friends. I had a few ideas that I was trying to introduce at the time. And I have been always involved in baking cakes for events. (Ola, mother)

For some pupils attending Polish schools, enjoying Polish culture through Polish culinary experience was an integral aspect of Polish schooling. Krzysiek's teenage daughter (who was not interviewed), along with Aine (6 years old) and Weronika (10 years old), emphasised the opportunity to buy Polish doughnuts from the school's kiosk each weekend as a beloved part of their Polish complementary schooling experience.

When it comes to religion, in contrast to Polish schools in the USA and UK during the 19th and 20th centuries (as described in Section 1.3), today's Polish schools in Ireland appear to be less closely associated with Polish Catholic parishes. This was evident from an online questionnaire where only one out of ten Polish complementary schools in Ireland stated that they provide religious education. However, out of the interviewed principals of Polish schools in Ireland, Lidia explained that their school is not Catholic, but they do offer religion as a subject and there is a Polish priest who visits the school regularly to hear confessions from both children and parents.

We are not a Catholic school, but we teach religion. If someone doesn't want to, they don't have to send their child to religious education. Every two months, the priest comes to hear the confessions of children and parents. At first, they approached it differently. But this has been going on for ten years. Polish priests are coming. There are so many parents even going to confession that we say let the children go to confession first, then you, because you can sit there and confess for half a day. They are very happy with it. (Lidia, teacher and principal in a Polish school)

Lidia also reflected on the Polish counsellors providing one-time advice sessions in her Polish school. She emphasised that while they do not offer long-term therapy, they are equipped to guide families towards resources and support available in Ireland. She saw it as especially crucial given that many of the problems migrants bring are not new, but rather stem from their experiences in Poland and are exacerbated by factors like a lack of access to mental

health services and a sense of isolation in a new country. Lidia shared an example of how their psychologist was able to connect a student's family with a specialist who could address the specific issue they were struggling with. She emphasised that her Polish school is committed to doing what it can to assist its pupils and families in need.

5.4.3 Implications of Covid-19 on the social components of complementary schooling

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent government restrictions on schools, all schools in Ireland, including Polish complementary schools, had to change their ways of operating between March-June 2020 and January-March 2021. According to data from the online questionnaire conducted in this study, 20% of Polish schools remained temporarily closed (no teaching) while 70% transitioned to online teaching through video calls and/or email communication. While the implications of these changes on teaching and learning were explored in the following chapter, this section focuses on the social implications that have impacted pupils' experiences in Polish complementary schooling during this time.

Damian (16 years old, gen. 1.5) reflected on the emotional aspects and his feelings associated with remote learning and his Polish school changing the location after the lockdown. His school was operating online, lessons were sent over an email:

During Covid, it looked like we had constant contact with our teacher online. And there were no online lessons on Zoom or Microsoft Teams. Our teacher simply sent us the tasks we had to complete and we had a week to complete these tasks. So it's a bit more like homework: assignments were completed, submitted and graded. (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5)

He reflected on missing the atmosphere of in-person Polish learning which illustrates the importance of learning in a traditional school setting for his sense of wellbeing and community.

I missed that atmosphere. I missed this atmosphere the most. That Friday would come and you would just smile that you could go to this Polish school. But actually Friday came, you opened the computer and did what the teacher said. So there was no contact, no closeness, no atmosphere. So I definitely missed that. (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5)

Several children and parents whose Polish schools organised online video classes also reported that they missed social interactions with their friends in Polish schools during both lesson and break time.

I think it's better to be at [Polish] school and see my friends.
(Kasia, 10 years old, gen. 1.5)

I missed my friends (Marianna, 11 years old, 2nd generation)

It was a different time. There were no breaks with friends and so on. (Krystyna, mother)

I think they lacked interaction. (Kamila, mother)

This resulted in weakening friendships among pupils at the Polish school, as noticed by Krystyna, who compared her youngest children to her oldest son, who built strong bonds with his friends at the Polish school from an early stage.

The youngest sons' attendance [at Polish school] was hit by the pandemic, so these friendships are also completely different than I once saw with the oldest [child]. They only know each other a little, there are no such deep bonds. (Krystyna, mother)

Kamila reported that although there was interaction between pupils in her younger child's (Bartek, 5 years old) online lessons at her children's Polish school, children lacked interaction with peers during the breaks and lesson time, which made the learning experience much different from in-person.

Bartek had only half an hour of classes and they normally did classes from the book they had in front of them, they had to answer and there was this interaction between the children and the teacher. Generally speaking, I don't think they had any major problems with it, but I wouldn't say they simply lacked interaction with their peers during breaks or even during lessons. (Kamila, mother)

As the online questionnaire revealed, two of the Polish schools participating in this study had to change their location in 2020-2021 due to their landlords' sudden termination of the rental

agreement. This happened to the Polish school attended by Damian. The school had to temporarily move out of the Irish primary school building where it was renting rooms until 2020. Damian reflected on limited physical space and restricted movement during breaks in the school's temporary building. This illustrates how the physical school environment contributes to children's interactions and influences their construction of a sense of belonging as part of the experience of complementary schooling.

After Covid, we moved to another place. Before Covid, we were in an Irish primary school building, and this was the best place. This new place we were in was smaller, much smaller. There was much less space, we couldn't go out. We had to stay in classes during breaks, so we couldn't feel that good atmosphere, that school's spirit. Fortunately, we will be back there [in the previous school building], so I really feel that the good atmosphere will return. (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5)

The above accounts portray that the pandemic outbreak and its subsequent lockdowns in 2020 and 2021 have affected the social experience of Polish complementary schooling for children of all ages by impacting the process of developing relationships between children and limiting interaction during online lessons. Data presented in this section also suggests that the physical school environment and in-person interaction strongly contribute to children's experience of 'togetherness' in Polish complementary schools.

5.5 Summary

This chapter aimed to explore the relationship between language, identity, and belonging in the perceptions of Polish migrant children and parents and investigate their experiences of developing connections with Polish linguistic and cultural heritage through complementary schooling in Ireland. Findings delved into the intricacies of bi/multilingual children's language choices in various settings and when interacting with different speakers, revealing that they frequently adapt their language use in a range of contexts, including home, mainstream school and complementary school. Most parents interviewed used Polish as their primary language of communication with their children, highlighting its importance as a home language in Polish migrant families. As it was often children's first language, passed down by immediate family members, some children considered it more important than

English. Findings also showed that bi/multilingual children of Polish heritage used different strategies while conversing with siblings based on their own and others language proficiency and level of comfort; teenagers believed their language choices were adaptable and prone to change in the future.

The study found that English and Irish played different roles in the lives of Polish migrant children in Ireland. While most children associated the use of English with everyday communication and mainstream schooling, some saw it as a universal language for future opportunities. Teenagers found it easier to use English due to their proficiency in it. While perceptions of English seemed quite homogenous among the under 18 participants, children presented different views on the Irish language. Marysia, encouraged by her mother, recognized its importance for her career plans as a primary school teacher in Ireland. Damian, who identified himself as a Polish national, viewed proficiency in the Irish language as a form of cultural capital that equips one with a form of symbolic power to comprehend the underlying values and mechanisms in Irish society, such as "the continuing power of what is intangible and symbolic" (Edwards, 2009, p. 251), and, therefore, facilitates navigating his position in it. For Weronika (2nd generation migrant), her connection to Irishness was built on the perception of Ireland as a place of birth and having Irish ancestors. For her, the Irish language might be of great symbolic value, like it is for most of the Irish society who share an ancestral connection to it but do not use it daily (ibid.).

This chapter's findings also demonstrated how transnationalism affects the maintenance of HL and attitudes towards Polish culture among Polish migrants. Parents felt a desire, often a strong obligation, to keep their children connected to their Polish linguistic and cultural heritage as it was seen as a marker of Polish identity. Even those who predominantly speak English at home, like Barbara, wanted their children to have at least basic knowledge of Polish. In parental opinions, maintaining the Polish language and family connections with relatives in Poland was essential for building children's ties with Polish heritage and developing their transnational social networks and cultural capital that children could use in the future if they wanted to pursue education or work in Poland.

Furthermore, findings showed that Polish complementary schools in Ireland were perceived as an external tool that helped Polish migrant parents in their endeavours to keep

children connected to their Polish linguistic and cultural heritage. Due to their rich cultural offering, Polish complementary schooling's influence was seen to reach beyond HL transmission. In many cases, these educational settings acted as cultural hubs for both Polish migrant pupils and their parents and teachers. As such, they can be said to nurture migrants' sense of belonging and create a unique atmosphere of togetherness among their Polish migrant community. However, findings revealed that the COVID-19 pandemic significantly interrupted the social aspect of Polish complementary schooling in 2020-2021 as some schools closed down temporarily, and others switched to providing Polish classes online. This, as reported by participants of this study, negatively affected their experience of socialising in these settings and led to weakening peer-teacher interaction and weakening friendships among pupils.

Chapter 6: Polish complementary schools as educational settings

6.1 Introduction

Between 2004 and 2016, as the number of Polish families with children residing in Ireland has increased rapidly, so too has the demand for institutional support for HL maintenance among the Polish community (see Section 1.5). This suggests that Polish complementary schooling development in Ireland was a response to Polish migrant families' needs emerging from their desire towards maintenance and transmission of Polish language and culture to children, their future plans regarding return migration, as well as from opportunities for supporting HL maintenance and learning provided within the Irish education system. While these factors were explored in Chapters 4 and 5, the current chapter presents Polish complementary schools as educational settings operating beyond the education system in Ireland. As Polish migrant families' and individuals' experiences of participation in these schools remain influenced by the ways in which these schools operate, this chapter explores their provision and outlines the main similarities and differences among Polish complementary schools in Ireland in aspects such as school goals, funding, curriculum, subjects taught, admission and promotion criteria, levels of education covered based on data from the online questionnaire filled in by principals of ten Polish complementary schools across Ireland. Findings of in-depth interviews look at differences in children's and parents' expectations towards these schools, their commitment to balance mainstream and complementary schooling, and the ways in which some teachers in complementary schools tailor their teaching methods to meet the needs of their bi/multilingual students.

6.2 Results of the Online Questionnaire

6.2.1 Polish complementary schools' ways of operating

This study reveals that Polish complementary schools in Ireland differ in the ways they are organised, funded and deliver their services. The main differences in their characteristics (as shown in Table 20 below) include the type of organisation that the schools are registered as, operating days and hours, number of teachers employed, number of volunteers engaged, number of students enrolled, and whether the school collects fees for their provision.

Five of the schools that responded were established between 2004 and 2014, that is, within the first ten years of Polish migration to Ireland, and five were established between 2015 and 2021. This captures how the demand for Polish complementary education has increased with the growth of the Polish migrant community in Ireland.

Of the ten schools participating in this study, three are the ORPEG schools (Polish Schools by the Embassy of Poland in Ireland), three are private schools (i.e. private companies), two are operating as associations (of which one was non-profit), one a company limited by guarantee, and one school is registered as a charity in Ireland. In Ireland, not-for-profit companies (NPOs) include a range of types of organisations, e.g. unincorporated associations, trusts, companies limited by guarantee, and designated activity companies. They are eligible to apply for charitable status if their purpose is to serve the public benefit.

The ways in which Polish complementary schools operate legally shape how they deliver their services mainly because it determines their funding opportunities. These, in turn, may determine curricula followed/subjects taught, organisation of the school year and school day, admission requirements, grading system, etc. as described in detail in the following sections of this chapter.

Table 20: Characteristics of Polish complementary schools participating in this study

Respondent	Year of establishment	Type of an organisation	Facility	Days of teaching	Number of pupils enrolled	Number of teachers employed	Collecting fees for education
Polish School 1	2008	A not-for-profit unincorporated association	Local church	Saturdays	Less than 50	Up to 5	Yes
Polish School 2	2015	An association	Local community centre	Thursdays and Fridays (afternoons)	Between 50-99	Between 6-10	Yes
Polish School 3	2021	A private company	Local mainstream school	Tuesday afternoons	Less than 50	Up to 5	Yes

Polish School 4	2014	A company limited by guarantee	Local mainstream school	Saturdays	Between 50-99	Between 6-10	Yes
Polish School 5	2010	A charity	Local mainstream school	Saturdays	Between 500-1000	More than 30	Yes
Polish School 6	2007	A Polish Embassy School	Private premises	Saturdays and Sundays	Between 100-250	Between 6-10	No
Polish School 7	2005	A Polish Embassy School	Local mainstream school	Saturdays and Sundays	Between 500-1000	Between 21-30	No
Polish School 8	2015	A private company	Local mainstream school	Saturdays	Between 100-200	Between 11-20	Yes
Polish School 9	2007	A Polish Embassy School	Local mainstream school	Saturdays	Between 250-500	Between 11-20	No
Polish School 10	2017	A private company	Local mainstream school	Tuesday afternoons	Less than 50	Up to 5	Yes

Most of the Polish schools participating in this study (70 per cent), operate from hired premises of local mainstream schools while one school operates from private premises, one from a local community centre, and one school reported that they use rooms in the local church (Question 5). In terms of days of teaching, despite the commonly used term, ‘Saturday schools’, Polish complementary schools provide their education on different days of the week, including weekdays. Question 15 revealed that only five of the ten schools operate only on Saturdays, while two deliver classes on Saturdays and Sundays, two on Tuesday afternoons (after the mainstream school hours), and one on Thursday and Friday afternoons. Question 14 asked about the number of weeks in a school year that Polish schools provide their teaching. The lowest number of weeks reported was 32 (one school), while the highest number reported was 40 (two schools), the median (the value in the middle of data set) was 35 weeks which was also the most reported answer among the participating schools (40% of schools). The average number of weeks in which Polish schools operate in a school year is 35.3 weeks.

Five of ten schools reported to be part of an umbrella organisation for Polish complementary schools. The schools saw reasons for such collaboration in enhancing teacher's training, taking part in inter-school competitions for pupils, and developing educational projects. Moreover, nine schools reported cooperating with other Polish complementary schools in Ireland, four schools reported collaboration with Polish mainstream schools in Poland, and one school reported collaboration with Irish mainstream schools in Ireland. Among national and international institutions and organisations Polish schools collaborated with or applied for funding were the Embassy of Poland in Dublin, local County/City Councils, the Department of Justice and Equality, the Arts Council, the Polish Community Association, the Foundation to help Poles in the East, the Football Association of Ireland, Irish Literature Exchange, the St.Patrick's Festival - Brighter future youth group, and the The Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity (GOCC, Polish Wielka Orkiestra Świątecznej Pomocy).

Polish Schools by the Embassy of Poland in Dublin

Polish Schools run by the Embassy of Poland in Dublin (there are 5 such schools in Ireland located in Dublin, Limerick, Cavan, Waterford and Cork, of which three took part in this study) are run and supervised by the Polish Minister of Education and Science in Poland as stated in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of August 9, 2019 on the organisation of education for children of Polish citizens temporarily staying abroad (Journal of Laws of 2019, item 1652, as amended). They operate within the organisational framework of the Center for the Development of Polish Education Abroad (ORPEG – Ośrodek Rozwoju Polskiej Edukacji za Granicą) located in Warsaw, which is a Polish state unit, fully financed by the Polish state budget, that manages 74 schools in 36 countries around the world. ORPEG's mission is shaping and maintaining the sense of national identity among the Polish diaspora and Poles living abroad through teaching the Polish language, history and culture to children and young people in Polish, facilitating their possible return to the Polish education system, promoting Polish culture, methodological and substantive support for teachers teaching Polish.

One of ORPEG's responsibilities is to coordinate the organisation of the education of children of Polish citizens temporarily staying abroad, including supervision of financial and administrative matters over the activities of the Polish schools that they manage. Hence, the organisation of the school year in schools operating under ORPEG is determined by the Director of ORPEG at the request of the principal/head of a Polish Embassy School. Classes in these schools are held once per week, either only on Saturdays or parents can choose between enrolling their children on Saturday or Sunday classes (never both days; each child attends their classes once per week). There are also certain requirements for these schools as per how many hours per subject are allocated in each school term as well as the length of lessons and breaks between lessons.

As these schools are fully funded by the state budget of the Republic of Poland, the three Polish schools by the Embassy of Poland participating in this study reported that they do not require parents to pay fees for their children's education at these settings (as per the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of August 9, 2019: Education in schools is free of charge). although there is a limited number of children, they can enrol each school year, so parents usually need to register their children in April/May for the following school year. They are also supplied with schoolbooks by ORPEG, so parents do not pay for these. Some of these schools collect voluntary annual payments from parents (of about 35 Euro) to cover the school insurance policy as well as financially support initiatives organized by their Parents' Councils.

The Parents' Councils use the money from contributions to finance school competitions, book prizes, trips, and various school or class events. As Berta, teacher and head of one of the Polish Embassy Schools, reported, parents do not always want to pay this additional voluntary payment as they require the school to cover everything, as the Constitution of Poland provides education free of charge for Polish citizens.

Polish Community Schools

The term 'Polish community schools' refers to Polish complementary schools that are not Polish Embassy Schools. They are usually set up and run by members of the Polish

community in Ireland (such as Polish migrant teachers) and operate as private companies, non-for-profit organisations, associations or charities (see Table 20 for details). They are not funded from the Polish state budget. Hence, all of the community schools participating in this study reported they require parents to pay fees (Question 8). Collected funds are used to, among other things, cover school facility payments (e.g. rent), insurance, and the organisation of various school events and competitions. Some of the Polish community schools receive coursebooks from ORPEG. Others apply to the Embassy of Poland in Ireland for additional funds for the schoolbooks, while some ask parents to pay for their children's coursebooks or to buy them themselves. Those community schools that receive coursebooks from Poland are asked to follow the Core Curriculum, however, unlike ORPEG schools which have to send each class's book of records (with topics covered in the past school year) to ORPEG in Warsaw, there is no institutional procedure in place to check whether Polish community schools teach with accordance to the Core Curriculum framework.

As Polish community schools operate as privately managed organisations/companies (they are not managed by ORPEG nor supervised by the Polish Minister of Education), they can organise their teaching provision themselves by creating their own teaching programme. Among schools that answered Question 24: 'Does your school follow the Core Curriculum for Polish expatriate students attending Republic of Poland schools outside the territory of the Republic of Poland issued by the Ministry of National Education in Poland?' one Polish community school indicated they did not follow it. There are no Polish legal regulations or governmental bodies that set out how these schools should operate. The umbrella organisations they may belong to, often focus on providing opportunities for teachers' professional development, or with organisation of some events; they do not coordinate these schools' finances or administration. Hence, it is the school principals' and classroom teachers' responsibility to design the ways in which they provide their services.

6.2.2 Goals of Polish Complementary Schools

Despite the different ways in which Polish complementary schools in Ireland operate, most share similar goals (as stated by respondents to Question 6), focused on the preservation and development of knowledge of the Polish language and culture (see Table 21 below). Polish

schools focus on teaching Polish at different educational levels, including preparing their pupils for the Polish Leaving Certificate examination in the Irish educational system, with particular attention to teaching reading and writing in the Polish language. Another important goal is assisting pupils in preparation for continuing their education in case of return migration to Poland. These goals of Polish schools meet Polish migrant parents' desires for their children's literacy skills in the HL, as explored in the previous chapter.

Table 21: Goals of Polish complementary schools in Ireland

Heritage Language Education	Culture, Identity, and Community Integration	Pupils' Development
<i>To teach Polish at all educational levels, starting from infant school and ending with preparing students for the Polish LC in the Irish education system (Polish School 2)</i>	<i>Providing general knowledge about Poland and consolidating Polish traditions (Polish school 2)</i>	<i>Supporting the comprehensive and harmonious development of the child (Polish school 6)</i>
<i>Teaching writing and reading in Polish (Polish school 4)</i>	<i>Promote bilingual heritage (Polish school 3)</i>	<i>supporting him [the child] in the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, shaping the right ethical attitude (Polish school 6)</i>
<i>[The school] implements the core curriculum constituting Annex 1 to the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 9 August 2019 on the organisation of education for children of Polish citizens temporarily residing abroad (Journal of Laws of 2019, item 1652, as amended) (Polish school 7)</i>	<i>Familiarize with Polish culture, customs, traditions, history, geography (Polish school 4)</i>	<i>Preparation for the role of a student at a later stage of education, and in the future for the role of a righteous citizen of a democratic state. (Polish school 6)</i>
<i>To teach Polish language (Polish school 8)</i>	<i>Tightening Polish friendships (Polish school 4)</i>	<i>[The school] provides students with the opportunity to learn in the field of complementary education (Polish school 9)</i>
<i>[The school] makes it easier for students returning to Poland to continue their education in the Polish education system (Polish school 9)</i>	<i>To promote the maintenance of the Polish language and culture among Polish families living in Ireland (Polish school 5)</i>	
	<i>Upbringing in respect for the diversity of cultures, beliefs and views, but also instilling love for one's own traditions, history and culture (Polish school 6)</i>	
	<i>[To teach] Polish traditions to Polish children living in Ireland (Polish school 8)</i>	
	<i>[The school] undertakes activities aimed at maintaining and developing the sense of national</i>	

	<i>and linguistic identity of students</i> (Polish school 9) <i>[The school] cooperates with Polish and Polish diaspora associations and organisations supporting the development of Polish culture abroad</i> (Polish school 9)	
--	--	--

Complementary schools' focus on cultural heritage preservation and promotion is not narrowed to teaching about Polish culture, traditions, history, and geography. It includes encouraging one's appreciation of bilingualism and transmission of ethical values (values-based education) and encouraging respect for cultural diversity in society. By fostering strong bonds and relationships within the migrant community (community building) and strengthening transnational connections through collaboration with Polish organisations abroad, Polish complementary schools support their communities in the development and maintenance of cultural and linguistic identities.

Some of the Polish schools see their role as going beyond HL transmission and cultural maintenance. They aim to be spaces that foster migrant children's holistic education, where pupils' harmonious development is at the centre of the school's focus. By providing learning opportunities outside the mainstream educational system, these schools want to prepare students for their future roles within the educational system and shape their attitudes through democratic citizenship education.

6.2.3 Admission and Polish language entry requirements

The condition for admitting a student to a Polish School by the Embassy of Poland is to provide the head of the Polish School with a certificate of the student's attendance at a mandatory school operating in the education system of the student's country of residence, or a written statement from the parents regarding the student's attendance at such a school. Although these schools are primarily settings for Polish children temporarily residing abroad, they also enrol children of Polish citizens permanently residing abroad and children who are not Polish citizens, if the school has vacancies and appropriate staff and organisational

conditions and financial resources for doing so (as per the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of August 9, 2019, on the organisation of education for children of Polish citizens temporarily staying abroad, Journal of Laws of 2019, item 1652, as amended). Similarly, Polish community schools may (but do not have to) ask the parents to submit a statement about the child's attendance in the mandatory Irish education system.

Six of ten schools participating in this study reported there is a basic level of Polish language required to admit a child in their school (Question 7). Two schools reported no knowledge of Polish needed at entry. One school requires a good level of spoken Polish and one school selected the answer "Other" and provided the following comment:

the school admits children with any level of Polish, however, the school operates only through the medium of Polish. Lack of knowledge of the language would make it impossible to function in school (Polish School 7)

Nine out of ten schools provide their teaching only through the medium of Polish language, while one school reported to use mostly Polish and occasionally English as a language of instruction (Question 13).

6.2.4 Curriculum and Subjects Taught

In 2010, the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Poland (in cooperation with Polish educational organisations abroad), developed the *Core Curriculum for Polish expatriate students attending schools outside the territory of the Republic of Poland*. The document was designed as a proposition for Polish migrant teachers and Polish educational settings abroad. It was then updated and published in 2020. The updated version of the Core Curriculum contains content on students' linguistic, literary, cultural, history and geography education. Its structure allows teachers to indicate what students should know and what skills students should gain to complete different stages of education, from the early school level through primary school to the secondary school level. Language skills are seen as the basic competence at each stage of education, as this is fundamental to learning Polish literature, history, and culture. The content focuses strictly on literature, history, geography and the culture of Poland, as content about foreign language(s), culture(s) and knowledge of

geography and history of other countries is assumed to be acquired by students in their local mainstream schools in their host country. While Polish community schools in Ireland may (but are not required to) follow this curriculum when designing, planning and implementing their teaching/school curricula, Polish Embassy Schools are required to implement the *Core Curriculum* framework as it constitutes Annex No. 1 to the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of August 9, 2019, on the organisation of education for children of Polish citizens temporarily staying abroad (Journal of Laws of 2019, item 1652, as amended). It regulates the subjects to be taught at each level of education in these schools, i.e. Early School Education as a subject for children attending classes from 1st to 3rd, and to teach two core subjects which are: Polish language (linguistic competence) and Knowledge of Poland (elements of history, geography, culture) for children attending classes 4th to 8th of Polish primary school level, as well as students attending secondary school level.

This indicates that funding and operating within or outside the framework of ORPEG remain closely connected to the curriculum followed by Polish schools in Ireland.

The answers provided by the Polish schools participating in this study revealed that while most of the Polish complementary schools in Ireland teach the subjects indicated in the Core Curriculum framework (Polish language and Knowledge of Poland or history and geography of Poland), some schools provide a wider selection of subjects offered, including two schools teaching mathematics and one providing religious education (Question 25). Six out of ten schools reported running a Polish Leaving Cert preparatory course (Question 22) of 2-3 hours per week (Question 16).

6.2.5 Levels of education covered and grading system

The structure of levels of education in which Polish complementary schools provide their teaching usually reflects the structure of the Polish system of education. In Poland, compulsory schooling begins in the so-called class 0” (in Polish, also called ‘zerówka’) and is compulsory for 6 years olds but children who turn 5 may also start it, depending on their parents’ wish and capacity in the school. Nine out of ten Polish complementary schools that participated in this study reported that they run a class “0” for children of age 5-6 years old.

Before the changes in the education system in Poland in 2019, Polish complementary schools provided their education in accordance with the previous system of education in Poland that included: 6 years of primary school, 3 years of gymnasium school (an equivalent to junior cycle), and 3 years of secondary school (equivalent to senior cycle). In September 2019, Polish complementary schools in Ireland implemented the same changes as public schools in the Polish system of education. These levels of education currently cover:

- preschool/early years education for children of age 3-5,
- class “0”¹⁹ for children of age 5-6 years old,
- classes 1st to 8th class of primary school for children aged 6/7 years old to 13/14 years old,
- classes 1st-4th of secondary school for children of age 13/14 years old to 17/18 years old.

Table 22: Levels of education covered in Polish complementary schools in Ireland

Level of education/ class	Number of Polish schools offering this level of education
Class “0”	9
Primary school	10
1 st class of primary school	10
2 nd class of primary school	10
3 rd class of primary school	10
4 th class of primary school	10
5 th class of primary school	1
6 th class of primary school	8
7 th class of primary school	7
8 th class of primary school	5
Secondary school	5
1 st class of secondary school	5
2 nd class of secondary school	4

¹⁹ An equivalent to Junior Infants year in Irish primary schools.

3 rd class of secondary school	5
4 th class of secondary school	2

While all of the participating schools declared to provide Polish complementary education at the primary school level, only half said that they provide education for children at the secondary school level (Question 17). The results also reveal that the number of schools offering Polish complementary education at the upper end of primary school drops off from the 6th class of primary school, and it remains low at the secondary school level (see Table 22 above). This might be explained by early adolescents resigning from attending Polish schools at the time of transition to their Irish post-primary level.

The length of a school day in Polish schools is linked to the level of education attended (the higher the level of education, the longer the school day). While a school day in preschool/class “0” level has been reported to last 2-3 hours by 50% of participating schools, in classes 1st to 3rd of primary school, 70% of schools reported the school day lasts more than 4 hours. A school day for 4th-8th classes (primary school) and in all secondary school classes was reported to be more than 4 hours long by 80% of the schools who responded.

In Polish Embassy Schools, the grading system and promotion of students to the next class/level of education is carried out in accordance with Polish education law, and students receive official certificates of class/school completion at the end of the school year, which are issued by the Department of Education and Science in Poland. The grading system for Polish Embassy Schools is regulated via Polish education law. When assessing pupils’ work, teachers apply the following rules for converting points into grades:

Table 23: Grading System in Polish Schools

Percentage of points obtained	Grade (verbal)	Grade (numerical)
100%	Excellent	6
86-99%	Very good	5
71-85%	Good	4

56-70%	Satisfactory	3
40-55%	Pass	2
0-39%	Unsatisfactory (Fail)	1

In Polish community schools, the grading system and requirements for student promotion might be designed entirely by the school principal or particular subject teachers. However, many schools follow the Polish national grading system, which may help pupils who will move to Poland in the future to adapt more easily to continue their education in mainstream schools there.

6.2.6 Pupils and teachers in Polish schools

There are a range of factors that may affect the number of pupils enrolled in each school, such as the school's location (urban/suburban/rural), school's fees/no fees policy, days/hours of providing classes, levels of education covered, and the perceived quality of delivering their services in parental and children's perspectives as explored in this chapter. The total number of pupils enrolled in 2021 varied across the participating schools (Question 9). As shown in Table 24, there were three schools with less than 50 pupils enrolled, two with 50 and 99 pupils, two with 100 – 250 pupils, one school with 250 – 500 pupils, and two with 500 – 1000 pupils, of which one was a Polish Embassy School and the other a Polish community school operating as a charity. No schools reported more than a thousand pupils enrolled at the time of responding. However, one school reported that the highest number of pupils they have ever enrolled was 1000 pupils in 2018 (Question 10). Two other schools indicated that they had their highest enrolment figures in 2017-2018, which corresponds with the fact that 40% of participating schools were funded between 2014-2017. Moreover, all the responding schools indicated in Question 12 that more than half of their pupils were born in Ireland. These results should also be connected to the results of national censuses in both 2011 and 2016, which reported the largest number of Polish residents in Ireland in the history of this country, the increased number of Polish households consisting of a family with children, and the high number of Polish-nationals in the Irish education system (CSO, 2016). This suggests that 2011-2018 were peak years in terms of demand for Polish complementary education, as

well as the years in which the population of many Polish schools increasingly consisted of pupils of Polish parents born in Ireland.

Results of the questionnaire revealed that the number of teachers employed in the Polish schools is linked to the number of children enrolled in each school: the more children enrolled, the more teachers employed. The three smallest schools with up to 50 pupils enrolled employed up to 5 teachers, while the largest schools with between 500 and 1000 pupils employed more than 21 teachers. Responses to Question 23 revealed that most Polish schools responding tend to have 16 or more pupils per classroom in 1st to 6th class at primary school level, while most schools reported they have 15 or fewer students per classroom attending 7th-8th class at primary school level and classes 1st-4th of secondary level.

Table 24: Numbers of pupils, teachers and volunteers participating in Polish schools

School Identifier	Number of pupils	Number of teachers	Number of volunteers
Polish school 1	Less than 50	Up to 5	[no number provided]
Polish school 2	Between 50-99	Between 6-10	2
Polish school 3	Less than 50	Up to 5	[no number provided]
Polish school 4	Between 50-99	Between 6-10	0
Polish school 5	Between 500-1000	More than 30	4
Polish school 6	Between 100-250	Between 6-10	2
Polish school 7	Between 500-1000	Between 21-30	[no number provided]
Polish school 8	Between 250-500	Between 11-20	[no number provided]
Polish school 9	Between 100-250	Between 11-20	0
Polish school 10	Less than 50	Up to 5	[no number provided]

As indicated in responses to Question 33, some schools also engage voluntary staff in addition to hiring teachers. Volunteers play an important role in complementary schools by supporting teaching tasks, helping with organising school events, supporting the work of a

school library, and providing administrative support. These contributions may help to run complementary schooling on a daily basis and promote HL and culture within the complementary school's community and beyond.

While Polish Embassy Schools are obliged to employ only qualified teachers (teachers with no qualification could only be employed in these schools based on ORPEG approval), Polish community schools are free to decide the requirements for the position of a teacher in their settings. The results of the online questionnaire reveal that all 10 Polish complementary schools that responded employ only qualified teachers. All reported that their teachers' minimum level is either a BA degree or an MA degree. All ten schools reported that teachers they hired completed their teaching qualifications in Poland. Six out of ten schools reported that all or majority of teachers they employ completed an additional training programme to prepare them for teaching in Polish complementary schools abroad. Six schools answered that none of their teachers were registered with the Teaching Council in Ireland. Four schools indicated that only a few of their teachers are registered with the Teaching Council (Question 39).

Seven out of ten schools reported problems with recruiting new teachers (Question 40). Question 41 revealed a range of difficulties that Polish complementary schools' managers listed as potential reasons for why they were experiencing difficulties with hiring new teachers, which clustered around five main reasons, presented in Table 25 below.

Table 25: Potential reasons for difficulties with hiring new teachers at HL school

Potential reasons for difficulties with hiring new teachers	Number of schools that reported the problem
School operating times are not suitable for many	6
Lack of Polish teachers in Ireland (e.g. Polish history/geography teachers and teachers with suitable qualifications)	5
Low wages due to not many teaching hours weekly	4
Temporary character of the job	1

Low prestige of the job	1
-------------------------	---

A further part of this chapter explores findings related to the provision of Polish complementary schools, teaching methods, and students' and parents' involvement. As a Polish migrant mother and teacher, I paid particular interest and attention to pupils', parents' and teachers' perceptions of the benefits and challenges of Polish complementary schooling. I used my research journal to note my comments and reflections (see Appendix S).

6.3 Findings of Semi-Guided Interviews

Interviews with children, parents and teachers participating in Polish complementary schools in Ireland revealed differences in perspectives and understandings of these schools' role in family efforts to maintain and develop Polish language and culture. These differences included participants' perspectives on how these schools design and deliver their teaching.

6.3.1 Variations in children's and parents' expectations towards Polish schools

The interviews revealed that children and parents prioritised different aspects of this type of schooling. The young children interviewed discussed the importance of both the experience of learning about Poland and the opportunity to play in their Polish complementary education. Robert, whose mother recently decided to enrol him in a Polish school by the Embassy of Poland, reflected on his experiences with the Polish community school he attended before:

Researcher: So, which Polish school did you prefer?

Robert: The previous one [Polish community school].

Researcher: What did you do there?

Robert: We went to the park, played, made things with our hands, painted, and studied a little.

Researcher: And what is it like in the new school?

Robert: Only learning.

Researcher: Do you like it?

Robert: Well, not really. (Robert, 9 years old)

Despite feeling that he was doing well academically, Robert did not enjoy his time at the new Polish school due to the lack of activities beyond traditional classroom learning. On the contrary, Robert's mother, Ola, placed a high priority on the amount of time children spent on conventional learning in the classroom. She was dissatisfied with the previous Polish school's offerings and decided to enrol him in another Polish school, stating, "They were just going out to the garden, or going to the park, or playing football, and they didn't learn anything at all for the last few weeks" (Ola, mother). She also underscored her dissatisfaction with the financial aspect of community schooling, remarking, "And for this you paid quite a lot of money" (Ola, mother). Her expectations regarding the teaching programme in Polish complementary schools were influenced by three factors: economic considerations, perceived teaching quality, and alignment with the Polish education system.

I didn't want to pay [for children's complementary schooling]; that's the first thing. And I've heard that there is a higher level [quality of teaching] here and [it's] also more like [a school] in Poland. I thought that if we returned to Poland sometime, they would be more prepared for the Polish [education] system. In the sense that not only fun, songs, although it was also fun (...) But I wanted them to learn more to write and read and things like that. (Ola, mother)

Like Ola, Milena had high expectations for her child's education, aiming for the Polish complementary school to maintain standards similar to those in Poland. When making the decision about which Polish school to choose, two key factors were considered: the school's affiliation with Polish authorities and the feedback of other parents, which Milena gathered by researching online reviews.

Researcher: When you chose a Polish school, what were you guided by then?

Milena: Because everything was foreign to me, I read reviews on the Internet. (..) I knew that this school at the Embassy was a school run by the Ministry of Education or by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. So, it was obvious to me that I thought that this is a school at the [desired] level in that case and the most reminiscent of the Polish one [in Poland]. (Milena, mother)

Milena never considered the distance from home to the Polish school to be important. Instead, she prioritised ensuring that her children were familiar with the Polish school system. This was particularly important given the uncertainty surrounding their family's duration of stay in Ireland at the time of enrolling in the Polish school.

Researcher: Was distance from home also a factor?

Milena: Never. No, never. Only the level [quality of education], the fact that they will get the end of the school year reports here, that it will be very similar to what school is like in Poland because I cared about this. Back then, I also did not know how long we would stay here, and now, I also think that there are random situations, whatever can happen, so that they know what the school looks like in Poland. (Milena)

During the conversation, Ola and Milena discussed the quality of education provided in Polish schools and how it compares to the education offered in their complementary school. However, other parents have different expectations. They are looking for the Polish complementary school to offer more opportunities for children to play and have fun, similar to what mainstream schools provide in the Irish educational system as per their perceptions.

Yesterday, a very interesting e-mail came from the dad of a student from the 5th grade, who wants to start a debate among parents that the Polish school is not attractive, that the child cries every week and does not want to go, and from week to week the resistance is greater. There are no long breaks, no possibility to go outside, no fun. The Irish school is much more interesting. (Berta, teacher and principal in Polish school)

The duration of the breaks between classes was also highlighted by Robert, who appreciated the longer breaks at his previous Polish school because, as he put it, "There wasn't as much work, and the breaks were half an hour long" (Robert, 9 years old). Berta noted a lack of parental awareness regarding the school year organisation and teaching practices at Polish Embassy schools, which are obligated by Polish education law to adhere to official state regulations when it comes to delivering instruction and planning school days.

Parents do not realise that the Polish educational system has solved the issue of the length of breaks and lessons; there are regulations that there should be no more than

3 hours of the same subject together. It is a completely different system from the Irish system. And the fact that we have to implement the core curriculum, our classes must be content-rich. (Berta, principal of a Polish complementary school)

Berta compared the organisation of school days in mainstream schools with that of Polish complementary schools. She noted that due to offering classes only on the weekends, Polish schools cannot structure their days in the same way as mainstream schools. As a result, in her Polish school, they have ten-minute breaks after every 45-minute lesson to shorten the school day on the weekend. She emphasised the differences between Polish schools funded by the Embassy of Poland and Polish community schools. Schools funded by the government of Poland must comply with specific regulations set by the Polish educational authorities. On the other hand, Polish community schools, which are self-funded, have more freedom to decide how to organise their teaching.

We get money, but we are required to teach according to the core curriculum. Private schools do not get money, but they have complete freedom. (Berta)

The data above indicates that specific constraints concerning the organisation of teaching and learning provision in Polish complementary schools are intricately connected to the source of their funding (self-funded or from the Polish state budget) and whether they are schools operating independently or are part of the ORPEG framework and managed by the Polish ministry responsible for national education.

6.3.2 Learning in Polish school perceived as beneficial but demanding

Both younger and older children involved in this study understood the value of attending a Polish complementary school. They recognised that attending a Polish school could help them learn about their heritage. When asked about the advantages of attending a Polish school, 7-year-old Max mentioned, “I know more about Poland, and things like that. And, for example, I learned Polish letters and alphabet”. Robert (9 years old, 2nd generation), appreciated the opportunity to have access to Polish literature through the school library “[I like that] there is a library in the [Polish] school” (Robert, 9 years old, 2nd

generation). Marysia, who is 13 years old, highlighted that attending a Polish school provides them with the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the Polish education system in case they need to transition to mainstream education in Poland.

And, for example, if something happened in Ireland or if we went back to Poland, for example, I went to a Polish school, it would be easier for me a little. (Marysia, 13 years old, gen. 1.5)

Parents also recognised various benefits of complementary schooling for their children. Barbara, who moved to Ireland 3 years prior to the interview with her Irish husband and their three children, noticed that attending a Polish complementary school influenced her oldest child's, Kornelia (8 years old), sense of identity. After attending the Polish school for nearly two years, Kornelia's self-identification shifted to 'half Polish, half Irish' after attending the Polish school.

Previously, when she didn't attend a Polish school, she said she was half English and half Irish. I said, "No, Kornelia, you're not half English because you were only born in England. You are half Polish and half Irish". She said 'no'. She said she didn't even speak the language. I said, "This is why you need to learn [it]". And now, when she started attending [the Polish school], she says she is half Polish, half Irish. (Barbara, mother)

Furthermore, Kornelia took advantage of the Polish school environment to discover a new role for herself and to confirm her language skills. She noticed that some children, such as her friend Jack, were not proficient in Polish, and she offered to help by acting as an interpreter for them.

My friend named Jack, he doesn't know how to speak Polish, but he can only speak [Polish] like he's half Polish. (...) Some people can speak English very well. I like speaking Polish and English [in the Polish school]. If someone doesn't understand the Polish teacher, I can explain to them what's going on and what we are doing. (Kornelia, 8 years old, 2nd generation)

This illustrates how the context of Polish complementary schooling offers children an opportunity to explore their language repertoires and their own potential through language

mediation in the Polish school classroom context. While aware of the benefits, children also perceived the Polish school as demanding. For example, Marysia saw it as more difficult than her mainstream Irish primary school.

And for example, I think, as for my Irish school, the one before, that the Polish school was much more difficult, for example, when we had lessons, we had to look at what we had or, for example, if we are not at school, we had to see what we had, tasks and everything. And in the Irish school, it wasn't like that. It was like everything is OK, you are absent, OK (Marysia)

Berta, a principal, acknowledged that studying at the Polish school she manages requires significant effort on the part of the students due to the demanding requirements associated with implementing the Core Curriculum.

Teaching in our school involves a lot of effort on the part of the child because we have to implement the core curriculum developed in Poland. It is not leaving the child in conditions that are very attractive to them. This is, indeed, a school where you have to learn a lot (Berta, principal of a Polish complementary school)

At the same time, her Polish school has a policy of awarding each pupil a prize, such as a Polish book, in recognition of their commitment to Polish complementary education.

Every child gets a book, a prize. Not necessarily just a book, but a prize. We conclude that all children are worth being rewarded, after all, they give one day of their weekend to school. (Berta)

While for children, the academic pressure associated with learning at Polish schools has been perceived as challenging and shaped whether they liked attending the school, some parents valued the rules in Polish schools and saw teachers as more consistent than teachers in Irish mainstream sector. Milena emphasised that the Polish school teaches children responsibility and consequences, which she perceived as values embedded in Polish education and Polish identity:

In this Polish school, I saw that the teachers are consistent, more so than in the Irish [school]. You do not have homework [done], then there you have a minus [mark], or

something. In Irish school, you don't have homework [done] – nothing happens, okay, you'll bring it next time. You weren't in the Polish school, but you can, you have someone to write lessons from, make up for the absence, right? You weren't in Irish school, you're sick – you don't have to, and so on. So also, such a kind of responsibility, such a consistency, is very positive, in the sense of Polish values, Polish school values. Children always say that in the Polish school teachers are stricter than in the Irish one. But I like it, and this is also an advantage for me, and also the things resulting from it. Plus, I would say, upbringing in such a Polish identity. (Milena, mother)

Another parent, Lila, expressed that the stress she felt regarding the demanding nature of Polish school in comparison to her children's education in Irish schools mirrored her own childhood experiences in Poland.

I talked yesterday about these poems that Marcinek has to learn [to Polish school]. I said to Rafał [Lila's husband, Polish, 1st gen. migrant] that I have a very interesting process of returning to what emotions I have related to the Polish school. I have more stress so that the lessons would be done for the Polish school [than for the Irish school]. This is because I have always functioned like this in Poland; it was always so stressful, school was the most important when I was six years old. (Lila, mother)

This demonstrates how the academic pressures experienced by some parents in the Polish education system in the past may shape their current views of their children's schooling in Polish complementary schools and in mainstream education in Ireland.

6.3.3 Children juggling Polish school commitments and personal priorities

The workload associated with learning in Polish schools was perceived by both younger and older pupils attending Polish complementary schools as adding to academic pressure. Max, who is 7 years old, has mixed feelings about attending Polish school. He expressed that he doesn't enjoy all the lessons and homework assignments. He also mentioned that he would prefer not to have any homework assigned. Mateusz, a young teenager (12 years old, gen. 1.5), perceived the large amount of homework assigned and time committed for preparation for Polish school as some of the reasons leading to his decision to withdraw from Polish

school following completion of 5th class. The excessive amount of homework he received in Polish school left him no time to play with friends.

We just had so much homework that... I don't know. My friends were knocking for me, and I couldn't go out, I had a lot of work. And it was so bad, and there was so much of it, and it was just so boring too. (Mateusz)

The feeling of being overwhelmed with workload and school commitments seem to be intensified as pupils grow up and attend higher, more demanding levels of education in their Polish complementary schools. Milena, Mateusz's mother, underlined the fact that in the first years of attending the Polish school both of her children were enthusiastic about it. Their attitudes, however, changed as more learning and time commitment were required when attending higher level classes at complementary school.

Class "0", those first years there, 1st to 3rd class, in general was great and cool, they were happy, but later... It probably has to do with the fact that there was more learning and more responsibility, that's for sure. So, they were less and less willing to go there. (Milena)

Mateusz referred to the amount of work and time invested in learning and preparing homework for Polish school as a "big thing". This suggests that he considered the time and effort invested in learning and doing homework as an important commitment. The feeling of being restricted and having to sacrifice his free time to complete homework for Polish school seemed to cause frustration for Mateusz. He said, "it was a big thing because every Saturday, on normal days, I couldn't go out anyway because I just had to do this homework and so on" (Mateusz, 12).

Milena further elaborated on Mateusz' and Marysia's desire to spend time with their friends as one of the main reasons for losing interest in attending Polish school on Saturdays and their decision to withdraw from it. She explained that as children grow into their teenage years, their friends and acquaintances become increasingly important to them. During our conversation, someone had already knocked on the door twice for Philip, which shows that friends can be a constant presence in their lives. Milena pointed out that her children's friends were always around after school and on weekends, which left little time

for Polish school. Additionally, they often had other events, such as birthdays and joint trips, scheduled on Saturdays, but attending Polish school made it difficult to attend them. Marysia, 13 years old, Milena's daughter and Mateusz's older sister, withdrew from Polish school after completing 6th grade at primary level. This coincided with Marysia starting her mainstream secondary school, which affected her daily schedule significantly and added more academic pressure, leading her to withdraw:

And now I don't go anymore, because now that I have this new school, well, it's just like this Polish school was difficult and everything. And I think that I will not have time for a Polish school, because, with the English school, I don't even have any free time. I'm just finishing in the evening, I'm just finishing the homework, and I don't even have time to go outside or do anything anymore. (Marysia)

Krzysiek found it a common pattern among children to resign from attending Polish schools around the time of transition to their post-primary school in the Irish education system as they find it more demanding.

Many of our students give up when they go to secondary school, so it is said that secondary school is more difficult in Ireland and, finally, in my opinion, more demanding. So, kids sometimes drop out in the seventh class [of primary level in Polish complementary school] more or less (Krzysiek)

Data from the online questionnaire confirmed that fewer pupils were attending classes 7-8th of primary and 1-4th of secondary levels in Polish schools. Some complementary schools do not offer teaching in these classes due to low interest. Parents responded differently to their children's loss of interest in continuing education in Polish schools. Some, like Krystyna and Honorata, maintained their decision that children should attend and left them with no choice.

For now, they are forced to go to this Polish school. (Krystyna)

My children had no say when it came to it [Polish school]. I didn't ask them at all. Well, there was a time when they wanted to resign, but I didn't accept it at all. It lasted for a while, and they knew they wouldn't win anymore, and they just had to accept it.

Then I didn't really have any problems until the end. They knew it was Saturday and it was the Polish school. (Honorata)

Others, such as Milena, Ewelina, and Krzysiek, engaged in conversations and negotiations in an attempt to reach an agreement about the preferred length of time for their children to attend the Polish complementary school. These efforts were often made jointly by both parents, as indicated by the use of “we”.

So, we just made an agreement with them later on, we said, “Look, until sixth grade, just complete this sixth grade, and we'll leave you alone” (Milena, mother)

She had a phase that she did not want to attend [Polish school], because other children did not go [there], because someone... Maya does not go [to Polish school] on Saturday, and she has to go, and something else, and something else, some birthday she missed or something. And it was a bit like that for a while, but now it is not, now she probably likes it. Generally, the agreement was, I mean, we talked like, we told her to finish the sixth class [of Polish complementary school's primary level] (Krzysiek, father)

I'm proud, and I'd like her to continue [attending the Polish school]. I never tried to force anything; it wasn't a decision because I wanted it. If I saw that she was getting tired or didn't want to, or was showing any dissatisfaction, or was crying, I don't think I would force it on her (Ewelina, mother)

After Milena's 12-year-old son Mateusz, who was finishing his fifth year in a Polish school, expressed his strong desire not to continue attending, Milena chose to honour his decision. She shared, “I said [to him] I would not force him to go because I believe it would be pointless given his awareness.” Nonetheless, she felt that his resignation from Polish schooling reflected her parental shortcomings.

6.3.4 Parental involvement and support

This section explores parental involvement, which includes supporting schools as educational settings, being involved in their children's education in complementary schools, and making efforts to support them in pursuing complementary education. An example of parental involvement in supporting the school as an educational setting is the Parents' Council operating in some of the Polish complementary schools. Their role is to provide help in the organisation of school events and seasonal celebrations, as well as to collect voluntary payments from parents that contribute to cover the school's insurance policy, stationery, as well as books and prizes for children:

The parents' council must conduct various gainful activities so that the school can pay for insurance and buy books for prizes. This is mainly what the parents' council deals with. In addition, it supports the school by purchasing paper and office supplies, buying prizes for competitions, and helping in making decorations. (Berta)

According to one of the principals, some parents are hesitant to contribute because they know the payment is not mandatory. However, Berta emphasised the importance of this money for running the school, explaining that without it, covering the school insurance policy would be impossible.

The Parents' Council primarily collects contributions that are optional and there is a growing problem with collecting this money. This is only 35 euros per year, but parents are aware that it is not mandatory. (...) Meanwhile, this money goes primarily to the school insurance, because we are not able to rent a building without insurance. This is an amount of over 6,000 euros per year, which we pay for the use of the building at the weekends (Berta)

In Krzysiek's perception, parental attitudes and levels of involvement have changed over time. As he compares parents of children who attended a few years back, he finds today's parental community, in general, more demanding and less supportive. He points out, however, that the Parents' Council has always consisted of parents truly engaged in Polish school's life:

Those parents were devoted to school. I mean, now they're also devoted often, but... A little generalising, this is a bit like, parents are more like demanding now.

He elaborated on distinguishing different types of parents he had observed as a teacher: those who were engaged in school life (parents' council), those who are involved in their children's complementary education but are not engaged in school life, and those who are not involved in anything but driving children to the Polish school and back.

Here, you have such a full spectrum of parents: there are parents who only bring their children to school, and the child has the school backpack from their Irish school. Irish school bag in a Polish school... And then you see, homework not done, not prepared for the class. Then, there are parents who help their children somehow, but they would not be involved in school [life] at all. Maybe there are parents who, I don't know, don't have the courage or, I don't know, prefer someone else to get involved. But without them, it is simply impossible. (...) This council of parents at school - this is a very important thing. (Krzysiek)

Some of the Polish migrant parents claimed that their engagement with Polish school was better than with their children's Irish mainstream school due to better teacher-parent communication:

[In Irish school], it is such a completely different approach to these children than in this Polish school. The fact that they are a bit relaxed there [in the Irish school], but also there is no contact with the teacher. Because in the Polish school, not only did I know everything, later even from this school blog, what children write, and so on. [In Polish school] there was always contact with the teacher by e-mail, plus many times we also had teachers' phone numbers, so it was great. Therefore like, I see positively the Polish school, while the Irish one, however, not (Milena)

For Lila, whose son only started attending the Polish school not long before the interviews were scheduled, getting involved in her child's Polish education meant searching for ways to support him, finding times for doing the homework that would be suitable for him, and observing him to ensure he was not feeling overwhelmed:

It's still the beginning, and sometimes I have such fears in my head that there will be too much for him, both Polish and Irish school, but I think that I am so vigilant, and I observe him and react, so that he does not get stressed, so that he does not feel

overloaded. We were looking for time during the day when we could do his homework [for Polish school] (Lila)

The parents-children collaboration in finding learning strategies and time for doing homework for Polish school, resulted in her son's, Marcin, being very satisfied with his work and completing it earlier than requested:

he enjoyed it very much; he was very proud of himself, he wrote these letters beautifully, he did the whole page, despite the fact we still had three more days, and he did the whole page yesterday. (Lila)

As a migrant mother, she discovered that while feeling a sense of pressure regarding her son's best academic achievement in the Polish school, she also appreciated the more relaxed approach in the Irish educational system. She reflected on her own process of learning to give her son space and adjust her expectations in order to reduce extra academic pressure associated with attending Polish school:

For me, as a mother, it is a beautiful process to learn to give Marcin space, not to push him like in Poland where there has always been pressure on this education. Here, however, in Ireland there is much more relaxed, looking at the lessons they have [in Irish school] and how they have in Polish school.

(Lila)

Lila and Krystyna also reflected on the role of parental engagement in the complementary education process, for example, through collaboration with teachers and involvement in doing homework with their children.

And I also explain it to my husband that there is more homework in the Polish school, because they have only four hours a week, so they automatically need parents at home and this is our role, they [Polish school teachers] pass it on to us, they support us, but we also need to cooperate (Lila, mother)

We sit down once a week to do homework. These are usually fixed Wednesdays that move to Thursday and sometimes it's Friday night. But generally, on Wednesday we do Polish homework, we all sit together with the kids (Krystyna, mother)

Milena also reflected on the importance of her involvement, along with her husband, in their children's education in Polish school. They assisted their children with test preparations and completing homework. She believed that this collaborative learning approach proved to be beneficial as it helped children achieving good grades and make them familiar with the grading system in the Polish education which might be useful in case of return migration.

...they had good grades [in their Polish school], but let's face it, it was also with our help (...) for example, in Marysia's case, we studied for history [of Poland] tests with her (...) So, let's say, they had good grades, so it never demotivated them, but also like, I don't know, it was hard to 'earn' these grades. However, I still think that this is a good way, because it is a Polish school, so like a copy of Poland, right? So, it's good, because we never know what awaits us in life, and if there was a situation that these children will come back to Polish to school in Poland, they will already have some idea, some kind of background, even about this grading system. (Milena)

Their involvement included not only supporting them in doing homework but also managing logistics such as transportation to school and dealing with different school time schedules, which Milena believes is a well-known side of parental sacrifice related to complementary schooling. Their engagement also included fostering a positive learning environment at home and providing children with emotional support along the way:

This is also the truth: we sacrificed a lot; maybe it is not talked about much, I do not know, but it is a huge sacrifice by parents, enormous. Only the parent who sends their child to a Polish school knows this. Children finished [Polish school] at different times, there were times when you could not wait inside the school, in the building, but you had to wait in front of it. And at the very beginning, when we arrived here [to Ireland] (...), we did not have a car yet, so these commutes, plus the fact that I was in this pregnancy at risk, plus you know, all this, plus that need to tune these children in positively, wind them up, they did not want to go, so you tell them like, make them aware, help in preparing for lessons. I really tell you that the involvement of parents here is huge, huge. (Milena, mother)

Milena felt a sense of personal failure when her children chose to discontinue their complementary Polish schooling, as she had invested significant effort in their education.

This sentiment was compounded by her comparison to her husband's perspective and her friend whose children continued to attend Polish school.

My husband is more rational, he says that they've learned so much already. My husband says that we can be proud of ourselves, that I can be proud of myself because it rested more on my shoulders because he usually works on weekends, so it was more of my responsibility somehow. However, I have such a thing in the back of my head that it is a failure because, for example, I have a friend whose all children go to this Polish school, and they go, you know, they keep attending. Even her oldest who is in secondary school, goes, he still goes there. (Milena, mother)

While she felt disappointed about her older children's decision to resign from continuing education in the Polish school, Milena, expressed her anticipation of encouraging her children to join the Polish school again for a Leaving Cert preparatory course when they are older. She also expressed enthusiasm about enrolling her youngest child in the same Polish school in the future.

I'm waiting for Janek, when he will be at the school-age, and I will also enrol him in the Polish school. Yes, for sure. This is a great thing. (Milena, mother)

Once this section has explored some aspects of parental engagement, the next section will describe how teachers are approaching the challenges associated with delivering lessons in complementary educational settings.

6.3.5 Teachers tailoring their educational approaches

Implementing the Core Curriculum is challenging for many Polish complementary school teachers. Berta sees the reason for this situation in the lack of fit of the curriculum language to children's needs, especially in light of the decreasing ability of migrant children to speak Polish fluently and limited opportunities for exposure to Polish at home due to parents' work commitments.

We all have more and more children who were born abroad, and for them, learning in Polish is already a problem. (...) A parent who comes home after 8 hours of work plus commuting. More or less, he is involved in making money about 10 hours a day,

and he doesn't have time to talk to the child more often. In most Polish homes, there is Polish television, but it does not solve the problem. (Berta)

As she said, “Children’s bilingualism is not a product that one can achieve with no effort” (Berta). She saw Polish complementary schools as offering possibilities to immerse children in a range of rich contexts through teaching Polish language, history, geography and culture:

The [Polish] school teaches about various things, e.g., Polish art history and lake districts in Poland. These are topics that are obviously not included in everyday conversations at home (Berta, Polish school principal)

However, Berta noticed that due to the decreasing level of knowledge of Polish among Polish migrant children, “it is becoming increasingly difficult to implement the core curriculum these days” (Berta). Honorata (teacher and principal) pointed out that the differences in teaching the Polish language have been quite significant. Initially, children with some prior knowledge of Polish from schools in Poland found it easier to cope with the language. However, the situation has worsened over time, making it difficult to teach Polish in a conventional way, especially to children who were born here. As a result, foreign language teaching methods are now being used more often. Honorata also added that although early school textbooks from Poland can still be used, they become increasingly difficult for older children, causing more harm than good.

Berta emphasised that teachers in complementary schools must be sensitive to the specific learning needs of pupils from migrant backgrounds. They also should know how to deal with migrant parents and understand their unique, often difficult, experiences related to migration and living in a foreign country.

Teachers with teaching experience gained in Poland are not always the best option for our school, because they do not understand the specifics of our teaching. Polish school abroad is a complementary school, not mandatory. Our students attend mandatory schools in the Irish system from Monday to Friday, so they have different needs than students of mainstream schools in Poland. Here we are also dealing with different parents. Many parents carry the baggage of difficult experiences related to migration. All this should be understood and taken into account by the teacher in the complementary school when cooperating with students and parents. (Berta)

To meet the unique needs of Polish migrant pupils in complementary schools, some teachers try to tailor their teaching approaches and lesson designs. Sabina, who by profession is also an art therapist, used to combine art techniques with language teaching to foster pupils' self-expression skills, enhance their communication in Polish, as well as encourage active participation in the lesson:

I am also an art therapist by profession (...) We did all sorts of tasks; for example, when we were looking at [book] characters, we were doing character descriptions, and they had to make a collage. And when they made these collages, they started talking about themselves, and that's how we went on to describe the book characters. I combined these methods. In the seventh grade, we made a circle, and they read a book with the division into roles. When we did *Lem*, we first read it with the division into roles, and then they had to perform it, but without the book. (Sabina)

Paulina, a Polish language teacher in older primary school classes (7th-8th grade), based her lessons on dialogue in order to promote critical thinking skills through discussing both current and historical events in Poland and Ireland. In this way, Paulina's Polish language classes provided a space for mutual growth, shaping young people's perspectives. They were also an occasion to nurture their perspectives on one's sense of belonging to cultural and linguistic communities, shaping awareness and a sense of responsibility and empowerment when looking into the future.

We are very often talking about what is happening in Ireland and Poland. We are talking in the context of the events that have taken place [in the past] and in the context of what is happening now. And all the time there is also an emphasis on how important they are in building the future. Because in a few years, it is the people I teach now who will decide what this world will look like. And if we don't teach them certain things, then nobody will teach them. It seems to me that this is a huge role of the Polish school because we have such opportunities, we have time for it, we have materials, and every poem can be used to find something like this. They learn about themselves too (Paulina)

Maria brought an interesting perspective as a mother-teacher when she was reflecting on why her two daughters were more enthusiastic when going to their Irish primary school than to the Polish complementary one:

As a mother, I always wonder why they run happily to the Irish school and like it very much. Then, when Sunday comes, I skip the issue of getting up in the morning, because it was secondary in the first year, but I was trying to understand why they did not want to go there [to the Polish school]. And unfortunately, in some of these places, the level of stress is very high (Maria, mother, teacher, principal)

In Maria's opinion, the reason for the lack of enthusiasm among many children, including her own, for attending Polish school lies in the mismatch between the teaching methods used in complementary educational settings. She believes that the frequent tests and grading systems in many Polish schools may cause too much stress in children, leading to a negative impact on their well-being and attitudes towards attending these schools. After working for several years in a few Polish complementary schools, she concluded that applying the design of Polish education in Poland to Polish complementary schools in Ireland was not the right approach.

I understand that the ORPEG schools were aimed at adapting those children who would return to Poland, and the children of diplomats initially, yes. But the more of our children began to be born here, the more such children began to come to Polish [complementary] schools. I had the feeling that this was not really the point [of complementary schooling] (Maria)

She began searching for alternatives and eventually opened her own Polish community school with fellow Polish teachers. In addition, she started working as a Polish teacher in an Irish post-primary school, which allowed her to observe the approaches of mainstream teachers and adapt them to her own teaching in both mainstream and complementary school settings.

Very often, because I am in this school every day, practically like any other teacher from morning to 3:20 PM, I go and watch other teachers as they teach. As they teach French, but not only, because I go to visits, for example, to an English teacher, now I have made an appointment with the history lady. I try to be curious so that I do not

open the door that has already been opened. That means, when I know that some methods are used and students know them and they use them every day, I just do everything to use them too. (Maria)

She believes that the best approach is to apply teaching methods that are compatible with Polish migrant children's educational needs and that children are already familiar with from attending mainstream education.

I try to learn a lot from the Irish, and when it comes to methods, it works very well for me, this peer assessment, this type of feedback. They are used to helping each other; with my students, we have a rule: "Ask three before you ask the teacher". They should also come around the class, check things among themselves and only if they do not manage, come to me. That's for sure: all project methods do a great job with it. (Maria)

Teachers' efforts to adjust their teaching methods have been reported to be acknowledged by some pupils and their parents. During the interview, Paulina, who has been using discussion as a main teaching strategy in her lessons, read two gratitude cards that he had received from her pupils at the end of the school year. Pupils recognised her engagement in providing them with support, empowerment, and encouragement to exceed their own limits:

"Thank you for helping me discover what I'm best at and convincing me that I can do more than I expect; for showing me that I matter and am important; for the fact that in such an age I could always count on you."

Milena, a parent, considered the level of teachers' engagement in relation to their salary in complementary schools and the challenges associated with children's low engagement in complementary schooling.

The truth is that for this salary, it's simply ridiculous, this is the truth. I really rate their involvement very high. And when I think about these teachers, I think that this is a kind of ant work abroad, in this Polish school. I am also aware that teachers know that these children often go there only because their parents send them, otherwise they do not want to go. (Milena)

Maria emphasized the significant role of a supplementary school teacher in either nurturing or inhibiting students' positive attitudes towards higher learning. Her perspective is closely aligned with mine, as detailed in my research journal entry (Appendix S).

There is always a man behind it, there is always a teacher behind it, who will either “murder” this positive attitude towards language or on the contrary – who will open something up (Maria)

Data presented in this section illustrated the important role of teachers in shaping HL students' experiences of learning in a complementary school setting. Their engagement in both designing and delivering HL, history and culture classes remains of great importance as it may shape pupils' attitudes to the process of learning and influence the way they perceive themselves as learners and user of their HL. Furthermore, some of the interviewed teachers felt that more flexible teaching approaches could enhance migrant pupils' learning in Polish complementary schooling. For instance, Berta said that “it might be a good idea to commit some of the time to teaching children about Ireland in Polish; it would be interesting for them” (Berta, Polish school teacher and principal). Maria recommended using the methods that pupils are familiar with through their mainstream education. Yet, due to no relationship between complementary and mainstream schools, “it is difficult to combine knowledge [from the Polish school] with knowledge from the Irish school since we know nothing about each other (Berta, Polish school teacher and principal).

6.4 Covid-19 implications on teaching and learning

This study offers novel insight into how the pandemic and lockdowns in 2020-2021 impacted teaching and learning in complementary education settings in Ireland. Based on responses from Polish school principals to an online questionnaire, several significant implications were reported that impacted their operations during that time. These included unexpected termination of rental agreements with mainstream schools, adjustments to teaching schedules, a reduction in student enrollment, and rising operational costs due to increases in insurance expenses.

Table 26: Implications of COVID-19 on Polish schools' functioning in 2020-2021

Reported implication of Covid-19 lockdowns	The number of schools reporting it
Changing the school's location due to termination of rental agreements	3
Changing the school's operating times	1
Decrease in the number of pupils enrolled	4
Decrease in teaching staff	1
Increase in school operating costs, especially in insurance costs	5
School permanent closure	1

Moreover, teachers who provided online teaching during the pandemic, like Krzysiek, Paulina, and Sabina, reported facing issues with the older students' engagement in the online learning process. They observed that sometimes the interaction was minimal, and they doubted whether the students were paying attention.

It is the student's involvement that requires attention because sometimes there was a lesson when there was not much interaction, and I wondered: "Hello, are you alive? Are you even here?" (Krzysiek, teacher at Polish complementary school).

Mainly, there was a discussion, and here we failed a bit in online teaching because my students in older classes had their cameras turned off. (...) I did not force them to do so and I simply accepted it. So, this discussion sometimes turned into a monologue (Paulina, Polish school teacher)

Sometimes, I had the impression that I was just talking for the sake of speaking; the microphones were turned off, the cameras were turned off, and they didn't answer questions, so I had the impression that I was actually giving a lecture. Nothing could be enforced either. I mean, they returned homework because I can't say they didn't, but during online classes, it was difficult, especially in the older class. It was a little easier with the younger ones. (Sabina, Polish school teacher)

Among these schools that provided online teaching, some teachers and principals reported enhanced collaboration in order to share knowledge and practices with fellow teachers. Schools were proud to have developed online teaching quickly and effectively due to collaboration with one another, teachers' determination to learn, and the support that some have received from Poland:

While working online in 2020 - at the beginning of the pandemic, the school moved teaching online within two weeks - a public blog with lesson materials was created (also for those Polish children who were not school students and were deprived of the opportunity to participate in organised teaching Polish), online meetings were started. (Berta, Polish teacher and principal)

At the first moment, in March, I had thirty teachers, and only two teachers took up online teaching. They had never learned or trained this before. There was no need for this [before Covid]. (...) I invested in them [teachers]. Warsaw helped us a lot. Everyone took the training [in online teaching methods]. It didn't matter if it was a music teacher. Everyone, everyone joined the training. (...) there was a lockdown again in January and then, 100% of teachers started working online. (Lidia, Polish school teacher and principal)

Moreover, this study has revealed an intriguing result. As Berta, a Polish school teacher and principal, said, "These [Polish complementary] schools are not known at all. Nobody knew anything" before the pandemic. The Covid-19 pandemic influenced positively the awareness of Polish complementary schools in Ireland. This recognition resulted from some mainstream post-primary schools contacting Polish complementary schools regarding the preparation of calculated grades for Polish LC students in 2020-2021, based on these students' education and progress in Polish complementary schools. Berta shared an interesting conversation she had with the principal of a post-primary school in Dublin.

I was asked about documentation and whether I had the student's work. I said I didn't have the student's work, but I had the child's report cards, student records, and school records for the last 10 years. I don't have them here; they are in Warsaw. I have to apply to Warsaw for a copy. The director was surprised that we had documented students' progress 10 years ago, that there was an archive, and that there was some procedure for obtaining this data; he was delighted. And he said: Listen, Berta, do you have a website? I will talk about you; there are still a lot of Poles, and I want

people to know about your school. I told him yes. we are a large school, and the Polish community usually knows about us. However, it was an Irishman who, no matter how much he was delighted with the [Polish] school, knew nothing about it. (Berta, Polish school teacher and principal)

Although such instances brought a potential for a positive change in recognising Polish complementary schools by Irish post-primary schools, it is important to note that this recognition can only be observed among those Irish post-primary schools that had students wishing to take Polish at their LC in 2020 and 2021. Hence, the scope of nationwide recognition of Polish complementary schooling remains limited.

6.5 Summary

Most of the existing literature on the topic of complementary HL schools across the world looks at single aspects of these schools, such as HL and culture transmission, which has led to fragmentation of knowledge across disciplines researching complementary education and limited understanding of how these schools are organised (Stweenwagen et al., 2022a). As this chapter delved into the differences and similarities among Polish complementary schools' ways of operating as educational settings, it explored detailed characteristics of the ten Polish complementary schools in Ireland participating in this study. Most of the participating schools (7 or 70%), delivered their teaching on the weekends, while the other 3 schools teach on weekdays after the mainstream school hours. This remains in line with 'traditional' understandings of HL/complementary schools, which have so far been defined as *extra schooling organised by and for particular ethnic groups outside of mainstream provision* (Strand, 2007, p. 1). While this study did not take into consideration other forms of community education, such as peer-to-peer, and there was no Polish school in Ireland operating as a full-time school, such as Muslim national schools in Dublin, this study discovered some major differences among Polish complementary schools in Ireland. These differences include their provision organisation and management, as well as funding and curriculum, which have not been explored in detail in other studies in Ireland to date. The main organisational differences were observed between two types of Polish complementary schools in Ireland: Polish community schools and Polish Schools by the Embassy of Poland

(located in Dublin, Limerick, Waterford, Cork and Cavan). The former operate as not-for-profit organisations, charities, or private companies, self-funded by collecting fees or donations; they are free to decide what they teach and how they organise their teaching. The latter, operate within the organisational framework of the Centre for Polish Education Abroad (ORPEG) located in Warsaw and are, as noted earlier, obliged to implement the curriculum and school structures as per Polish educational law issued by the Department of Education in Poland. These operational differences were the source of the variety of children's and parental perceptions of their role, often leading to misunderstandings related to the expectations regarding school programme design. While both young and teenage pupils report that they often felt overwhelmed with the amount of learning and homework and said that they would appreciate a more fun approach to learning, most of the parents interviewed put a strong emphasis on their children's development of literacy skills in the Polish language during their education in the Polish school. Some confusion was also observed in parental (mis)understandings of different types of Polish complementary schools operating in Ireland, and how they design and organise their school days. While ORPEG Polish schools (Embassy Schools) were often perceived as more trustworthy (due to their affiliation to Polish State authorities) and as delivering higher standards of teaching, some parents expected these schools to provide more opportunities for pupils' free time (such as longer breaks between lessons) and playing, without acknowledging (perhaps, without understanding) that these schools are obliged to operate and deliver the curriculum as per regulations coming from Poland. Others were disappointed with Polish community schools for not meeting their expectations regarding teaching standards. They reported that too little time was dedicated to traditional classroom learning, focusing on reading and writing activities.

Despite differences in schools' operational structures, all of the participating schools shared similar fundamental goals/purposes, which were to transmit the HL and culture, provide them with Polish education at all stages from preschool to secondary school, and support them in achieving academic qualifications, such as the Polish Leaving Cert in the Irish educational system. These purposes remain the same as already discovered in studies on complementary education conducted in the 1990s (Pillas, 1992; Abdelrazak, 1999). For instance, Abdelrazak (1999) reported that most complementary schools aim to either (1) maintain/develop cultural/ethnic identities of children with migrant backgrounds and/or (2)

promote the achievement of these children in mainstream schools. Supporting the maintenance of their HL, culture, or enhancing migrant pupils' achievement has also been observed to be the main purposes of complementary schools run by other migrant communities around the world (Creese et al., 2006; Strand, 2007; Kenner & Hickey 2008; Maylor et al., 2010). In their review paper, Steenwegen et al. (2022a) argue that to fully understand the richness of community-based complementary schooling, it is crucial to acknowledge that community-based education reaches beyond promoting migrant pupils' HL maintenance and academic achievement (p. 3). The results from this chapter supported the argument, as some of the Polish schools participating aimed to support the comprehensive and harmonious development of their pupils. They provided ethics-based and values-based education to shape their attitudes as both pupils and citizens. Therefore, HL complementary schools can be seen as "spaces of hope" that "have the potential to play a role in shifting the monolingual habitus beyond their communities, co-creating a more linguistically inclusive society" (Lamb, 2020, p.99).

Planting the seed of values-based education in Polish complementary schools was discovered to be strictly connected to the ways they organise their teaching and to teachers' attitudes; for example, Polish complementary school teachers were perceived as more consistent than teachers in Irish mainstream schools. This strict approach was seen by some parents as teaching their children what responsibility is, which is seen as part of Polish identity, and part of becoming familiar with the Polish educational system. Parental emotions, as well as expectations related to their children's education at Polish complementary schools, were linked to their own childhood experiences with the Polish educational system in Poland.

This chapter has revealed that many Polish complementary school pupils of all ages find complementary education in these settings both beneficial and demanding. The benefits, as seen by children, relate to the opportunity to master the Polish language and explore Polish culture, which is perceived as important for getting to understand one's cultural/ethnic background, and considered relevant, especially in case of possible return migration to Poland. The perceived drawbacks of attending Polish schools relate to workload and homework and are perceived by both parents and children as increasingly challenging with every class/year attended. Data presented in this chapter indicated several factors influencing

teenagers' attitudes to complementary schooling and their decision to reassess their commitment. As in other studies (Machowska-Kosciak, 2015; Crean, 2020), these factors included academic pressure emerging from workload, time commitment for completing homework during the week, changes of circumstances in life such as transition to secondary school in the Irish educational system linked with more time commitment required to prepare for their regular school on a daily basis, as well as changes in children's priorities due to growing up, and prioritising other types of activities such as spending time with peers, more than an additional day of learning in a school setting. These were also shown here as contributors to teenagers' decisions to withdraw from education at Polish complementary schools (Connaughton-Crean, 2020).

With exceptions, past and current research on complementary schools places little attention on parental engagement and teaching approaches in these settings. This chapter has shown that parents can play an active role in planning and supporting their children's HL education in complementary schools. This study explored parental agency, which can be seen in initiating open family discussions about children's long-term educational goals and recommendations regarding the length of their children's complementary education. Participating parents were involved in their children's learning process in Polish schools via a range of activities, such as collaborative learning, engaging in homework, and engaging in searching for optimal learning strategies for their children, all of which resemble the ways parents are usually involved in their children's education in the mainstream. While homework has often been perceived as overwhelming by children, parents report that it creates an opportunity for them to get involved and follow what their children are currently learning about in Polish schools. In line with previous research, this study revealed that parental dedication and efforts go above supporting the learning process and include providing emotional support and encouragement to children, as well as solving logistical issues such as transportation to and from school. Parents find these things challenging (Connaughton-Crean, 2020) but effective and see them as having a positive influence on their children's achievement in complementary schools. Despite having involved parents and good grades, some teenagers in Polish schools still reconsider their commitment to HL education. This can sometimes lead to resignation because they feel overwhelmed by the academic demands and homework and because they feel that school responsibilities interfere with their social life.

Interestingly, the findings of this study show that once withdrawn, former pupils showed negative attitudes towards learning in complementary schools. However, they kept a positive attitude towards their HL use and maintenance.

Findings from this chapter support results from previous studies on complementary schools' teachers as having a significant role in shaping pupils' learning experience and attitudes towards learning in complementary schools. This study confirms that tailoring teaching methods and approaches adopted by individual complementary schools' teachers, e.g. using art in language education, facilitating group work, applying an interdisciplinary approach, and encouraging peer discussions, were received positively by pupils and motivated them to further develop their HL skills in a complementary school setting.

Moreover, this chapter has revealed insights into the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic on teaching and learning in Polish complementary schools, such as school closures due to national lockdowns and transition to online provision in 2020-2021.

Chapter 7: Discussion, Conclusions & Recommendations

7.1 Introduction

The findings of this research project, which are based on the narratives of Polish migrant children, pupils, and teachers in Ireland, along with language portraits created by interviewed children and responses to an online questionnaire filled in by principals of Polish schools, offer a unique and in-depth insight into the perceptions and experiences of Polish HL education in Ireland. Findings engaged with the diversity of practices and choices that Polish migrant families made after moving to Ireland, which shaped their connection with Polish linguistic and cultural heritage while living abroad. These included maintaining Polish as a home language, using travel and new technologies for sustaining cross-border social networks, and, most importantly in light of the focus of this study, their participation in Polish complementary schools in Ireland. With a particular emphasis on the latter, this chapter thoroughly examines the findings of this study, considering existing literature on HL maintenance/development and identity (re)negotiation in migrant families. It also delves into the underlying attitudes and beliefs that influence Polish migrants' daily language practices and the diverse choices they make to preserve, promote, and transmit Polishness while living in Ireland. Section 7.2 discusses this study's findings and delves into 1) the intricacies of negotiating identity and belonging in the context of migration, 2) the pivotal role of heritage and foreign languages in language education in Ireland and, 3) the valuable opportunities offered by Polish complementary schools for maintaining and developing connections with HLs and cultures, and 4) implications of the Covid-19 lockdowns in 2020-2021 on teaching and learning in Polish complementary schools. Insightful conclusions are provided in section 7.3, which elevates the findings to a national and international level. Section 7.4 revisits the research questions in light of the data analysed. Section 7.4 addresses the limitations of the present study, and section 7.6 explores its implications and recommendations for policy and practice. Finally, section 7.6 presents the dissemination of this study's findings and suggests future research directions.

7.2 Discussion of Findings

7.2.1 Negotiation of belonging and identity in Polish migrant families in Ireland

After decades of Polish migrants settling around the world (as shown in section 1.3), the knowledge of the Polish language still remains “central to concerns of themselves and others in the community, and an important part of being Polish” (Bifulco & Smojkis, 2023, p. 3). In line with other studies (Connaughton-Crean, 2020; Connaughton-Crean & Ó Duibhir, 2017; Diskin, 2010; Kealy, 2019; Machowska-Kosciak, 2020), data analysed in this research project shows that Polish complementary education remains a component of maintaining and developing Polish migrants’ identity and their attachment to Polishness as it complements family efforts to maintain the Polish language and culture while living in Ireland. As language, identity, and belonging are interconnected (Anderson, 1991), they shape bi/multilingual individuals’ perceptions of self and influence how they socialise in different social groups and contexts (both informal and institutionalised) they participate in (Connaughton-Crean & Ó Duibhir, 2017; Hélot & Ó Laoire, 2011; Machowska-Kosciak, 2020; Ní Dhuinn & Keane, 2023; Paulsrud, et al., 2020). In line with studies by Fishman (1966) and others (Creese, et al., 2006; Creese, 2009; Machowska-Kosciak, 2020; Steenwegen et al., 2022b), this study demonstrated that complementary schools remain crucial sites for bi/multilinguals’ heritage language socialisation and their identity (re)negotiation. Therefore, portrayed in Chapter 5 adaptation of language use across settings, including family, mainstream schools and complementary schools, reflects the dynamics of Polish migrant children’s bi/multicultural identities as they interact with others in diverse contexts. This encourages their opportunities to gain cultural and linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1991) that may ultimately influence their position in both Polish and Irish societies, as well as globally (Connaughton-Crean & Ó Duibhir, 2017; Francis et al., 2009; Patterson, 2019).

In line with other studies on HL maintenance, the findings of this study confirmed that the home environment was seen as the main domain for the transmission of HL to migrant children, with its success depending largely on choices taken by all family members as part of their FLP (Connaughton-Crean, 2020; Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). Data illustrated that the development of a Polish identity occurred mostly at home and was seen as a parental responsibility (Kealy, 2019; Weekly, 2020), while Polish complementary schools were perceived as ‘external tools’, expanding home practices and providing support to FLP

(Schwartz, 2010). The central position of Polish as a home and family language influenced children's attitudes toward it, showing that language beliefs and ideologies are greatly shaped by language use and everyday practices (Spolsky, 2004; Curdt-Christiansen, 2009). For those who spoke Polish predominantly at home, like Max (7 years old), it seemed "like a more important language", in contrast to English, which was spoken less in the home environment and hence perceived as "not that important" (Max, 7 years old, 2nd generation). The significance of Polish was also rooted in the fact that it was often migrant children's first language, passed to them by immediate family members ("taught to me by my mother and my grandmother", Ewa, 7 years old, 2nd generation) which seemed to be another factor strengthening children's emotional attachment to their HL (Song & Wu, 2024). Nonetheless, when conversing with siblings, children employed diverse strategies considering their own and other speakers' language proficiency in different languages and their emotional comfort levels associated with using these languages, as previously shown by Connaughton-Crean (2020). Furthermore, teenagers considered their language choices adaptable and likely to change with evolving circumstances in the future. For instance, Marysia (12 years old, gen. 1.5) said, "if I was 16 or something, we would have started talking in Polish more and more".

Findings also revealed the different roles that learning and using English and Irish played in Polish migrant children in shaping their perceptions of their own identities and belonging. Most interviewed children perceived English as valuable for everyday communication in Ireland and associated it with being a language of schooling in the Irish education system. In line with other studies (Connaughton-Crean, 2020; Machowska-Kosciak, 2020), data in this research project portrays how English remained important for Polish migrant children's bi/multicultural identities and opened a range of opportunities for developing friendships with peers at school and in the neighbourhood, further influencing these children's sense of belonging when growing up in multilingual Ireland. Furthermore, parents and children also saw English as a form of linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1991), broadening migrant children's future educational and professional opportunities in Ireland and abroad (Connaughton-Crean & Ó Duibhir, 2017). For example, Marcel (7 years old, 2nd generation) associated English with success as a YouTuber, his dream future career. Teenagers like Marysia and Mateusz perceived it as a language easier to learn "English, well, I could always learn it faster" (Marysia, 12 years old, gen. 1.5).

Furthermore, children participating in this study presented different views on the Irish language. For instance, Marysia (13 years old, gen. 1.5), encouraged by her mother, recognised its importance for her career plans as a primary school teacher in Ireland. While research on migrants' perceptions of Irish-medium education remains limited (Ní Dhiorbháin, et al., 2023), this study contributes to our current knowledge by providing insight into Damian's reasons for choosing to attend Gaelcholáiste after he completed his English-medium primary school in Ireland. Damian (16 years old, gen. 1.5), who identified himself as Polish, saw his investment (Norton Peirce, 1995) in gaining proficiency in the Irish language and maintaining everyday interactions through Irish in his Irish-medium school setting as a way to gain cultural capital. He believed proficiency in Irish would equip him with a form of symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1991) to comprehend the underlying values and mechanisms in Irish society, such as "the continuing power of what is intangible and symbolic" (Edwards, 2009, p. 251), and, therefore, facilitate navigating his social position. For Weronika (10 years old, 2nd generation), who identified herself as Irish-Polish and learned the Irish language within the English-medium school, proficiency in Irish was not a crucial component of her Irish identity. Her connection to Irishness was instead rooted in Ireland as her birthplace and having Irish ancestors. While the "complex relationship with the Irish language" (Ó hIfearnain, 2009, p.539) experienced by all people living on the island of Ireland (Ó Murchadha, 2021) remains beyond the focus of this study, it should not be omitted when discussing the HL identities of migrant-background children growing up in Ireland (Ní Dhiorbháin, 2023). The presence of the Irish language as the first official language of the State, national heritage, and language of schooling continues to shape the societal and educational contexts of today's Ireland.

Data presented in this study showed that the parental and children's reasons for their investment (Norton Peirce, 1995) in maintaining/developing migrant children's knowledge of the Polish language and their connection to Polishness were linked to migrants' belief in the importance of developing a Polish identity while living abroad. This has been already evident among Polish migrant families across time and space (Bifulco & Smojkis, 2023; Miodunka, 2003; Sękowska, 2010). In line with other studies (Connaughton-Crean & Ó Duibhir, 2024; Migge, 2015), findings demonstrated that families' transnational lifestyle and individuals' conceptualisations of the notion of 'home' represent the emotional attachment

that they attach to geographical places and spaces (Antonsich, 2010). While many studies inquiring about the relationship between geographies, belonging and identity in the context of migration, individuals' constructions and perceptions of the notion of home “remains assumed, more often than interrogated” (Ralph & Staeheli, 2011, p. 517), this project fills this gap by providing insight into the personal dimensions of Polish migrants’ (1st, 2nd, and generation 1.5) conceptualisations of ‘where is home’ and ‘what constitutes home’. The findings of this study revealed, in line with recent studies of migrants’ identity and belonging in the Irish context (Gilmartin & Migge, 2015; Fathi, 2022), that how individual migrants make sense of the concept of home remains complex, temporal, prone to change, and often ambiguous (Krzyżanowski & Wodak, 2008). Findings of this study showed that the complexity of defining ‘home’ was rooted in participants’ dual understandings of home: 1) as a place of current residency, family life and work, which was portrayed by accounts like Honorata’s, who said, “your home has to be where you are, where you are at the moment” (Honorata, mother and teacher in Polish complementary school); and 2) as a place of belonging and place migrants were longing to, e.g. “I know that I will come back [to Poland] one day. I don't feel ‘at home’ here” (Milena, mother). The temporal, emerging nature of conceptualisations of ‘home’ was observed in migrants’ accounts, depicting how their perceptions of home evolved over time due to their personal experiences of migration and significant moments in their lives, such as buying a property and family enlargement. This temporality and constantly evolving definition of home was portrayed by narratives like: “Ten years ago, maybe I would still say [home was] in Poland, but not anymore. It has changed a long time ago” (Honorata, mother and teacher in Polish complementary school), and: “But after some time, it has changed (...) slowly here has become my home” (Ilona, mother and Polish complementary school teacher). Feeling ‘at home’ was further influenced by migrants’ perceptions of feeling safe (Yuval-Davis, 2006), which was portrayed in Ilona’s and Monika’s words: “Here [Ireland] is where I feel safe” (Ilona, mother and teacher in Polish school); “I'm glad I chose a safe country for my children” (Monika, mother). This complex nature of ‘what is home’ can be seen as “entangled between opposite modes: settlement and movement (Boccagni, 2017), lived and idealised notions, a notion of safety and a place to run away from” (Fathi, 2022, p. 1099) which was expressed, for example, by Damian, who said: “as far as the standard of living is concerned, I feel better in Ireland. However, when it

comes to the feeling that I am at home and that freedom, it is in Poland” (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5). This dual nature of perceiving home (Fathi, 2022) often led to contradictions and caused to difficulties in conceptualising home with relation to either home or host country, as portrayed by Damian: “these are two things that clash a little bit and I can’t answer the question of where or which country is my home” (Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5), and Weronika: “I don’t know, because they’re both *like* [emphasis added] my home” (Weronika, 10 years old, 2nd generation). Two adult participants expressed difficulties with seeing any of the country as their ‘home’. For instance, Maria said, “I have a problem with clearly identifying myself with any of the countries” (Maria, mother and teacher in Polish complementary school). As other studies have also shown (Krzyżanowski & Wodak, 2008), the feeling of being ‘in-between’ or not belonging anywhere – not to the home society (anymore), nor to the host one – is often expressed with the use of metaphors. For instance, Berta (mother and complementary school teacher) considered herself a person with no home (“bezdomovec”), who is “on the move”, while Maria used a metaphor suggesting being torn between two countries: “I think that as emigrants, we will always have one leg there and another one here” (Maria, mother and Polish teacher in an Irish post-primary school and a Polish complementary school).

Different perceptions of place-belongingness were evident between children participants born in Poland and in Ireland. The former were more likely to see Poland as their home, and the latter were often lining towards seeing Ireland as their home, while still emphasising the significance of Polish culture through attaching connection to their roots. While some studies showed that children who belong to generation 1.5 renegotiate their identities differently to second generation migrants (Li, 2021; Park & Scott, 2022), findings of this study showed that both second and generation 1.5 children reflected on their identities through the lenses of relationships with close and extended family members from Poland, relationships with peers and friends in Ireland, as well as everyday linguistic and cultural practices in different contexts, which suggest that “migration remains a singular, subjective and unique experience which resists generalisation” (Krzyżanowski & Wodak, 2008, p. 98).

Despite different conceptualisations of the notion of ‘home’, both children and parents expressed a strong willingness to keep and develop their ties to Polishness through

both sustaining transnational bonds with family in Poland and developing strong linguistic and literacy skills in the Polish language. The parental desire to keep Polish ‘alive’ in their family sometimes even felt like ‘an obligation’, which was also evident in the study on Polish parenthood in Ireland (Kealy, 2019). All interviewed parents except one used Polish as their primary language while communicating with their children at home, indicating their belief in its significant role as a family in their FLP (Connaughton-Crean, 2020). This belief was adopted by many participating children who also perceived their Polishness to be strongly linked to the knowledge of the Polish language: “If I didn't know the Polish language, I wouldn't really feel Polish” (Izabela, 11 years old, 2nd generation). Even those whose families used English predominantly as a family language (Barbara and Kornelia) still expressed a desire that children would develop basic knowledge of Polish. Moreover, maintaining the Polish language and sustaining strong family connections with transnational family members in Poland were seen as crucial for developing children’s sense of Polishness, securing transnational social networks and gaining cultural capital that the children could use if they ever decided to return to Poland or pursue educational and professional opportunities there (Connaughton-Crean, 2024; Diskin, 2020; Kealy, 2019). Therefore, for both those having and not having plans for future return migration, Polish complementary schools acted as an external “additional tool” (Marta, mother) that deepens and extends home practices and helps to raise Polish migrant children “to be like *real* [emphasis added] Poles, like patriots” (Milena, mother) and enhances migrant children’s opportunities for gaining cultural and social capital (Nordstrom, 2016, 2019; Patterson, 2019).

Finally, participants perceived migration as a transformative process that offers “an opportunity to look at both countries from a different perspective” (Maria, mother and teacher), further influencing their decision to participate in Polish complementary schooling. Due to the complexities of migration and transnational lifestyle, migrants may struggle with self-identification and deciding what constitutes a ‘home’ (Gilmartin & Migge, 2015; Krzyżanowski & Wodak, 2008). This study further illustrated the intricacies of migrants’ conceptualisations of home and identity. It showed how these two concepts build on multilayered, fluid, and evolving reflections and practices of “using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not 'who we are' or 'where we came from', so much as what we might become, how we have been represented and how

that bears on how we might represent ourselves” (Hall, 1997, p. 4). In their constant search for answers to these questions, migrants deploy their linguistic repertoires and adjust language use across diverse settings and contexts - such as home, mainstream school, and complementary school - which illustrates the dynamics of navigating their positions and negotiating identities in multilingual contexts (Machowska-Kosciak, 2020; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). Therefore, the findings of this study show migrants as “social actors, not as passive victims” (Zontini, 2004, p. 1114) as they (re)negotiate their belongingness and influence social structures within the various power relationships in both their home and host societies, as well as globally, by engaging in HL education to gain and utilise cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991).

7.2.2 Immigrants’ HL and bi/multilingualism as (mis) recognised capital

The analysis of quantitative and qualitative data provided by desk research and semi-guided interviews illustrated both primary and post-primary level pupils of Polish background viewing learning their HL, Polish, as well as foreign languages as an investment (Darvin & Norton, 2015, 2021) in capital (Bourdieu, 1991) broadening their future educational and professional ambitions. This included preparing for taking languages as subjects at their Leaving Certificate, like Damian (16 years old, gen. 1.5), who said, “I will be taking 4 languages, because it is Irish, which we also have as a subject, English as an additional language subject, German and Polish”, as well as planning how to make use of language knowledge in the future, like Izabela, “I also want to learn French and Spanish. I’ll have to know French if I want to read French books. I want to be an illustrator” (Izabela, 11 years old, 2nd generation), “I’m closer to this choice to study political sciences here in Ireland in Dublin. Here, too, knowledge of [foreign] languages will definitely come in handy” (Damian, 16 years old, generation 1.5). The future opportunities provided by knowing foreign languages, as seen by both parents and children, also included possibilities of travelling, exploring other cultures, and socialising with peers of foreign cultural and linguistic backgrounds (see also: Connaughton-Crean, 2020). Participants also acknowledged the benefits of the cross-language transfer (Cummins, 2008, 2017) as they reflected on learning other languages while growing up bi/multilingual. For instance, Damian, who spoke Polish

at home and in a Polish complementary school, made his own decision to start an Irish-medium post-primary school after completing his English-medium primary education. He recognised the benefits of bilingualism for enhancing his learning of the Irish language (“Certainly my experience of learning English from an early age, learning about the culture of this language, the history of this language, helped me a little in learning and simply speaking Irish”, Damian, 16 years old, gen. 1.5).

However, the benefits associated with HL bilingualism seemed to be underestimated within the mainstream context, as previously shown in other studies conducted in Ireland and around the world (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017; Jiménez Raya et al., 2020; Machowska-Kosciak & Barry, 2022; Ní Dhuinn & Keane, 2023). Polish migrant parents and children reported significant differences in approaches towards linguistic diversity and children’s bilingualism by individual class teachers, principals and whole schools, especially in the primary sector. In line with recent studies conducted in Ireland, analysed narratives portrayed an inconsistency between approaches towards pupils’ home languages as recommended in recently introduced policies, such as the Primary Language Curriculum, and actual policy and practice in Irish schools and classrooms, which influence migrant children’s development of identities (Machowska-Kosciak & Barry, 2022; Ní Dhuinn & Keane, 2023). Although some mainstream school teachers showed interest in children’s HLs and cultures, e.g. through exploring international Christmas traditions, celebrating “International Day”, or asking about their complementary education (Baumgart & Farr, 2011), these often seemed to evolve as ‘implicit policies’ (Hélot & Ó Laoire, 2011, p. xiv) based on an individual teacher’s beliefs instead of a whole school systematic approach towards implementation of linguistically inclusive pedagogies (Baumgart & Farr, 2011). Moreover, the interviewed Polish migrant families often found it challenging to balance the maintenance of their HL and supporting children’s development of proficiency in English and Irish (Machowska-Kosciak, 2020; Connaughton-Crean & Ó Duibhir, 2017; Connaughton-Crean, 2020). Tensions emerged between the expectations of Polish migrant parents who valued their children’s bilingualism as a resource and capital and approaches of mainstream schools’ or teachers’ towards their pupils’ home languages (Machowska-Kosciak & Barry, 2022; Ní Dhuinn & Keane, 2023). Consistent with previous research (Hélot & Ó Laoire, 2011), the narratives of many participants (both children and parents) indicated that educators tend to focus mainly on

enhancing migrant children's skills in school languages, English and/or Irish. Furthermore, as desk research revealed, the view of the children's HL(s) as problematic for learning and teaching in the mainstream classroom remains a long-standing issue in the Irish education system, possibly rooted in many schools' history or traditions of taking this approach towards languages (Hélot & Ó Laoire, 2011; UNESCO, 2024). This marginalisation of HLs generated frustration for Polish migrant parents as they felt that the maintenance and development of their children's HLs were misrecognised by the Irish schools, which were viewed as maintaining a "neutral" (Kamila, mother) stand towards migrant children's bilingualism. This illustrates that while the Irish education system is adapting to its society's linguistic and cultural diversity through developing language-inclusive curricula, 'monolingual habitus' (Gogolin, 2002) and 'implicit policies' (Hélot & Ó Laoire, 2011) still shape the mainstream language education experiences and identity development of many migrant pupils growing up in today's multilingual and multicultural Ireland (Baumgart & Farr, 2011; Horn, 2015; Lacey, 2022; O'Rourke, 2011; Wallen & Kelly-Holmes, 2006; Machowska-Kosciak & Barry, 2022). This process is seen here as a consequence of institutionalised patterns of cultural values that limit migrant equal participation in social and educational life in their host country (Fraser, 2007; Valenzuela, 1999) and shapes their identities (Ní Dhuinn & Keane, 2023).

Furthermore, the findings of this study confirmed the crucial role of children, parents, institutions, communities, and teachers' agencies in the creation, implementation, and negotiation of language policies and practices (Hélot & Ó Laoire, 2011; Hornberger, 2002). As portrayed in Chapter 4, community involvement and successful collaboration with mainstream schools and national authorities can bring positive changes, shaping pupils' language learning journeys and supporting the development of their (bi-/multi-) cultural identities in school and beyond. This was illustrated by Polish migrant parents taking the initiative to "educate" their children's teachers by explaining their family language practices and needs (like Maria and Berta), promoting Polish language and culture within their children's mainstream school setting (Berta) and outside, and approaching school principal with an idea to create after school classes for Polish children attending his school. The last initiative seems particularly interesting as it established a Polish language provision (after mainstream school hours) available exclusively for Polish pupils attending one particular primary school. This, considering no official Polish language provision in Irish primary

schools, can be seen as an alternative, and worth further exploration, model to community-based complementary education.

This study has revealed that for migrant children to develop their HL skills, the involvement of their parents is crucial as they mutually co-create the home language context they live in (Smith-Christmas, 2022; Schwartz, 2010). However, during their time at school, it lies in the teacher's hands to implement (on a day-to-day basis) inclusive teaching pedagogies that embrace and promote all languages and cultures that children bring to the classroom. This plays a significant role in shaping how children utilise and perceive their linguistic and cultural resources, ultimately impacting their educational journey and future life (UNESCO, 2024). Hence, teachers' education, building their capacities through development opportunities, research-practice partnerships, and communities of practice should shape the outcome of today's education in multilingual and multicultural contexts (Ní Dhuinn & Keane, 2023). One example of this was illustrated in the findings presented in Chapter 4. As Berta (mother) said, her child was "so lucky!" as his primary school teacher conducted research on immigrant children's language bilingualism. According to Berta's view, this greatly influenced the whole school approach towards recognising and understanding immigrant children's needs associated with their connections to HLs and cultures (Little & Kirwan, 2019).

As desk research revealed, there has been a notable increase in the number of mainstream schools in Ireland offering Polish language education at the post-primary level after integrating Polish into Ireland's post-primary curriculum. This shows that "The state, as a superpower, can reorganise fields, dictate the conversion rate of capitals and, thereby, reinstitute the relations of force among the respective holders of various capitals in the fields" (Çelik, 2021, p. 524). Different stakeholders (the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Dublin, the Department of Education, PPLI, Polish complementary schools and the Polish Educational Society in Ireland) engaged in developing and promoting the Polish provision in Irish post-primary schools. This demonstrates the role of agency at national and community levels in language planning (Hornberger, 2002), and the shift towards seeing HLs as resources, not as problems (Ruiz, 1984).

As a result, integrating Polish into the Irish education system created potential employment opportunities for Polish migrant teachers. Nonetheless, this research project revealed that the Teaching Council's requirements for migrant teachers' registration in Ireland were perceived as "the major obstacle" (Agata, Polish complementary school teacher) due to their complicated and time-consuming nature. This view was previously explored by Mc Daid and Nowlan (2022), who argued that the discouragement that the process results in may be interpreted as a systemic constraint that fails to put enough value on linguistic and cultural capital that many migrant teachers are equipped with due to their third level education obtained in the country of origin, migration background, as well as professional experience in complementary schools with pupils of migrant origin. Such misrecognition (Bourdieu, 1991) contributes to the reproduction of the 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1977) that places migrants in disadvantaged positions in Irish society and education system (Mc Daid & Nowlan, 2022; Machowska-Kosciak & Barry, 2022; Ní Dhuinn & Keane, 2023).

7.2.3 Polish complementary schools catering for the needs of Polish migrants

Consistent with existing research (Liddicoat et al., 2007; Liu & Hoare, 2023; Nordstrom, 2020; Steenwegen et al., 2022a, 2022b), the results of this study illustrate that Polish schools emerged as grass-root initiatives responding to the linguistic and cultural needs of the growing Polish community in Ireland since 2004. The demand and willingness for this type of education is best observed in the rapid increase in the number of Polish complementary schools across Ireland since 2005. The establishment of Polish complementary schools in Ireland aims to support Polish migrant parents in the transmission of the Polish language and culture to their children from an early age (Diskin, 2020; Nestor, 2014; Pedrak, 2019), as such provision was not available in the Irish education system. They result from joint efforts of Polish migrant teachers and parents. The overarching objective of Polish complementary schools to transmit knowledge of the Polish language, history, geography, culture and traditions to the youngest Polish generation was reflected in participating in this study schools' goals and mission statements, presented in Chapter 6. As such, they can be seen as complementary educational settings set up to support the transmission, maintenance and development of HL and culture in order to contribute to the preservation and formation of

cultural/ethnic identities among the young migrant generations (Creese et al., 2006; Diskin, 2020; Kenner & Hickey, 2008; Li Wei, 2006; Liu & Hoare, 2023; Meylor et al., 2010; Pillas, 1992; Strand, 2007; Pedrak, 2019).

The study revealed new insights into the ways in which Polish complementary schools operate in Ireland. Data demonstrated that they are well-organised educational settings with established curricula, cultural events, and collaborations with Polish and Irish organisations. There are two main types of schools: Polish community schools and Polish schools by the Embassy of Poland in Dublin. The former are non-profit organisations, while the latter operate within the framework of the Centre for Development of Polish Education Abroad in Warsaw (ORPEG). The differences in their operations lead to varying perceptions and expectations among parents and pupils. The ORPEG schools are often perceived as prestigious due to their affiliation with Polish state authorities and their similarity to mainstream Polish education (“I’ve heard that there is a higher standard[of teaching] here and also more like [a school] in Poland” – Ola, mother). However, children found them to be more challenging in terms of workload and learning expectations, as evidenced by the experience of Max (9 years old, 2nd generation) who attended both types of Polish complementary schools in Ireland. He expressed a preference for the community school, citing his reasons as, “We were going to the park, played, made things with our hands, painted, and did some learning” while in the Embassy school, it was “only learning” (Max, 9 years old, 2nd generation).

Despite differences between types of Polish complementary schools in Ireland, all these settings delivered their classes outside the mainstream school hours, with seven of the participating schools delivering their teaching on the weekends, while the other 3 schools on weekdays after the mainstream school hours. Complementary education posed a challenge for many pupils of Polish schools as they struggled to balance their learning at complementary schools with other commitments and social life, as evidenced in previous studies (Machowska-Kosciak, 2015; Connaughton-Crean, 2020). To respond to the challenges of Polish complementary teaching and learning, some Polish complementary school teachers adapted their teaching pedagogies to meet the needs of their bi/multilingual and bi/multicultural pupils (see Chapter 6). Findings portrayed some Polish complementary

schools' teachers tailoring their methods by integrating art and language education, facilitating group work, applying interdisciplinary approaches, and encouraging peer discussions about pupils' multiple identities (see also: Cheung, 2015). These practices were received positively by pupils; however, they were based on individual teachers' approaches rather than emerging from the design of Polish complementary education in Ireland, which, in principle, aimed at reflecting and familiarising children with the Polish education system.

In addition, this study portrayed parental engagement in children's complementary schooling – an area of research on complementary schools which, with some exceptions (Li, 2005), has so far received little attention. The findings of this study show that while most of the parents interviewed for this study strongly emphasised their expectation for children's development of literacy skills in the Polish language through complementary schooling, many of them stayed committed to assisting their children with their process of learning in Polish school. Participating parents were involved in their children's learning process in Polish schools through a range of activities they performed, such as collaborative learning, engaging in help with doing homework, and engaging in searching for the best learning strategies for children. While homework has often been perceived as overwhelming by children, it created an opportunity for parents to get involved and follow what their children are currently learning about in Polish schools. Moreover, some migrant parents participating in this study perceived effective teacher-parent communication in Polish schools as the factor strengthening their involvement and cooperation between HL school and the migrant home environment (e.g., through getting involved in Parents' Councils at Polish schools), as previously evidenced by Piqueray, et al. (2016). In line with previous research, this study revealed that parental dedication and efforts went above supporting the learning process and included providing emotional support and encouragement to children, often also engaging in negotiating terms and length of their children's complementary education, as well as solving logistical issues such as transportation to school and back (Connaughton-Crean, 2020). Parents also remained engaged in preparation and participation in cultural and seasonal events organised at Polish schools. Nevertheless, some participants reported feeling that their contributions were frequently overlooked and “not talked about much” (Milena, mother) in discussions surrounding the complementary education of migrant children. These findings

emphasise the need for greater recognition (also in terms of research attention) of parental involvement in complementary education (Cheung, 2015).

Despite parental and teachers' involvement in assisting pupils in their complementary school journeys, this study showed that teenage pupils often reassess their investment (Norton Pierce, 1995) in HL learning as they move to post-primary education in the Irish education system. This may result in teenagers resigning from attending Polish schools due to feeling overwhelmed with the amount of learning, homework, and the complementary school clashing with their social life (Connaughton-Crean, 2020). While some, like Mateusz (12 years old, gen. 1.5), perceived attending a Polish school as limiting their opportunities for socialising with friends and children in the neighbourhood, others, like Damian (16 years old, gen. 1.5), saw it as a place to develop friendships with other children of Polish migrant background. Although close social relationships among migrant children are important for their identity negotiation (Winter & Pauwels, 2006), there has been limited attention to the role of migrants' complementary schooling in terms of friendship formation and social participation (Liu & Hoare, 2023). This study indicates that by offering a range of cultural and national celebrations, Polish schools acted as cultural hubs that nurture migrants', both children's and adults', sense of 'togetherness' and deepen their connections with other members of the Polish migrant community in Ireland (Liu & Hoare, 2023). In this way, Polish complementary schools construct a space where migrants, both children and adults, develop a sense of connection with their school community and with the Polish nation as an 'imagined community' (Anderson, 1991), which further influences their investment into HL learning and maintenance (Darvin & Norton, 2015) and shapes their identities (Hall, 1997).

Furthermore, this research has depicted Polish complementary schools as formally registered organisations that offer paid positions to their teaching staff. The economic and professional advantages associated with working in complementary schools should be acknowledged when investigating the professional identities of heritage language/migrant teachers (Nordstrom, 2020; Wu et al., 2011). This is especially pertinent as this and other studies (McDaid & Nowlan, 2022; Cheung, 2015) have shown that migrant teachers often face challenges in gaining recognition as legitimate educators due to institutional barriers, which then hamper their chances of securing employment within the national Irish education

system. It contributes to strengthening the divide between mainstream and complementary sectors, reflected in the lack of strong collaboration (Hancock & Hancock, 2023), homogeneity among the teaching population in mainstream schools (Sala Rothen & Mc Daid, 2023), and limited opportunities for successful knowledge transfer (Cummins, 2008). This divide has the effect of isolating and separating the linguistic, cultural, and educational experiences of migrant children attending both mainstream and complementary schools in Ireland (Pedrak, 2022). To challenge this situation, we should reimagine language teaching and learning so that different stakeholders (mainstream schools, community organisations, families) are recognised as equal partners contributing to the common goal of long-term multilingualism in education and society (Lo Bianco, 2023).

7.2.4 Implications of Covid-19 on teaching and learning in Polish HL schools

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education is widely acknowledged by all (Sahlberg, 2021, p. 11). However, this study stands as the sole source of insight into the effects of the pandemic and school closures in 2020-2021 on teaching and learning in complementary education settings in Ireland. This underscores the marginalisation of these settings in academia and society, even during a global crisis. With limited knowledge about the situation of complementary schools during the pandemic, the findings of this study will be examined here in light of the existing literature on the pandemic's effects on Polish complementary schooling in the UK and Scotland, and mainstream schooling in Ireland and globally as presented in literature review (Section 2.3.2).

Throughout the lockdowns in March-June 2020 and January 2021-March 2021 in Ireland, both mainstream and complementary schools that used to rent their facilities on weekends remained closed. Between the two national lockdowns and in 2021, schools could teach in person; however, they would be doing so under restrictions and with adherence to COVID-19 safety measures applying at the time. The findings of the present study revealed that during the pandemic period in 2020-2021, Polish complementary schools in Ireland faced similar challenges to mainstream schools nationwide (Bray, et al., 2020; Bray et al., 2021; Burke & Dempsey, 2020; Devitt, et al., 2020; Flynn, et al., 2021; Keane, et al., 2023) and worldwide (UNESCO et al., 2020), such as the implications of transitioning to online

teaching and learning, declining student engagement, and negative effects on students' wellbeing. However, on top of these, Polish complementary schools in Ireland experienced additional difficulties, of which the most important was struggling to maintain their tenancy agreements. Previous studies (e.g. Burman & Miles, 2020, Nordstrom, 2020) had already flagged issues regarding complementary schools renting rooms from mainstream schools. However, this study reveals that maintaining their physical locations - a crucial and fundamental aspect of many complementary schools' existence - was significantly endangered under the pandemic circumstances. As a result of some mainstream schools terminating their tenancy agreements with Polish complementary schools in 2020 and 2021, three of the Polish schools included in the study had to leave their rented facilities immediately and find another location. One Polish school reported to permanently close its doors in 2020 as they struggled to secure an alternative building in the same area or its proximity. Moreover, findings of this study show that while some Polish schools were able to negotiate lower costs of their tenancy agreements during the lockdowns, others reported being unsuccessful and paying the full monthly price for renting the rooms from a mainstream school despite the buildings being unused and closed for several months in 2020 and 2021. In addition, a decrease in the number of pupils enrolled in these settings due to the pandemic, further contributed to structural difficulties and financial hardship that many complementary schools encountered in the years 2020-2021, making it a particularly challenging time for them (Hancock & Hancock, 2023).

While seven of the Polish complementary schools participating in this study transitioned to online teaching in the spring of 2020, the other two decided to shut down temporarily during the pandemic. Those who continued online reported initial challenges related to unfamiliarity with the concept of online teaching and using new technologies to facilitate it (Kim et al., 2021). However, the findings of this study revealed that the great engagement and agency of teachers and principals in Polish complementary schools enhanced the process of transitioning to online provision and fostered the development and implementation of various teaching methods and strategies, as also observed among complementary schools in the UK and Scotland (Young & White, 2021; Hancock & Hancock, 2023). However, unlike in the UK, where Polish schools received support (e.g. in the form of training) from the National Resource Centre for Complementary Education

(NRCSE)²⁰, no such a body exists in Ireland. Polish complementary schools in Ireland reported their teachers exploring new opportunities on an individual basis, relying on knowledge transfer between colleagues within one school setting or learning from collaboration with other complementary schools, which was an evident practice at the time in the study conducted by Young and White (2021). In addition, some schools participating in this project received training opportunities from Poland and from the Polish Educational Society in Ireland. One Polish complementary school reported developing and delivering a series of webinars for complementary schools' teachers aiming at discussing common issues and developing skills crucial for online teaching. Participants could avail of these webinars free of charge during the pandemic time. Such opportunities for sharing knowledge and practices among Polish complementary schools facilitated networking and brought a sense of working together while physically distanced under the lockdown circumstances (Young & White, 2021). Like among Polish complementary schools in the UK (Young & White, 2021), a range of platforms and software were reported by participants of this study to be used by complementary schools' teachers to facilitate teaching and enhance communication with migrant pupils and parents (in addition to e-mail communication) during the pandemic time. These included video meeting software like Zoom, Google Meet, MS Teams, and Skype, developing a school blog/website to upload teaching materials, and Google Classroom and Microsoft OneNote used mainly for homework assignments. Many complementary schools' teachers continued to use this software even after returning to in-person teaching following lockdowns (Hancock & Hancock, 2023).

Polish complementary schools have reported issues related to student engagement during online learning despite the best efforts of teachers. This is particularly evident among older students who have shown limited engagement and interaction with their teachers during online classes. Some parents and teenage pupils, like Milena, Mateusz, and Maria, reported feeling overwhelmed by the workload and assignments during online teaching in their Polish schools, which they found unnecessary under the already stressful circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to this pressure, three teenagers (Mateusz and Maria's two

²⁰ NRCSE was founded in 2006 to support community-led complementary schools in England. It facilitates the Quality Mark for Complementary Education. In April 2022, NRCSE joined the YPF Trust to expand its reach. <http://www.complementaryeducation.org.uk/>

daughters) decided to discontinue their education in Polish complementary schools. While Maria managed to find online private Polish language tutoring for both of her daughters, Mateusz's resignation during the COVID-19 pandemic marked the end of his nearly six years-long journey of Polish complementary schooling for the time being. In addition, participants of the present study highlighted the negative impact of COVID-19 lockdowns and online teaching on social bonds among peers at Polish complementary schools, which were also reported by students in mainstream education in Ireland (Flynn et al., 2021). Furthermore, the relocation of some complementary schools to other buildings (due to losing tenancy agreements with mainstream schools) proved unsuitable and further restricted social interactions. Overall, the implications of COVID-19 significantly impacted the unique atmosphere of community and togetherness in complementary schools, as also noted by Hancock & Hancock (2023).

Moreover, Polish complementary teachers participating in this study reported issues centred around pupils' mental health during the Covid-19 pandemic, which were also evident in mainstream schools in Ireland (Quinn et al., 2021) and globally (Montero-Marin et al., 2023; Rogers et al., 2021; UNESCO et al., 2020). Several concerns reported in this study included pupils' "distancing themselves" (Sabina, Polish complementary school teacher) and developing various "psychological issues", which seemed to be exacerbated by the influence of the pandemic period and lockdowns on pupils' linguistic competencies in their HL. Teachers reported a common decrease in speaking abilities in the Polish language among their students. One Polish migrant parent reported that their daughter suddenly started using only English when communicating with family, while until the pandemic, Polish was the home language used by all family members in this migrant family. Additionally, one teacher reported a student who refused to speak to anyone during the pandemic time and required psychological attention. Pandemic implications on students' access to HL education and on their domestic use of their HLs contributed to these HL learners perceiving themselves as "incompetent" (Polish school 7) upon their return to in-person/hybrid education in Polish complementary schools between the 2020 and 2021 lockdowns.

A notable discovery of this study is the positive impact of the pandemic in increasing awareness of the presence of Polish complementary schools in Ireland and their significant

contribution to the linguistic success of migrant students in the Irish education system. This recognition came about when mainstream post-primary schools reached out to Polish complementary schools for assistance in determining grades for Polish Leaving Certificate students in 2020-2021, based on the students' progress in the Polish complementary schools. However, it is important to highlight that this recognition was limited in scope. Hence, a widespread acknowledgement of Polish complementary schooling across the country is needed to support HL education at all educational levels in Ireland.

7.3 Conclusions

Complementary schools remain an under-explored topic in Ireland. There is a growing body of research conducted worldwide focusing on different aspects of this type of education, such as HL teaching and learning, pupils' identity development, HL socialisation, belonging and community building, the possible influence on pupils' attainment in mainstream education, multilingual pedagogies, leadership, and more. Yet, the fragmentation of current knowledge about complementary schooling worldwide may contribute to common biased perceptions and stereotypes about these schools (Stweenwagen et al., 2022). Therefore, this research has contributed to worldwide research centred around HL education by taking a broader approach at Polish complementary schools, exploring them as educational settings as well as cultural hubs with the potential influence on young migrant pupils' educational trajectories, transnational families' cultural identities and sense of belonging, and professional paths of Polish migrant teachers in Ireland. Moreover, the findings of this study remain embedded in the broader context of recent policy developments in Ireland regarding heritage and foreign language education and the global need to promote social justice and inclusion for democracy (CoE, 2022).

While our 'traditional' understandings of HL/complementary schools have been for long centred around seeing them as "extra schooling organised by and for particular ethnic groups outside of mainstream provision" (Strand 2007: 1), this study shows that their role goes beyond HL maintenance (Maylor et al., 2010; Liu & Hoare, 2023; Steenwegen et al., 2023) and encompasses providing opportunities for HL learners, their parents and migrant teachers to develop connections with their linguistic and cultural heritage, deploy their

linguistic repertoires and exercise agency. In this study, the importance of the cultural component integrated into HL education in Polish complementary schools was juxtaposed with the reported by participants little recognition towards pupils' home languages and cultures in their mainstream schools, showing 1) tension between the parental expectations towards mainstream schools and parental agency in trying to influence their children's mainstream education, 2) complementary schools as bringing educational response to migrant families' needs by placing HL and culture at the heart of their provision. Indeed, despite differences in Polish schools' operational structures, the goals of all Polish complementary schools, as explored in this study, focused greatly on the transmission of the Polish language and culture to the next Polish generations and providing Polish education at all stages, from preschool, throughout primary, to secondary school level. While these purposes remain the same as already discovered in studies on complementary education conducted in the 1990s (Pillas, 1992; Abdelrazak, 1999; Maylor et al., 2010), this study shows that the conception of a Polish complementary school keeps evolving as these schools adapt to the needs of nowadays migrant communities they serve and structures of host societies they operate within. For instance, in comparison to Polish complementary schools in the UK and the US in the 20th century, contemporary Polish complementary schools in Ireland place little attention on teaching religion as a subject. Moreover, the capacities of these schools to adapt to different circumstances were best seen during the COVID-19 lockdowns in 2020-2021 as many of them transitioned to teaching online. Yet, complementary schools' input in students' overall educational journey remains marginalised or undervalued in nowadays superdiverse societies, like in Ireland, perhaps due to traditional superior positions that official languages of schooling have been holding in many European countries' mainstream education systems for centuries (Hélot & Ó Laoire, 2011). Therefore, considering the long-existing debate about languages' place and role in Irish education policy, classrooms, and society, especially in light of recent curriculum changes in the primary education sector that introduce foreign languages to all children in 3rd to 6th classes, it seems crucial to stay conscious about "claiming that merely teaching languages, which is what public systems do, is sufficient for maintenance across generations" (Lo Bianco, 2024, p. 6).

This brings us to the need to understand the socioeconomic position of both heritage and foreign language education within multilingual societies (ibid.) and detect the underlying

mechanisms and ideologies shaping the relationships of power in multilingual contexts. As Pavlenko and Blackledge point out, “languages – and language ideologies – are anything but neutral” (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004, p. 3). In Ireland, the Irish language continues to play a major role in Irish society as an entangled symbolic heritage (Ceallaigh & Dhonnabháin, 2015), and its situation in Irish education remains supported by the financial backing of institutional initiatives and policies that solidify its place within the current landscape (Walsh, 2022). English holds a strong position as the 2nd official language of the state and remains spoken as a first language by a vast majority of Ireland’s inhabitants. Its strong position is further supported by being a *lingua franca* commonly associated with success, travel and educational opportunities in Ireland (Connaughton-Crean, 2020), Europe (Seidlhofer, 2007), and globally (Crystal, 2003). Among foreign languages in Ireland, French keeps the strongest position in Irish education due to its long tradition of being taught as a foreign language in Irish mainstream schools. Nevertheless, recently, the number of pupils taking French Leaving Cert is declining, while many HLs, like Polish, have seen a major increase in uptake over the last 10 years (see Chapter 4). Nevertheless, in the Irish context, as this study has shown, despite the prominence of Polish complementary schooling in Ireland over nearly two decades and the underlying intergenerational Polish community involvement in shaping Polish language provision within and outside the Irish education system, HL education remains marginalised and “societal bilingualism is beginning to change into or compete with multilingualism in an LEP [languages-in-education policy]” (Ó Laoire, 2012, p. 17).

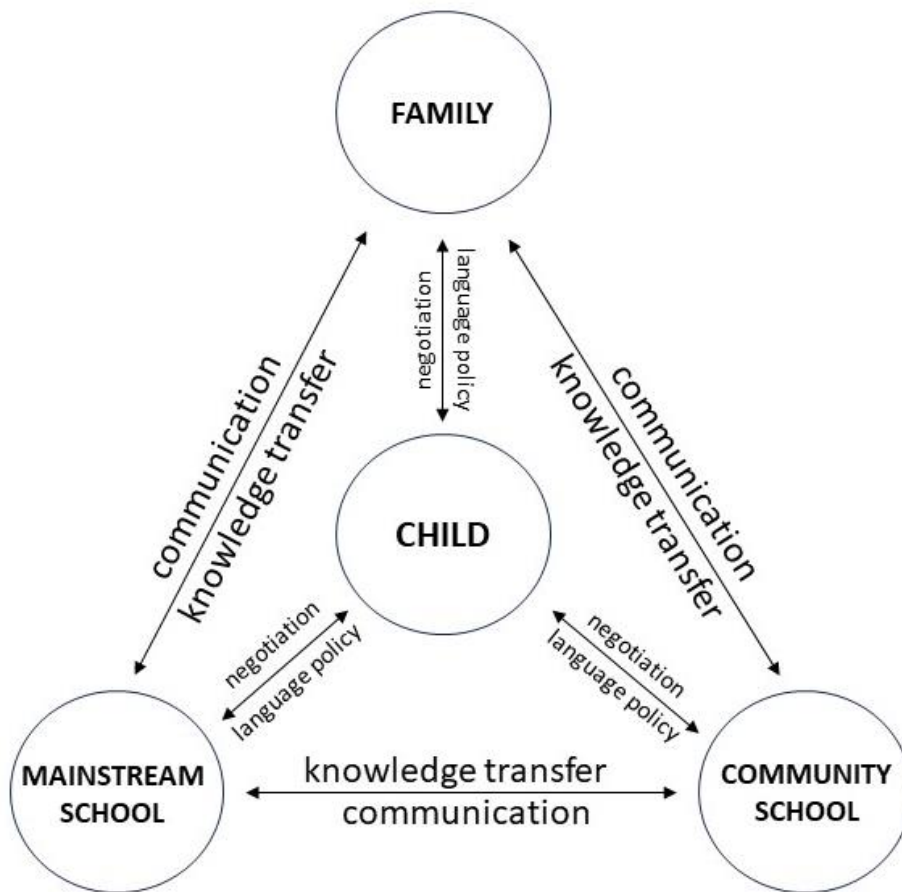
As this study has shown, pupils learn their languages ‘in separation’ due to no communication between mainstream and complementary schools, and little to no implementation of multilingual pedagogies in both settings. While children’s HLs are not often used for educational purposes in their mainstream schooling, English is mostly excluded from Polish complementary education due to its immersion character. In both mainstream and complementary contexts, implementing language-inclusive pedagogies based on translanguaging and knowledge transfer emerged from an individual teacher’s decision rather than from a school’s language policy (Pedrak, 2022). As this division between mainstream and complementary education experience seems to significantly hinder pupils’ opportunities to deploy their full linguistic repertoires and shape their multiple identities, this study proposes to see children’s education across contexts and settings as “a set of

overlapping, distinctive roles and contributions to an overall shared goal” (Lo Bianco, 2023, p. 10). For this purpose, Lo Bianco (ibid.) developed an Integrated Language Planning model emphasising the importance of a shared decision-making process at family, school and community levels to reinforce multilingualism (see Section 2.5.4).

Considering the findings analysed in this project and drawing on Lo Bianco’s model and theoretical framework underpinning this study (Section 2.5), I propose a Child-Centred Collaboration for Language Education model (see Figure 21 below). This model envisions children, parents, teachers, principals, community members, policymakers, and other stakeholders as equal partners working towards a shared objective of establishing sustainable language policies and practices to improve children's overall language education experiences across contexts (school, home, community). It places the child at the core of language education planning and implementation, recognising children as active agents (Smith-Christmas, 2022) able to negotiate language policies and practices in diverse environments (Schwartz, 2024) and to reassess their investment in language learning (Darvin & Norton, 2015) based on their understandings of symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1991) it offers them, and the challenges they face in pursuit of their linguistic and educational goals.

Moreover, the model emphasises the importance of schools, communities, and families, to maintain open communication with children. This ensures that their perspectives are acknowledged and valued in decisions that affect their daily lives (DCYA, 2015), particularly those related to their identity negotiation, such as school language education and the maintenance of their heritage language and culture. Therefore, mainstream schools, community schools, and families should work together to coordinate educational content and teaching methods. This can facilitate knowledge transfer (Cummin, 2008) between different learning environments and ensure that language policies and practices in various settings promote and recognise the value of individual and societal multilingualism in the long term (Lo Bianco, 2023).

Figure 21: Child-Centred Collaboration for Language Education Model



Enhancing collaboration between mainstream and complementary schools can help to overcome common challenges highlighted in this and other studies conducted in Ireland, such as balancing maintenance of HL with learning in mainstream schools (Machowska-Kosciak, 2015; Connaughton-Crean, 2020), challenges with delivering complementary schools' curriculum for Polish students abroad highlighted by Polish complementary school's teachers as it began to be outdated and teaching materials from Poland often not meet the needs of the current bi/multilingual pupils who were born in Ireland, and mainstream school teachers often not knowing how to approach multilingualism in their classroom effectively. While parental reasons for enrolling children in Polish complementary schools usually centre around opportunities for developing literacy skills in their HL which are not available in the mainstream education system and seem challenging to transmit in a home environment,

complementary schools are also perceived as spaces for gaining linguistic and cultural knowledge that can be seen as a symbolic capital enhancing these children's future educational and professional opportunities, as well as for supporting their bi/multicultural identities development and sustaining a sense of connection with Polishness while growing up in Ireland (Machowska-Kosciak, 2015; Connaughton-Crean, 2020). Collaboration between complementary and mainstream sectors could also enhance migrant parents' involvement in their children's educational journey in both contexts.

The *Global Call to Action for Heritage Language Education*, a joint initiative by professionals and researchers engaged in HL education, launched on UNESCO International Mother Language Day in 2024, outlines the global context in which HL teaching and learning occurs, and proposes steps to build positive changes. "A simple step that everyone can take", as pointed out by one of the initiative members, Dr. Sabine Little from Sheffield University, "is being aware of which HL programs are operating in your community" (Anderson et al., 2024). Collaboration between mainstream school settings and complementary schools can start with and include information exchange between principals and teachers in both settings through conversations and meetings, visits in the classrooms, observations and participation in school activities (Lo Bianco, 2023). This could result in collaborative projects developed jointly by mainstream and complementary schools in order to support knowledge transfer and promote opportunities to embrace linguistic and cultural diversity in Ireland on a school, community and national level. This reminds me of educational projects that I have co-authored and co-supervised as the deputy principal at Equal Chances Polish School in Carlow between 2017 and 2019. In particular, the projects "Overcoming Prejudices", "Unity in Diversity", and "Identity through Art" were awarded funding under the Communities Integration Fund implemented in 2017 by the Department of Justice and Equality in Ireland. These projects were aimed at building awareness among local Polish migrant and Irish communities about the need for understanding and promoting linguistic and cultural diversity, supporting social integration, and equipping young generations with knowledge and skills useful to develop and negotiate their dynamic identities in a multicultural Irish society. To deliver their objectives, a range of various workshops for children and meetings for parents were organised, e.g. arts competition and workshop at which participants created posters depicting diversity under the guidance of a professional artist with a Polish migrant

background, theatrical workshops about emotions for youth organised with Bernard Shaw Theatre in Carlow, music workshops organised with Graiguecullen Choir, a talk for parents on raising bilingual children organised with Mother Tongues Ireland, and much more. Another project I was engaged in focused on teaching about inclusion, anti-discrimination and tolerance. The initiative was supported by funding from the Embassy of Poland in Dublin. It included a cycle of workshops for adolescent pupils of the Janusz Korczak Polish School by the Embassy of Poland in Dublin held by Dr Alicja Bartus from the Oświęcim Institute of Human Rights (Oświęcimski Instytut Praw Człowieka). Topic covered, among others, exploring the lives of the Righteous Among the Nations who gave testimony of courage and humanity during World War II, understanding mechanisms of hate and discrimination, learning about Auschwitz in light of other genocides in the XX century in order to raise awareness about the importance of developing tolerance and inclusion not only in times of global crisis, like wars and pandemics, but also on a daily basis, in local schools and neighbourhoods. This project was delivered through the medium of Polish, but presentation slides and movies have captions in English to enhance pupils' understanding of discussed topics. I imagine such projects would be of great benefit to the greater Irish post-primary schools population if organised in collaboration with mainstream schools. As many Polish complementary schools and Irish mainstream schools already celebrate international days promoting languages and cultures, diversity and inclusion, such as Polish Bilingual Day, International Mother Language Day, Children's Book Day, St. Patrick's Day etc., these opportunities could be used to develop joint projects on a local scale (e.g. town, city, county). What is crucial is the willingness for collaboration between both complementary and mainstream school settings, as well as the wide promotion of such initiatives among local communities. Another step would be collaboration with national and international organisations to support knowledge transfer between professionals working in mainstream and complementary school sectors, e.g. through the organisation of workshops and conferences, such as the Mother Tongues Conference on HL Education in Ireland which I had a chance to co-organised between 2018 and 2020. It aimed at providing space for practitioners, researchers, policymakers and all involved in HL education to discuss experiences and share ideas. From this collaboration at the 2020 edition of the Mother Tongues Conference organised in collaboration with Móðurmál – the Association on

Bilingualism in Iceland, another initiative emerged: FOHLC Europe (Forum of HL Coalitions in Europe) that aims to support HL programmes and complementary schools teaching any HLs across Europe.

Opportunities for knowledge and experience exchange between schools, academia and community could bring possibilities for developing teaching materials for both mainstream and complementary schools that would draw on empowering multilingual pedagogies (Paulsrud et al., 2017; Hélot & Ó Laoire, 2011), such as translanguaging (Garcia & Lei Wei, 2015), and include knowledge transfer (Cummins 2000, 2008) between home, mainstream and complementary school. To reflect and support the dynamics of HL education such materials should consider migrant parents' and children's cultural and linguistic views and experiences as a resource for building a deeper understanding of why and how "the relationship between first, second and foreign language learning should be made explicit not just in the curriculum but in classroom practice" (Little, 2003, p. 6). As this study has shown, pupils, parents, and children of a migrant background act as agents who stay involved and responsive in making decisions to create changes and influence language teaching and children's learning trajectories. This has been observed here by parents' involvement with the promotion of bilingualism in mainstream schools of their children, Polish migrant teachers collaborating with the Embassy of Poland to promote the inclusion of Polish as a subject at the Irish post-primary level mainstream education, as well as Polish complementary schools' principals and teachers responding to disruption of Covid-19 lockdowns and one school developing widely accessible cycle of webinars to support teaching Polish online and the use of new technologies in teaching (see also: Hancock & Hancock, 2023).

Moreover, between 2020 and 2023, teachers from Polish complementary schools in Ireland, Spain, Belgium, Great Britain, Lithuania and the Netherlands, under the coordination of the Municipal Methodological Centre in Bialystok (Poland) developed and participated in the project "Polish school abroad. A competent teacher and a creative student as the key to success" which was co-financed by the European Union under the Erasmus+ program. During the project, teachers created a range of interactive materials supporting creative teaching in complementary schools. These materials were then uploaded on the project

website²¹ and remain widely accessible to Polish complementary schools around the world. Similarly, in 2019, the "Wspólnota Polska" Association located in Poland, together with the Polish Educational Society in Ireland, created an educational package titled "Emi i Maks w polskiej szkole" ["Emi and Maks in a Polish school"] funded by the Senate of the Republic of Poland, which consists of a textbook, exercises for pupils, and a guide for teachers (both printed and freely accessible online)²². To support the teaching of the Polish language and culture to early primary school-age pupils of Polish background growing up in Ireland, this publication was written by several teachers from Polish complementary schools in Ireland, whose lived experience from the complementary school classroom and knowledge of Polish migrant children's educational needs made the book tailored to these pupils' needs. Each lesson consists of teaching the Polish language and introducing a cultural element, which, in addition to important days for Poland, such as Poland's Independence Day, also shows holidays celebrated in Europe and around the world, e.g. European Union Day and International Earth Day. This collaboration emphasises the role of the Polish complementary school teacher, who "does not only play the role of a guide to Polish culture but also acts as a mentor encouraging pupils to discover the richness of multilingualism and multiculturalism, looking for similarities and differences between Polish and Irish culture, and thus supporting pupils in shaping a sense of identity"

While these projects were held without collaboration with mainstream education, they show Polish migrant teachers' agency and present opportunities that could be explored even further if collaboration between mainstream and complementary schools was well-established in Ireland. Such initiatives could enhance interactions between teachers and students in both mainstream and complementary settings and create more opportunities for linking teaching programmes in both settings to pupils' (individual and collective) experiences by using identity texts, language portraits, developing syncretic curricula (Cummins & Eager, 2010; Kenner & Ruby, 2013) and drawing on migrant teacher's, parents' and children's lived experiences as *funds of knowledge* (Li Wei, 2014). It also requires acknowledging bilingualism and identity negotiation as dynamic and constantly 'in the process' influenced by power relationships, policy, social norms and networks, yet shaped by

²¹ Available on: <https://epolonia2020.modm.edu.pl/>

²² Available on: <http://wspolnotapolska.org.pl/emimaks/>

the learner's agency and autonomy. This study contributes to seeing complementary schools' pupils as social agents that influence their language learning trajectories as they engage in adapting language use and engaging in language mediation across settings. It brings to the fore the need to go beyond the social dimension of language use and learning in the classroom. As pointed out by North and Piccardo (2016), mediation "integrates and goes further than the co-construction of meaning by underlining the constant link between the social and individual dimensions in language use and language learning" (p. 5). It enables communication beyond linguistic and cultural barriers and relies on collaboration in (co)constructing new meanings, hence can further shape interactions in both mainstream and complementary classrooms and challenge the multilingual habitus and 'coercive power relations' in schools where languages other than the language of schooling remain silenced (Cummins, 2000).

Finally, to gain a broader, global perspective on community education, this study proposes considering them also in light of linguistic human rights and social justice. This lens allows us to view complementary schools as "safe havens", not only safeguarding the education rights of migrant children in their mother tongues but also instilling them with a long-term interest in language education for democracy (CoE, 2022). Opportunities provided by complementary education reach beyond promoting migrant pupils' HL maintenance (Liu & Hoare, 2023). By equipping migrant pupils with cultural and linguistic capital, providing them with space for developing multiple identities, and shaping their educational trajectories, complementary schools contribute to the comprehensive and harmonious development of their pupils based on values and norms that further shape their participation in today's diverse European societies and influence their global citizenship. They contribute to linguistic and cultural diversity, social inclusion, and democracy in their host countries by promoting the value of HL development and multilingual education. As "spaces of hope" (Lamb, 2020), these schools have "the potential to play a role in shifting the monolingual habitus beyond their communities, co-creating a more linguistically inclusive society" (p. 99). Yet, low societal and political awareness about the value and contribution of complementary schooling leaves their provision in marginalised positions, especially visible during the COVID-19 pandemic, and hence keeps their potential audience unaware of opportunities awaiting. The results of this research project highlight the importance of continuing the

discussion on (mis)recognition of resources that linguistic and cultural diversity brings to foreign and HL education, both in Ireland and globally. Communication and collaboration at school, community, national and international levels remain crucial to challenge monolingual ideologies, foster inclusivity, and facilitate the change towards equitable educational systems that respond to diverse students' needs and allow them to leverage their full potential in the classroom and beyond.

7.4 Research Questions Revisited

7.4.1 Research Question 1

Considering recent developments in Ireland's national language and education policies, what are the goals, designs, and perceptions of Polish complementary schools in Ireland among Polish migrant pupils, parents, and teachers?

With the growth of the Polish community in Ireland due to Poland's becoming the European Union's member state, Polish complementary schools in Ireland began to emerge in 2005 as grassroots initiatives. Their main goal was to provide Polish language, history and geography education at all levels (pre-primary, primary, secondary) as it was unavailable within the Irish mainstream schooling at the time. At the time of data collection (2021), there were 52 Polish complementary schools operating across the country. Findings of this study demonstrated that they remain well-organised educational settings with a curriculum and teaching programmes they follow, planned cultural events over each school year, and established collaboration links with various Polish and Irish organisations. The study observed two main types of Polish complementary schools in Ireland: Polish community schools and Polish Schools by the Embassy of Poland in Dublin (located in Dublin, Limerick, Waterford, Cork and Cavan). Polish community schools are set up by members of the Polish migrant community, they operate as non-for-profit organisations (associations, charities or private companies), remain self-funded (by collecting fees or donations), and have more freedom in terms of what they teach and how they organise their teaching. They are often part of umbrella organisations, such as the Polish Educational Society in Ireland, which provide them with opportunities for collaboration and teachers' professional development. Polish schools by the Embassy of Poland operate within the organisational framework of the Centre

for Development of Polish Education Abroad (ORPEG) located in Warsaw, they are fully funded from the state budget of Poland and are obliged to implement the curriculum for Polish complementary schools issued by the Department of Education in Poland and to adjust their operating ways to the structures of the Polish education system. These operational differences between Polish community schools and so-called ‘Embassy schools’ were observed to remain the source of a richness of perceptions, expectations, and experiences related to these schools’ programmes and teaching provision among Polish migrant parents and children who participated in this study. Parents often perceived Polish schools operating under the ORPEG structures (Polish schools by the Embassy of Poland) as meeting their expectations of more prestigious and traditional Polish educational settings, due to their affiliation to Polish state authorities and the similarities to the mainstream education in Poland. Children often preferred a less conservative approach to education, based on fun, interaction, and hands-on learning. Some teachers at Polish complementary schools demonstrated agency in their attempts to tailor their teaching approaches to meet the diverse linguistic and educational needs of their pupils.

Due to the joint efforts of the Polish Educational Society, the Embassy of Poland in Dublin, and the Irish Department of Education, Polish has been introduced to Irish mainstream post-primary schools firstly as a Junior Cycle short course, and then in 2020, it was integrated as a Senior Cycle curricular language as part of the diversification of foreign language provision in education outlined in the *Languages Connect* strategy. As a result, in 2022, Polish was taught in nearly a hundred mainstream secondary schools across the country. While some children participating in this study viewed this as a promising opportunity to prepare for the Polish Leaving Certificate examination within their regular school hours (if offered there), others said that if they were to learn Polish as a subject in their Irish mainstream school, they would continue to attend Polish complementary schooling because of the community spirit and the unique atmosphere of Polishness there.

For many Polish teachers, complementary schools provided the only opportunity to continue their professional careers due to the bureaucracy associated with migrant teachers’ registration with the Teaching Council in Ireland, which is required to enter the teaching profession in the Irish mainstream school sector.

7.4.2 Research Question 2

In light of migrants' perspectives on 'home' and belonging, what are the reasons behind participation in Polish complementary education, and what advantages and challenges are associated with involvement in HL education in Ireland? (Do participants' viewpoints align or conflict with one another)?

This study uncovered a wide range of perspectives on the concept of 'home' and belonging among Polish migrant children and adults in Ireland. When considering their sense of belonging, children often took into account their parents' place of origin, the location of extended family members, and their current circumstances related to family life, social connections, and education. In interviews, parents in the study often weighed factors such as family life, length of time living in Ireland, job satisfaction, social ties in both countries and their intentions (or lack thereof) to return to Poland. Some participants saw Poland as their home despite living in Ireland for a long time, while others regarded Ireland as their home due to established friendships, property ownership, and professional fulfilment. Interestingly, some interviewees expressed feeling torn between two places, finding it difficult to determine where or what 'home' really is, or seeing themselves as a person with 'no home'.

Despite variations in the ways 'home' was defined, Polish migrant parents were strongly committed to ensuring that their children maintained a connection to their Polish linguistic and cultural heritage. They believed that developing oral and literacy skills in the Polish language was essential for their children's sense of Polish identity, maintaining family ties in Poland, and opening up future educational and career opportunities in Poland (or elsewhere). These elements of heritage language schooling played a fundamental role in decisions about investment in HL complementary schooling and were viewed as significant by both parents and children for gaining a deeper understanding of children's roots, as well as for their familiarisation with the Polish education system, which was particularly relevant for those considering the possibility of returning to Poland.

Additional advantages of attending heritage language (HL) schools included access to the Polish school library, involvement in various social and cultural activities, and opportunities to form friendships with other children from Polish backgrounds. However, the study found that many Polish supplementary school students of all ages find the educational

experience demanding. The perceived downsides of attending Polish schools were related mainly to academic pressure from the workload and increased as children progressed to higher stages of Polish complementary schools. Teenagers complained about the time required to complete homework, especially after transitioning to secondary school in the Irish educational system, which necessitated more time for preparation for regular schooling. They also reported difficulties with juggling their commitment to Polish school with their personal priorities as they mature, leading them to focus on spending time with peers rather than additional days of structured learning in a school setting. These factors were recognised as contributors to students' choices to discontinue their education at Polish supplementary schools.

Parents expressed that effective communication with teachers in Polish schools strengthened their involvement and collaboration between the Polish complementary school and the home environment. They demonstrated dedication and effort in supporting their children's learning at Polish schools by providing emotional support and encouragement at home. Additionally, they often negotiated terms and duration of complementary education with their children, as well as dealt with logistical issues such as transportation to and from school. Some parents felt that their contributions were often overlooked in discussions regarding the complementary education of migrant children.

Most of the teachers interviewed in this study also had their own children attending Polish complementary schools. This demonstrates how these organisations provided both professional opportunities for adults and educational opportunities for children. However, the lack of wider recognition for complementary school teachers' work (many of whom worked there in addition to their full-time jobs) and their relatively low earnings due to limited working hours in complementary schools often posed challenges for Polish schools in retaining their staff or attracting new teachers.

7.4.3 Research Question 3

Considering language beliefs and practices in Polish migrant families, how may attending Polish complementary schooling influence the maintenance and development of HL and the (re)negotiation of identities among Polish migrant pupils, parents, and teachers in Ireland?

The rich history of Polish complementary schooling worldwide has underscored the ongoing significance of preserving the Polish language and culture for members of the Polish community, as well as for upholding a strong sense of Polish identity among young migrant generations. This study has delved into the importance of complementary Polish education in maintaining the heritage language and culture within Polish migrant families in Ireland. The findings revealed that supplementary schools play an important role in supporting the preservation of the heritage language through immersive education, enabling Polish children to develop their language skills while nurturing their multilingual identities through language socialisation and cultural integration within the Polish school community.

The study's findings illustrated the home environment as the primary domain for transmitting HL and cultural traditions to migrant children. Polish families implemented various strategies to support this, including engaging in everyday conversations in Polish, reading Polish books together, celebrating Polish seasonal traditions, and playing games in multiple languages. While children adapted their language use depending on the context and speaker, Polish held a strong position as the language of communication between parents and children. The prominent role of Polish as a family language influenced children's attitudes toward it, indicating that their language beliefs and ideologies were significantly influenced by language use and everyday practices at home. Parents and teachers viewed Polish complementary schools as an external tool that expanded home practices and supported FLP.

Moreover, this study has played a crucial role in HL education research by taking a holistic approach to Polish complementary schools. It explored these schools not only as places of HL learning but also as cultural hubs with the potential to impact the socialisation of young migrant generations, the sense of belonging in transnational families, and the professional identities of Polish migrant teachers in Ireland. The study indicates that by organising various cultural and national events, Polish schools serve as cultural centres that foster a sense of unity and deepen connections within the Polish migrant community in Ireland for both children and adults. In this way, Polish complementary schools create a safe environment where migrants can negotiate a sense of belonging with their local Polish migrant community and with the Polish nation. This, as shown in this study, may further influence their commitment to heritage language learning and shape their identities.

However, the efficacy of complementary education appeared to be greatly influenced by the decisions made by all family members as active agents co-creating their context and shaped through their involvement in Polish complementary education when at home. This included conversations that encourage children's participation in HL schools, parental engagement in their children's education in these schools, and children's commitment to learning. Furthermore, the study also showed that the maintenance of heritage language and the negotiation of cultural identity are influenced within larger educational and social contexts. The complementary education's contribution to HL maintenance and development of multicultural identities in migrant children may be enhanced or constrained by teaching methods in both complementary and mainstream school settings, as well as by implicit and explicit language policies, both locally and nationally.

7.4.4 Research Question 4

What were the implications of COVID-19 on teaching and learning in Polish complementary schools in Ireland during 2020-2021?

The study provided a unique perspective on the impact of the pandemic and school closures in 2020-2021 on teaching and learning in Polish complementary education settings in Ireland. It stands as the sole source of such insight. The findings revealed that during the pandemic, Polish complementary schools in Ireland faced challenges similar to mainstream schools, including transitioning to online teaching, declining student engagement, and negative effects on students' wellbeing. In addition, Polish schools experienced difficulties in maintaining their tenancy agreements, with some temporarily closing or relocating and others transitioning to online provision. All schools reported a decrease in the number of enrolled pupils due to the pandemic, leading to structural and financial hardships.

Many Polish schools that shifted to online teaching initially faced the challenge of adapting to this new online environment. However, the commitment and proactive involvement of teachers and school leaders in Polish complementary schools played a key role in supporting the transition to online learning. They actively promoted the adoption of diverse teaching approaches by facilitating the exchange of knowledge and best practices among schools, thereby fostering a sense of community among complementary schools'

teachers. Despite these efforts, several Polish complementary teachers have encountered obstacles in engaging students in online learning, especially among older students who have shown limited interaction and participation in virtual classes. In addition, Polish complementary teachers who took part in this study mentioned concerns related to students' mental health resulting from reduced social interactions during online teaching and the absence of in-person school events. These factors have had a significant impact on the unique sense of community and togetherness in Polish complementary schools.

Furthermore, this study made a significant discovery regarding the COVID-19 pandemic's positive influence on awareness about Polish complementary schools in Ireland when mainstream post-primary schools sought the assistance of Polish complementary schools in assessing grades for Polish Leaving Certificate students in 2020-2021. Nevertheless, this recognition was limited in scope, highlighting the marginalised position of these complementary schools in Irish society during the global COVID-19 crisis.

7.5 Limitations of the Study

As this study was concerned with the perceived influence of attending Polish complementary schools on HL maintenance/development and identity(re)negotiation among Polish migrant children and their families residing in Ireland, all participants of the study were involved in participation in these schools. Therefore, to fit within the PhD time framework and avoid collecting too much data, samples from a wider population, including those Polish migrant families who chose not to be involved in complementary schooling, were not included. Such a study was conducted recently in the UK context in partnership with the Newham Partnership for Complementary Education (Husain & Lim, 2023). A much larger sample than in this research project was collected (the UK study recruited 153 pupils) as it received funding from the Economic and Social Research Council (UK) and involved a team of researchers and a research assistant engaged in fieldwork.

In addition, this study has identified several related issues, such as teaching methodologies in complementary schools and the professional development of complementary teachers. However, the investigation of these issues was limited as they were only considered relevant to the scope of this project, which focused on the influence of

complementary schooling on maintaining HL and cultural identity among Polish migrant pupils and their families.

Furthermore, this research project applied a cross-sectional design, meaning that data was collected at a single point in time. While the findings offer valuable insights into the experiences and perceptions of migrant pupils, parents, and teachers in complementary schools, further research is needed to interview those who completed or discontinued their participation.

Finally, while this study shed light on the marginal position of Polish complementary schools in Irish society, it was beyond the scope of the present research project to investigate underlying language ideologies of larger migrant and native populations in Ireland.

7.6 Implications and Recommendations for Policy and Practice

This study offers a deep insight into the influence of Polish complementary schooling on migrant children's language maintenance, development and use, agency, investment and identity construction and negotiation across different contexts, such as home environment, mainstream school and complementary school. The findings are of great value to teachers and principals in both mainstream and complementary schools, migrant communities, associations and institutions dealing with migration, education, and heritage, policymakers, and academics involved in HL education in Ireland and globally. Yet, there is an urgent need for comprehensive research on complementary schooling in Ireland. To foster discussion regarding HL(s) role and position in policies, research, and pedagogies, it is essential to include children's perspectives on how the interplay of language, identity and power in multilingual contexts may either hinder their opportunities to use their multilingual repertoires and develop bi-/multicultural identities or empower them and equip them with confidence and joy towards using foreign/home languages in the school settings and beyond. As Lo Bianco (2024) points out, "What really needs to happen are conversations, respectful conversations with the kids and giving them roles" (p. 19). This can be done by providing children with opportunities for co-shaping interactions, negotiating their identities, discussing their participation and perceptions of diverse pedagogies and allowing them to shape their in-classroom experience, both in the mainstream and complementary school

contexts, as well as by developing a body of research delving into children's lived experiences and agency. It is crucial to approach the linguistic and cultural knowledge of children with creativity in order to unlock the valuable resources they bring to Irish schools, communities, and society at large. Therefore, this study strongly recommends a wider adoption of language portraits as a research method and educational tool (Busch, 2018; Tabaro Soares et al., 2020) in multilingual and educational contexts that involve migrant and refugee children.

As highlighted in the conclusions, a sustainable model of communication and collaboration between mainstream and community schools must be developed to support all students' overall language education and provide them with rich opportunities in school and beyond. This responsibility should not be placed solely on individual academics, school principals or teachers, or community members, but it should be developed as a collaborative effort coordinated by a team of researchers (Lo Bianco, 2024) and tied to national languages in education strategies in Ireland. Therefore, this study recommends establishing a research and advisory body on Heritage and Community Language Education in Ireland, like the National Resource Centre for Complementary Education in the UK or the Sydney Institute for Community Languages Education. This body, ideally funded from the state budget or operating within structures of a higher education institution, could focus on the following areas, among others, in the Irish context:

- investigating possible areas of HL education development to inform policy and practice,
- facilitating collaboration between stakeholders at local, national and international levels,
- developing teaching materials, resources and CPD training for complementary and mainstream teachers,
- advocating for HL education, inclusion and equity through social media and networking,
- coordinating research-based activities at a regional and national scale,

- co-organising regular conferences and meeting to facilitate networking for all parties involved in HL education, including teachers, parents' associations, and policymakers.

There is a need to re-think HL education in Ireland in terms of providing recognition for participating students. As highlighted in this and other studies (Machowska-Kosciak, 2015; Connaughton-Crean, 2020), low societal prestige of HLs along with challenges of workload associated with HL complementary education often led pupils to discontinue their educational journey in these settings, especially when they transit to post-primary education. Therefore, it is crucial to explore ways of acknowledging pupils' participation in complementary education at primary school level. For instance, by incorporating information about it into the end-of-year reports that children receive in their mainstream schools. Moreover, resources and funding should be allocated by the Irish government to support community schooling and elevate the status of heritage and foreign languages across the education system and society as a whole. For this, the government should consider providing long-term funding for supporting collaboration between mainstream as complementary sectors. Offering complementary schools facilities free of charge would be another important step towards recognizing the value of plurilingualism and multilingual learners' efforts to gain linguistic and cultural capital which are crucial for democracy and the economy, not only in Ireland, but also globally.

Moreover, with the increasing linguistic diversity in Irish classrooms and the shortage of foreign language teachers in the state (Bruen, 2023), the pressure to find ways to make the teaching profession more accessible for migrant teachers in Ireland is now more visible than ever. Therefore, "the challenge of promoting intercultural education not only requires a change in the ethos and culture of schools, but also a rethink of management, administration and resourcing, which, to date, have been structured and organised to suit the dominant culture" (Wallen & Kelly-Holmes, 2006, p. 143). Therefore, allowing greater diversification among the body of teachers in Ireland, would strengthen the role of foreign and HLs in Irish society and education. To achieve this, Teaching Council requirements for migrant teachers can be updated and offering additional support to them, for instance by developing courses

like the Migrant Teacher Project held at Marino Institute of Education, which aims at would enabling more migrant teachers to learn about the Irish system and secure jobs in public schools. This could facilitate current language education provision not only in terms of greater availability of HL courses across the country, but also in terms of knowledge and experience exchange between mainstream and HL teachers. In fact, many of these teachers possess extensive teaching qualifications and experience, not only from their home country but also from teaching pupils of migrant background in complementary schools throughout Ireland. Acknowledging their expertise as an asset could be beneficial to the development of best practices in increasingly diverse Irish classrooms throughout the country.

National research and strategies should strongly encourage collaboration between the mainstream and community sectors, particularly with complementary schools as they play a vital role in migrant children's growth through providing opportunities for socialisation, education in their mother tongues, HL maintenance/development, fostering a sense of belonging, contributing to these children's wellbeing (Liu & Hoare, 2023). As such, they hold a strong potential to help challenge racism and discrimination within mainstream education and wider society (ibid.). Therefore, initiatives and organisations that facilitate dialogue and collaboration between migrant communities and wider society should receive financial support from the national governments of both host and home countries of various ethnic groups residing in Ireland.

7.7 Dissemination of Findings and Future Research Directions

The findings of this research project have been widely disseminated throughout the project. Dissemination channels included conference papers, posters, and publications (see details in Appendix W). Some of the topics covered included, among others, an overview of the situation of Polish complementary schooling, pupils' identity, Polish migrant teachers' professional trajectories, reasons behind participation and benefits, and using language portraits in research and education.

Various research areas could be explored in the context of complementary schools in Ireland and globally. For instance, future studies could delve deeper into these schools' pedagogical and assessment approaches. By doing so, we could investigate their potential

influence on pupils' attainment, engagement, and overall wellbeing in these settings. Additionally, it would be helpful to explore the role of funds of knowledge in language education planning in complementary schools. This would enable us to understand how these schools can leverage students' cultural backgrounds and experiences to enhance their language learning and development.

Another area of interest is the difference between parental expectations and aspirations, their involvement in HL schools, and how these factors impact students' achievement. It would be valuable to explore how parents perceive their role in supporting their children's learning and how their expectations and aspirations influence their children's motivation, engagement, and academic success. Moreover, it would also be useful to investigate the impact of complementary school teachers' identities on students' learning experiences.

Other areas that could be explored in future research include possible collaboration between complementary and mainstream education and possibilities brought by digital technologies in learning and teaching, such as HL online and hybrid classes. This could involve exploring how they can possibly enhance students' HL learning journeys. Longitudinal studies could also provide valuable insights into the experiences of migrant teachers and pupils who have completed or discontinued their complementary education. By examining the factors that influence their decision to transition from complementary to mainstream education or leave complementary schools, we can identify ways in which complementary schools may support students' long-term educational and career aspirations.

Lastly, future studies could investigate how complementary schools are perceived by various stakeholders, such as primary and post-primary students, teachers, and principals in the Irish education system, local politicians, national policymakers, and Irish society at large. By understanding the perceptions and attitudes of these stakeholders, we can identify ways in which complementary schools can better integrate into the wider education system and contribute to the development of a more inclusive and culturally responsive education system nationally.

List of References

- Abdelrazak, M. (1999). Towards More Effective Supplementary and Mother-tongue Schools: Guidelines. Resource Unit for supplementary and mother-tongue schools.
- Anderson, B. (1991). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origins and spread of nationalism* (Rev. ed.). Peter Lang Verlag.
- Anderson, J., Argyri, E., Ashtari, N., Cannizzaro, G., Egnatz, L., Emilsson Peskova, R., Hristozova, M., Little, S., Mehmedbegovic-Smith, D., Nahodilova, J., Paulovicova, N., & Wahlin, M. (2024). Global Call for Action for Heritage Language Education. *Heritage Language Global Think Tank*. <https://menntavisindastofnun.hi.is/is/global-call-hle>
- Andoh-Arthur, J. (2019). *Gatekeepers in qualitative research*. SAGE Publications.
- Antonsich, M. (2010). Searching for Belonging – An Analytical Framework. *Geography Compass*, 4(6), 644-659. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-8198.2009.00317.x>
- Ardasheva, Y., Tretter, T.R. and Kinny, M. (2012). English Language Learners and Academic Achievement: Revisiting the Threshold Hypothesis. *Language Learning*, 62, 769-812.
- Babbie, E. (2008). *The basics of social research* (4th ed.). Thomson Wadsworth.
- Baker, C. (2011). *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*. (5th Edition). Multilingual Matters.
- Barnes, J., Conrad, K., Demont-Heinrich, C., Graziano, M., Kowalski, D., Neufeld, J., Zamora, J., & Palmquist, M. (1994-2024). *Generalizability and Transferability*. The WAC Clearinghouse. <https://wac.colostate.edu/repository/writing/guides/>.
- Bassot, B. (2020). *The Research Journal. A Reflective Tool for Your First Independent Research Project*. Policy Press.
- Batardière, M., Berthaud, S., Ćatibušić, B., and Flynn, C. (2023). Language teaching and learning in Ireland: 2012–2021. *Language Teaching*, 56(1), 41–72.
- Baumgart, J. & Farr, F. (2011). Polish teenagers' integration into Irish secondary schools: language, culture, and support systems. In Egger, S. & McDonagh, J. (Eds.), *Polish–Irish encounters in the Old and New Europe* (pp. 179–196). Peter Lang.
- Beacco, J.C. (2005). *Languages and Language Repertoires: Plurilingualism as a way of life in Europe*. Language Policy Division, Council of Europe.
- Beacco, J.C., Byram, M. (2007). *From linguistic diversity to plurilingual education: guide for the development of language education policies in Europe*. Language Policy Division, Council of Europe.
- Beacco, J.C., Byram, M., Cavalli, M., Coste, D., Egli Cuenat, M., Goullier, F., Panthier, J. (2016b). *Guide for the development and implementation of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education*. Education Policy Division, Council of Europe.
- Beacco, J.C., Fleming, M., Goullier, F., Thürmann, E., Vollmer, H. (2016a). *A Handbook for Curriculum Development and Teacher Training. The Language Dimension in All Subjects*. Council of Europe Publishing.

- Bednarowska, Z. (2015). Desk research : wykorzystanie potencjału danych zastanych w prowadzeniu badań marketingowych i społecznych [Desk research : exploiting the potential of secondary data in market and social research]. *Marketing i Rynek*, 7, 18–26. <http://ruj.uj.edu.pl/xmlui/handle/item/26669>
- Bekhet, A. K., & Zauszniewski, J. A. (2012). Methodological triangulation: An approach to understanding data. *Nurse Research*, 20(2), 40-43. <https://doi.org/10.7748/nr2012.11.20.2.40.c9442>
- Biesta, G. (2010). Pragmatism and the philosophical foundations of mixed methods research. In A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie (Eds.), *Sage handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioural research* (2nd ed., pp. 95–118). Sage.
- Bifulco, A., & Smojkis, M. (2023). Identity Awoken in Second-Generation British Poles in the UK—Personal Journeys. *Genealogy*, 7(3), 59. doi: 10.3390/genealogy7030059
- Blackledge, A., Creese, A., Baraç, T., Bhatt, A., Hamid, S., Wei, L., Lytra, V., Martin, P., Wu, C., Yağcıoğlu, D. (2008). Contesting ‘Language’ as ‘Heritage’: Negotiation of Identities in Late Modernity. *Applied Linguistics*, 29 (4), 533–554.
- Block, D. (2018). The political economy of language education research (or the lack thereof): Nancy Fraser and the case of translanguaging. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, 15(4), 237–257. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15427587.2018.1466300>
- Blommaert, J., & Backus, A. (2013). Superdiverse Repertoires and the Individual. In: Saint-Georges, I.d., Weber, J.J. (Eds.) *Multilingualism and Multimodality. The Future of Education Research* (pp.11-32). SensePublishers. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6209-266-2_2
- Bloomfield, L. (1933). *Language*. Henry Holt and Co.
- Blythe S, Wilkes L, Jackson D, et al. (2013) The challenges of being an insider in storytelling research. *Nurse Researcher*, 21(1), 8-12.
- Bogdan, R.C., & Biklen, S.K. (2007). *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods* (5th ed.). Allyn & Bacon.
- Bonin, H. (2017). *Education of migrants: A social investment*. EENEE Policy Brief 3, May 2017. <https://eenee.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/PolicyBrief3-2017-1.pdf>
- Boroń, A., Gulczyńska, J., Barańska, M., Brenk, M., Mańkowska, A., & Nowak-Kluczyński, K. (2021). *Polonia i Polacy za granicą – kulturowe i edukacyjne obszary badań i doświadczeń* [Polish Diaspora and Poles Abroad. Cultural and Educational Areas of Research and Experience]. Wydawnictwo Nukowe UAM.
- Boucher, S. C. (2014). What is a philosophical stance? Paradigms, policies and perspectives. *Synthese*, 191(10), 2315–2332. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24020011>
- Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1990). *The Logic of Practice*. Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and Symbolic Power*. Harvard University Press.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. In: *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.

- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 11(4), 589–597.
- Braun, V., Clarke, V., Hayfield, N., & Terry, G. (2019). *Answers to frequently asked questions about thematic analysis*. Retrieved from <https://cdn.auckland.ac.nz/assets/psych/about/our-research/documents/Answers%20to%20frequently%20asked%20questions%20about%20thematic%20analysis%20April%202019.pdf>
- Bray, A., Banks, J., Devitt, A., Murphy, M., & O'Leary, M. (2021). Connection before content: Using multiple perspectives to examine student engagement during COVID-19 school closures in Ireland. *Irish Educational Studies*, 40(2), 431–441.
- Bray, A., Ní Chorca, E., Maguire Donohoe, J., & Smith, M. (2020). *Post-primary student perspectives on teaching and learning during COVID-19 school closures: Lessons learned from Irish students from schools in a widening participation programme*. Trinity College Dublin.
- Brehmer, B., & Treffers-Daller, J. (2020). *Lost in Transmission : The Role of Attrition and Input in Heritage Language Development*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Briggs, C. (1986). *Learning how to ask: A sociolinguistic appraisal of the role of the interview in social science research*. Cambridge University Press.
- Brinton, D. M., Kagan, O., & Bauckus, S. (2008). *Heritage Language Education: A New Field Emerging* (1st ed.). Routledge.
- Brown, N. (2021). *Making the Most of Your Research Journal*. Policy Press.
- Bruen, J. (2023). Foreign Language Learning in the Republic of Ireland: Developments, Challenges, Policy Implications. *Policy Papers*. <https://doras.dcu.ie/29130/1/Bruen%202023%20Foreign%20Language%20Learning%20in%20the%20Republic%20of%20Ireland%20%281%29.pdf>
- Bryceson, D., & Vuorela, U. (2002). Transnational Families in the 21st Century. In D. Bryceson & U. Vuorela (Eds.), *The Transnational Family: New European Frontiers and Global Networks* (pp. 3–30). Berg Publishers.
- Bukamal, H. (2022). Deconstructing insider–outsider researcher positionality. *British Journal of Special Education*, 49(3), 327–349. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8578.12426>
- Burman, E., & Miles, S. (2020). Deconstructing supplementary education: From the pedagogy of the supplement to the unsettling of the mainstream. *Educational Review*, 72(1), 3–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2018.1480475>
- Busch, B. (2006). Language biographies for multilingual learning: linguistic and educational considerations. In B. Busch, A. Jardine, & A. Tjoutuku (Eds.), *Language Biographies for multilingual learning* (pp. 5–17). PRAESA Occasional Papers No. 24.
- Busch, B. (2018). The language portrait in multilingualism research: Theoretical and methodological considerations. *Working Papers in Urban Language and Literacies*, 236, 1–13. https://heteroglossia.net/fileadmin/user_upload/publication/busch18._The_language_portrait_copy.pdf
- Busch, B. (2012). The Linguistic Repertoire Revisited. *Applied Linguistics* 33(5), 503–523.
- Byrne, D. (2021). A worked example of Braun and Clarke's approach to reflexive thematic analysis. *Quality & Quantity*, 56, 1391–1412. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-021-01182-y>

- Campbell, D.T. (1986), Relabeling internal and external validity for applied social scientists. *New Directions for Program Evaluation*, 31, 67-77. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ev.1434>
- Carminati L. (2018). Generalizability in Qualitative Research: A Tale of Two Traditions. *Qualitative Health Research*, 28(13), 2094-2101. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732318788379>
- Carreira, M. (2004). Seeking explanatory adequacy: A dual approach to understanding the term “heritage language learner”. *Heritage Language Journal*, 2(1). www.heritagelanguages.org
- Carton, J., Rosenback, R. (2021). Guide for educators: How to support multilingual children. *PEaCH*. Retrieved from: <https://bilingualfamily.eu/Resources/PEaCH%20for%20educators.pdf>
- Ceallaigh, T. Ó, & Dhonnabhain, Á. N. (2015). Reawakening the Irish language through the Irish education system: Challenges and priorities. *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education*, 8(2), 179–198.
- Çelik, Ç. (2021). Rethinking Institutional Habitus in Education: A Relational Approach for Studying Its Sources and Impacts. *Sociology*, 55(3), 522-538. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038520966565>
- Cenoz, J., & Gorter, D. (2017). Minority languages and sustainable translanguaging: threat or opportunity? *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 38(10), 901–912. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2017.1284855>
- Central Statistics Office. (2003). *Census 2002. Volume 4: Usual Residence, Migration, Birthplaces and Nationalities*. CSO. https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/census/documents/vol4_entire.pdf
- Central Statistics Office. (2007). *Census 2006. Principal Demographic Results*. CSO. https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/census/documents/Amended_Final_Principal_Demographic_Results_2006.pdf
- Central Statistics Office. (2012). *This is Ireland. Highlights from Census 11, Part 1*. CSO. https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/census/documents/census2011pdr/Census_2011_Highlights_Part_1_web_72dpi.pdf
- Central Statistics Office. (2017). *Census 2016 Summary Results – Part 1*. CSO. <https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/newsevents/documents/census2016summaryresultspart1/Census2016SummaryPart1.pdf>
- Central Statistics Office. (2023). *Census of Population 2022 - Summary Results*. CSO. <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cpsr/censusofpopulation2022-summaryresults/>
- Central Statistics Office. (2024). *Arrivals from Ukraine in Ireland, Series 12*. CSO. <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/fp/p-ai/arrivalsfromukraineinirelandseries12/>
- Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education. (2017). *Siolta - User Manual*. Department of Education.
- Chang, B. “Benji”, & McLaren, P. (2018). Emerging issues of teaching and social justice in Greater China: Neoliberalism and critical pedagogy in Hong Kong. *Policy Futures in Education*, 16(6), 781-803. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1478210318767735>

- Cheung, W.W. (2015). *Conceptions of teaching and learning held by teachers of Mandarin and Cantonese in Chinese complementary schools in Scotland* [Doctoral thesis, University of Stirling]. <https://dspace.stir.ac.uk/bitstream/1893/24444/1/PhDThesis-WWCheung-October2015.pdf>
- Chmielewski, W. (2021). Providing opportunities for Poles to study abroad: the work of the Interim Treasury Committee for Polish Questions from July 1945 to March 1947. *History of Education*, 50(5), 628–646. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0046760X.2021.1890238>
- Chondrogianni, V., & Daskalaki, E. (2023). Heritage language use in the country of residence matters for language maintenance, but short visits to the homeland can boost heritage language outcomes. *Frontiers in Language Sciences*, 2. <https://doi.org/10.3389/flang.2023.1230408>
- Clyne, M. (2001). Can the shift from immigrant languages be reversed in Australia? In J. Fishman (Ed.), *Can threatened languages be saved?* (pp.364–390). *Multilingual Matters*.
- Clyne, M. G., & Clyne, M. (1991). *Community languages: the Australian experience*. Cambridge University Press.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2017). *Research Methods in Education* (8th ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315456539>
- Connaughton-Crean, L. (2020). *He thinks he is Polish, but the way he acts is Irish”: the negotiation of family language Policy within Polish migrant and transnational families in Ireland* [Doctoral thesis, Dublin City University]. <https://doras.dcu.ie/24925/>
- Connaughton-Crean, L., & Ó Duibhir, P. (2017). Home language maintenance and development among first generation migrant children in an Irish primary school: An investigation of attitudes. *Journal of Home Language Research*, 2(0), 22-39.DOI: <https://doi.org/10.16993/jhhr.29>
- Connaughton-Crean, L., & Ó Duibhir, P. (2024). ‘We are always planning trips to Poland’: the influence of transnational family life on the family language policy of Polish-speaking families in Ireland. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2024.2331746>
- Connolly, P. (2003). *Ethical Principles for Researching Vulnerable Groups*. University of Ulster.
- Council of Europe (2001a). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. Cambridge University Press. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages> [Accessed 19 January 2022]
- Council of Europe, & Department of Education and Science. (2005-2007). *Language Education Policy Profile. IRELAND*. <https://rm.coe.int/language-education-policy-profile-ireland/16807b3c2f>
- Council of Europe. (1950). *European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, as amended by Protocols Nos. 11 and 14, 4 November 1950, ETS 5*. <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b3b04.html> [Accessed 19 January 2022]
- Council of Europe. (1954). *European Cultural Convention, 19 December 1954, ETS 018*. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list?module=treaty-detail&treaty-num=018> [Accessed 19 January 2022]

- Council of Europe. (1992). *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages*, 4 November 1992, ETS 148. <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3de78bc34.html> [Accessed 19 January 2022]
- Council of Europe. (1995). *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*, 1 February 1995, ETS 157. <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b36210.html> [Accessed 19 January 2022]
- Council of Europe. (2001b). *European Language Portfolio (ELP)*. Education Policy Division. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/portfolio> [Accessed 19 January 2022]
- Council of Europe. (2014). *Recommendation CM/Rec(2014)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the importance of competences in the language(s) of schooling for equity and quality in education and for educational success*. https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=09000016805c6105 [Accessed 19 January 2022]
- Council of Europe. (2018). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment Companion Volume With New Descriptors*. Language Policy Programme, Education Policy Division. <https://rm.coe.int/cefr-companion-volume-with-new-descriptors-2018/1680787989>
- Council of Europe. (n.d.). *Language Support for Adult Refugees. A Council of Europe Toolkit*. www.coe.int/lang-refugees
- Creese, A. (2009). Building on Young People's Linguistic and Cultural Continuity: Complementary Schools in the United Kingdom. *Theory Into Practice*, 48(4), 267–273. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40344654>
- Creese, A., & Blackledge, A. (2010). Translanguaging in the Bilingual Classroom: A Pedagogy for Learning and Teaching? *The Modern Language Journal*, 94(1), 103–115. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25612290>
- Creese, A., & Martin, P. (2008). Classroom ecologies: A case study from a Gujarati complementary school in England. In N.H. Hornberger (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of language and education*. Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-30424-3_236
- Creese, A., Blackledge, A., Baraç, T., & Bhatt, A. (2006). Multicultural, heritage and learner identities in complementary schools. *Language and Education*, 20(1), 23–43. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500780608668708>
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed). SAGE.
- Crowley, T. (2000). *The Politics of Language in Ireland 1366-1922. A sourcebook*. Routledge.
- Cruikshank, K., Lo Bianco, J., & Wahlin, M. (Eds.). (2023). *Community and Heritage Languages Schools Transforming Education: Research, Challenges, and Teaching Practices* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003302704>
- Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a Global Language* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a global language* (2nd edition). Cambridge University Press.

- Cummins J. (2008). Teaching for Transfer: Challenging the Two Solitudes Assumption in Bilingual Education. In: Hornberger N.H. (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Language and Education* (pp. 1528-1538). Springer.
- Cummins, J. (1977). Cognitive Factors Associated with the Attainment of Intermediate Levels of Bilingual Skills. *The Modern Language Journal*, 61, 3-12.
- Cummins, J. (1978). Metalinguistic development of children in bilingual education programs: Data from Irish and Canadian (Ukrainian-English) programs. In M. Paradis (Ed.) *Aspects of bilingualism* (pp. 127-138). Hornbeam Press.
- Cummins, J. (1979). Cognitive/academic language proficiency, linguistic interdependence, the optimum age question and some other matters. *Working Papers on Bilingualism*, 19, 121-129.
- Cummins, J. (2000). *Language, power, and pedagogy. Bilingual children in the crossfire*. Multilingual Matters.
- Cummins, J. (2005). Teaching for cross-language transfer in dual language education: Possibilities and pitfalls. In *TESOL Symposium on dual language education: Teaching and learning two languages in the EFL setting* (pp. 1-17). <https://gustavorubinoernesto.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Teaching-for-Cross-Language-Transfer-in-Dual-Language-Education-Possibilities-and-Pitfalls-Jim-Cummins.pdf>
- Cummins, J. (2017). Teaching for Transfer in Multilingual School Contexts. In: Garcia, O., Lin, A., May, S. (Eds.) *Bilingual and Multilingual Education. Encyclopedia of Language and Education*. Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02324-3_8-1
- Cummins, J. (2021). Language Proficiency and Academic Achievement. In *Rethinking the Education of Multilingual Learners: A Critical Analysis of Theoretical Concepts* (pp. 37-59). Multilingual Matters.
- Curdt-Christiansen, X.L. (2009). Invisible and visible language planning: ideological factors in the family language policy of Chinese immigrant families in Quebec. *Language Policy*, 8, 351–375. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10993-009-9146-7>
- Darmody, M., & Daly, T. (2015). *Attitudes towards the Irish Language on the Island of Ireland*. ESRI and Foras na Gaeilge. <https://www.esri.ie/publications/attitudes-towards-the-irish-language-on-the-island-of-ireland>
- Darmody, M., McGinnity, F., & Russell, H. (2022). *Children of migrants in Ireland: how are they faring?*. ESRI. <https://www.esri.ie/publications/children-of-migrants-in-ireland-how-are-they-faring>
- Darvin, R., & Norton, B. (2015). Identity and a Model of Investment in Applied Linguistics. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 35, 36–56. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190514000191>
- Darvin, R., & Norton, B. (2021). Investment and motivation in language learning: What's the difference? *Language Teaching*, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444821000057>
- Darwin Holmes, A. G. (2020). Researcher Positionality - A Consideration of Its Influence and Place in Qualitative Research - A New Researcher Guide. *Shanlax International Journal of Education*, 8(4), 1-10.

- Day, R. & Walsh, J. (2020). Building a language community through radio in the age of social media: the case of Raidió na Life. *Radio Journal: International Studies in Broadcast & Audio Media*, 18(1), 79-94.
- Day, R. (1985). The Ultimate Inequality: Linguistic Genocide. In N. Wolfson & J. Manes (Ed.), *Language of Inequality* (pp. 163-181). De Gruyter Mouton. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110857320.163>
- De Bot, K., & Gorter, D. (2005). A European Perspective on Heritage Languages. *The Modern Language Journal*, 89(4), 612-616.
- Dębski, R. (2009). *Dwujęzyczność angielsko-polska w Australii. Języki mniejszościowe w erze globalizacji i informatyzacji* [English-Polish bilingualism in Australia. Minority languages in the era of globalization and computerization]. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.
- Denzin, N. K. (1970). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods*. Aldine.
- Denzin, N. K. (1978). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods* (2nd ed.). McGraw Hill.
- Denzin, N. K. (2010). Moments, Mixed Methods, and Paradigm Dialogs. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16(6): 419-427.
- Department of Children and Youth Affairs. (2012). *Guidance for developing ethical research projects involving children*. Government publications. <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/238556/d63cdc6f-4896-438c-b01c-e5a33ef84082.pdf#page=null>
- Department of Children and Youth Affairs. (2015). *National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-making (2015-2020)*. <https://assets.gov.ie/24462/48a6f98a921446ad85829585389e57de.pdf>
- Department of Education and Science, & Council of Europe. (2008). *Language Education Policy Profile: Country Report, Ireland*. DES. <https://assets.gov.ie/24769/59459e317dbd493693f0cfdec77a6d5f.pdf>
- Department of Education and Skills, & Kildare Education Centre. (2012). *Final report on the modern languages in primary school initiative, 1998-2012*. http://www.onevoiceforlanguages.com/uploads/2/4/6/7/24671559/mlpsi_final_report_july_2012.pdf
- Department of Education and Skills. (2011). *Literacy And Numeracy For Learning And Life. The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011-2020*. DES. www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Literacy-and-Numeracy/Literacy-and-Numeracy-LearningFor-Life.pdf [Accessed 21 January 2022]
- Department of Education and Skills. (2015a). *Primary Language Curriculum. Curaclam Teanga na Bunsciole (for stages 1 & 2)*. DES. https://www.curriculumonline.ie/getmedia/524b871d-1e20-461f-a28c-bbca5424112d/Primary-Language-Curriculum_1.pdf [Accessed 21 January 2022]
- Department of Education and Skills. (2015b). *Framework for Junior Cycle*. DES. <https://ncca.ie/media/3249/framework-for-junior-cycle-2015-en.pdf> [Accessed 21 January 2022]

- Department of Education and Skills. (2016a). *The Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022*. DES. <https://assets.gov.ie/24606/a526faa89eb64675ab685c074f93b0af.pdf> [Accessed 21 January 2022]
- Department of Education and Skills. (2016b). *Action Plan for Education 2016-2019*. DES. <https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/action-plan-for-education-2016-2019/#:~:text=The%20Action%20Plan%20five%20goals%3A&text=improve%20the%20progress%20of%20learners,national%20planning%20and%20support%20services> [Accessed 21 January 2022]
- Department of Education and Skills. (2017a). *Languages Connect, Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026*. DES. <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/52f94d-framework-for-consultation-on-a-foreign-languages-in-education-strat/>
- Department of Education and Skills. (2017b). *Languages Connect Implementation Plan 2017-2022*. DES. <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/52f94d-framework-for-consultation-on-a-foreign-languages-in-education-strat/> [Accessed 21 January 2022]
- Department of Education and Skills. (2019a). *Primary Language Curriculum. Cúraclam Teanga na Bunsciole*. Dublin: DES. Available at: https://curriculumonline.ie/getmedia/2a6e5f79-6f29-4d68-b850-379510805656/PLC-Documnet_English.pdf
- Department of Education and Skills. (2019b). *Circular 0053/2019. Exemption from the study of Irish*. <https://assets.gov.ie/27473/c10cb646f6a14074b6d02d54b0ab3d1b.pdf> [Accessed 21 January 2022]
- Department of Education and Skills. (2019c). *Circular 0006/2020 Diversification of Foreign Languages Provision in the Curriculum*. <https://circulars.gov.ie/pdf/circular/education/2019/31.pdf>
- Department of Education. (2022). *Circular Number 0028/2022*. <https://www.gov.ie/en/circular/88a1a-say-yes-to-languages-language-sampler-module-202223/>
- Department of Education. (2023). *Primary Curriculum Framework. For Primary and Special Schools*. DE. <https://www.curriculumonline.ie/getmedia/84747851-0581-431b-b4d7-dc6ee850883e/2023-Primary-Framework-ENG-screen.pdf>
- Devitt, A., Bray, A., Banks, J., & Ní Chorcora, E. (2020). *Teaching and learning during school closures: Lessons learned - Irish second-level teacher perspectives*. Trinity College Dublin.
- Devitt, A., Ó Murchadha, N. (2021). Opportunities and Challenges in the Reform of Junior Cycle Language Curricula. In D. Murchan, K. Johnston (Eds.) *Curriculum Change within Policy and Practice*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Diebold, A. R. (1964). Incipient bilingualism. In D. Hymes (Ed.) *Language in Culture and Society* (pp. 495-511). Harper and Row.
- Diskin, C. & Regan, V. (2017). The attitudes of recently-arrived Polish migrants to Irish English. *World Englishes*, 36, 191-207.
- Diskin, C. (2020). New Speakers in the Irish Context: Heritage Language Maintenance Among Multilingual Migrants in Dublin, Ireland. *Frontiers in Education*, 4. <https://doi.org/10.3389/educ.2019.00163>

- Dowling, H. (2012). Polish immigrants in 20th century Ireland. In J. Płachecki (Ed.), *Polish emigration in Ireland in the 20th and early 21st centuries* (pp. 19–30). Wydawnictwo Naukowe Instytutu Technologii Eksploatacji—Państwowego Instytutu Badawczego.
- Drever, E. (1995). *Using semi-structured interviews in small-scale research: A teacher's guide*. Scottish Council for Research in Education.
- Drisko, J. W. (2024). Transferability and Generalization in Qualitative Research. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 0(0). 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10497315241256560>
- Dubiel, B. (2019). The assessment of language maintenance in bilingual children. *TEANGA, the Journal of the Irish Association for Applied Linguistics*, 10, 94-112.
- Dubiel, B., & Guilfoyle, E. (2021). Early shifts in the heritage language strength: A comparison of lexical access and accuracy in bilingual and monolingual children. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 25(1), 21-39. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1367006920936337>
- Dubisz, S. (Ed.). (1997). *Język polski poza granicami kraju* [Polish language abroad]. Uniwersytet Opolski.
- Dwyer, S. C., & Buckle, J. L. (2009). The Space Between: On Being an Insider-Outsider in Qualitative Research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 8(1), 54-63. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690900800105>
- Eckert, G. (2023). Teacher professional identities across sectors. In K. Cruickshank, J. Lo Bianco, & M. Wahlin (Eds.), *Community and Heritage Languages Schools Transforming Education: Research, Challenges, and Teaching Practices* (pp. 134-154). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003302704>
- Erlinghagen, M. (2021). The transnational life course: an integrated and unified theoretical concept for migration research. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 44(8), 1337–1364. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2021.1880014>
- European Broadcasting Union, Media Intelligence Service. (2022). *Trust in Media 2022*. EBU-MIS. https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/622b78ab1e61497a953bc219/636b05981ddcf0034db2b10e_EBU-MIS-Trust_in_Media_2022-Slidedeck.pdf
- European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture. Day, L., Meierkord, A. (2018a). *Rethinking language education and linguistic diversity in schools: thematic report from a programme of expert workshops and peer learning activities (2016-17)*, Publications Office. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2766/584023> [Accessed 19 January 2022]
- European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, Meierkord, A., Staring, F., Day, L. (2018b). *Migrants in European schools: learning and maintaining languages: thematic report from a programme of expert workshops and peer learning activities (2016-17)*, Publications Office. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2766/111543> [Accessed 19 January 2022]
- European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, Staring, F., Broughton, A. (2020). *Education begins with language: thematic report from a programme of seminars with peer learning to support the implementation of the Council Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages*

- (2019-2020), Publications Office. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2766/779296> [Accessed 19 January 2022]
- European Council. (2002). *Presidency Conclusions. Barcelona European Council 15 and 16 March 2002, SN100/1/02 REV 1*. https://ec.europa.eu/invest-in-research/pdf/download_en/barcelona_european_council.pdf
- Evans, D., & Gillan-Thomas, K. (2015). *Supplementary schools research report. Descriptive analysis of supplementary school pupils' characteristics and attainment in seven local authorities in England, 2007/08–2011/12*. Paul Hamlyn Foundation. <https://www.phf.org.uk/publications/supplementary-schools-research-report/>
- Expert Group on Future Skills NeEds. (2005). *Languages and Enterprise. The Demand & Supply of Foreign Language Skills in the Enterprise Sector*. http://www.onevoiceforlanguages.com/uploads/2/4/6/7/24671559/languages_and_enterprise_2005.pdf
- Extra, G., & Gorter, D. (2001). *The other languages of Europe*. Multilingual Matters.
- Faist, T. (2000). *The Volume and Dynamics of International Migration and Transnational Social Spaces*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198293910.001.0001>
- Fajkowski, J. (Ed.). (1999). *Zasoby kultury polskiej w świecie. Europa Zachodnia* [Polish culture resources in the world. Western Europe]. Główny Urząd Statystyczny.
- Fathi, M. (2022). 'My life is on hold': examining home, belonging and temporality among migrant men in Ireland. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 29(8), 1097–1120. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2021.1916445>
- Fishman, J. (1966). *Language Loyalty in the United States: The Maintenance and Perpetuation of Non-English Mother Tongues by American Ethnic and Religious Groups*. Mouton.
- Fishman, J. A. (2001). 300-plus years of heritage language education in the United States. In J. K. Peyton, D. A. Ranard, & S. McGinnis (Eds.), *Heritage languages in America: Preserving a national resource* (pp. 81–98). Center for Applied Linguistics & Delta Systems.
- Fishman, J., Gertner, M., Lowy, E. & Milán, W. (1985). *The Rise and Fall of the Ethnic Revival: Perspectives on Language and Ethnicity*. De Gruyter Mouton. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110863888>
- Flynn, N., Keane, E., Davitt, E., Coyne, I., O'Reilly, M., & McBride, O. (2021). Schooling at home in Ireland during COVID-19: Parents' and students' perspectives on overall impact, continuity of interest, and impact on learning. *Irish Educational Studies*, 40(2), 217-226.
- Forum Polonia. (2014). *Submission on Ireland's National Integration Strategy to the Department of Justice and Equality Prepared by Forum Polonia and affiliated groups and individuals*. <https://forumpolonia.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/Submission-on-Integration-Policy-by-Forum-Polonia-2.pdf>
- Foulidi, X., Oikonomakou, M., & Papakitsos, E. C. (2019). Language diversity in the Greek education system: Promoting multilingual classroom policies. *Journal of Research Initiatives*, 5(1), Article 6. <https://digitalcommons.uncfsu.edu/jri/vol5/iss1/6/>
- Francis, B., Archer, L., & Mau, A. (2009). Language as Capital, or Language as Identity? Chinese Complementary School Pupils' Perspectives on the Purposes and Benefits of

- Complementary Schools. *British Educational Research Journal*, 35(4), 519–538.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/40375601>
- Fraser, N. (2007). Re-framing justice in a globalizing world. In T. Lovell (Ed.), *(Mis)recognition, social inequality and social justice: Nancy Fraser and Pierre Bourdieu* (pp. 17–35). Routledge.
- Fusch, P., Fusch, G.E., & Ness, L.R. (2018). Denzin’s Paradigm Shift: Revisiting Triangulation in Qualitative Research. *Journal of Social Change*, 10(1), 19–32.
- Gage, N. L. (1989). The Paradigm Wars and Their Aftermath: A “Historical” Sketch of Research on Teaching since 1989. *Educational Researcher*, 18(7), 4–10. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1177163>
- Gal, S. (1979). *Language shift: Social determinants of linguistic change in bilingual Austria*. Academic Press.
- García, O. (2009a). *Bilingual Education in the 21st Century: A Global Perspective*. Basil/Blackwell.
- García, O. (2009b). Emergent Bilinguals and TESOL: What’s in a Name? *TESOL Quarterly*, 43(2), 322–326. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27785009>
- García, O. (2013). From diglossia to transglossia: Bilingual and multilingual classrooms in the 21st century. In C. Abello-Contesse, P. M. Chandler, M. D. López-Jiménez, & R. Chacón-Beltrán (Eds.), *Bilingual and multilingual education in the 21st century: Building on experience* (pp. 155–175). Multilingual Matters.
- García, O. (2014). Countering the dual: Transglossia, dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging in education. In R. Rubdy & L. Alsagoff (Eds.), *The global-local interface, language choice and hybridity* (pp. 100–118). Multilingual Matters.
- García, O., Lin, A., May, S. (Eds.). (2017). *Bilingual and Multilingual Education. Encyclopedia of Language and Education*. Springer.
- García, O., Wei, L. (2014). Translanguaging and Education. In: *Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism and Education*. Palgrave Pivot.
- Gilmartin, M., & Migge, B. (2015). Home stories: Immigrant narratives of place and identity in contemporary Ireland. *Journal of Cultural Geography*, 32(1), 83–101.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/08873631.2014.1000576>
- Godron, B. (2020). Vulnerability in Research: Basic Ethical Concepts and General Approach to Review. *Ochsner Journal*, 20(1):34–38. <https://doi.org/10.31486/toj.19.0079>
- Gogolin, I. (2002). Linguistic and Cultural Diversity in Europe: A Challenge for Educational Research and Practice. *European Educational Research Journal*, 1(1), 123–138. <https://doi.org/10.2304/eeerj.2002.1.1.3>
- Gogolin, I. (1994). *Der monolinguale Habitus der multilingualen Schule*. Waxmann-Verlag.
- Gołębiowski, J. (2021). Szkolnictwo polskie w Stanach Zjednoczonych [Polish schooling in the USA]. *Studia Polonijne*, 42, 439–458. <http://doi.org/10.18290/sp2142.20>
- Gorard, S. (2002). The Role of Secondary Data in Combining Methodological Approaches. *Educational Review*, 54(3), 231–237. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0013191022000016293>

- Government of Ireland, (1999). *Primary School Curriculum*. The Government Stationary Office.
https://www.curriculumonline.ie/getmedia/c4a88a62-7818-4bb2-bb18-4c4ad37bc255/psec_introduction-to-primary-curriculum_eng.pdf
- Government of Ireland. (2010). *20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030*. DES.
<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/f67134-20-year-strategy-for-the-irish-language-2010-2030/>
- Greene, J. C. (2002). Telling Tales. *Qualitative Social Work*, 1(3), 297-302.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1473325002001003832>
- Grosjean, F. (1998). Studying bilinguals: Methodological and conceptual issues. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 1(2), 131-149.
<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/bilingualism-language-and-cognition/article/studying-bilinguals-methodological-and-conceptual-issues/344F4231E25225A1EDD9BC253B441792>
- Gubrium, J. F., & Holstein, J. (2002). *Postmodern Interviewing*. Sage Publications.
- Guest, G. (2013). Describing Mixed Methods Research: An Alternative to Typologies. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 7(2), 141-151. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689812461179>
- Gumperz, J. & Hymes, D. (Eds.). (1986). *Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication*. Blackwell. [Original work published in 1972]
- Gumperz, J., & Cook-Gumperz, J. (1982). Introduction: Language and the communication of social identity. In J. J. Gumperz (Ed.), *Language and social identity* (pp. 1-22). Cambridge University Press.
- Gunasekare, T. P. (2015). Mixed research method as the third research paradigm: A literature review. *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*.
<https://ssrn.com/abstract=2735996>
- Habielski, R. (2000). *Polski Londyn* [Polish London]. Wydawnictwo Dolnośląskie.
- Hall, J. N. (2013). Pragmatism, Evidence, and Mixed Methods Evaluation. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 2013(138), 15-26. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ev.20054>
- Hall, S. (1997). Introduction: Who Needs. "Identity"? In S. Hall, & P. D. Gay (Eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity*. Sage Publications.
- Hall, S. (2002). The Question of Cultural Identity. In S. Hall, D. Held, & T. McGrew (Eds.), *Modernity and its Futures*. Polity Press.
- Hall, S., Held, D., & McGrew, A. G. (1992). *Modernity and its futures*. Polity Press in association with the Open University.
- Haller, M. (2009). Language and identity in the age of globalization. In M. Cherkaoui, & P. Hamilton (Eds.), *Raymond Boudon: a life in sociology* (pp. 183-196). Oxford: Bardwell.
<https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-235265>
- Hammers, J.F., Blanc M. (2000). *Bilinguality and Bilingualism*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hancock, J., & Hancock, A. (2023). Teaching and learning community languages in Scotland during the COVID-19 pandemic: Challenges, opportunities and innovations. In K. Cruickshank, J. Lo Bianco, & M. Wahlin (Eds.), *Community and Heritage Languages Schools*

- Transforming Education: Research, Challenges, and Teaching Practices* (pp. 24–45). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003302704>
- Harris, J., & Conway, M. (2002). *Modern Languages in Irish Primary Schools. An evaluation of the National Pilot Project*. Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann (Linguistics Institute of Ireland).
- Harris, R., & Smolicz, J. (1984). *Australijczycy polskiego pochodzenia : Studium adaptacji i asymilacji młodego pokolenia* [Australians of Polish descent: A study of adaptation and assimilation of the young generation]. Ossolineum.
- Hatzichristou, C., Georgakakou-Koutsonikou, N., Lianos, P., Lampropoulou, A., & Yfanti, T. (2021). Assessing school community needs. during the initial outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic: Teacher, parent and student perceptions. *School Psychology International*, 42(6), 590-615. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01430343211041697>
- Haugen, E. (1953). *The Norwegian language in America: A study in bilingual behavior. Vol. 1: The bilingual community*. Indiana University Press.
- Heller, M. (1987). The role of language in the formation of ethnic identity. In J. Phinney & M. Rotheram (Eds.), *Children's ethnic socialization* (pp. 180–200). Sage.
- Heller, M. (1995). Language Choice, Social Institutions, and Symbolic Domination. *Language in Society*, 24(3), 373–405. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4168625>
- Hesse-Biber, S.N. (2010). *Mixed method research; Merging theory with practice*. Guilford Press.
- Hockey, J. (1993). Research Methods--Researching Peers and Familiar Settings. *Research Papers in Education*, 8(2), 199–225. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267152930080205>
- Hofferth, S.L. (2005). Secondary Data Analysis in Family Research. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 67, 891–907. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2005.00182.x>
- Hoffmann, C. (1991). *An Introduction to Bilingualism*. (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315842035>
- Holstein, J., & Gubrium, J. F. (1995). *The active interview*. Sage Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412986120>
- Horn, C. (2014). *Supplementary schools within multicultural Ireland: identity maintenance and heritage language learning*. [Doctoral thesis, Trinity College Dublin].
- Hornberger, N. (2002). Multilingual language policies and the continua of biliteracy: An ecological approach. *Language Policy*, 1, 27–51. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1014548611951>
- Hornberger, N., & Wang, S. (2017). Who are our heritage language learners? Identity and biliteracy in heritage language education in the United States. In D.M. Brinton, O. Kagan & S. Bauckus (Eds.), *Heritage Language Education: A New Field Emerging* (1st ed.). Routledge.
- Hornberger, N. (2001). Educational linguistics as a field: A view from Penn's program on the occasion of its 25th anniversary. *Working Papers in Educational Linguistics* 17(1–2): 1–26.
- Husain, L. and Lam, V. 2023. Growing up bilingual: language proficiency, social identities and competences of complementary school-attendees and non-attendees in the UK. *Language and Education* 37(1), 54-70. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2021.1983586>
- Irish National Teachers' Organisation (1991). *Foreign Language Teaching in Primary Schools: Issues and Research*. INTO.

- Irvine, J. T. (2012). *Language Ideology*. <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/display/document/obo-9780199766567/obo-9780199766567-0012.xml>
- Izsák-Ndiaye, R.. (2017). *Language Rights of Linguistic Minorities: A Practical Guide for Implementation*. United Nations. https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Minorities/SR/LanguageRightsLinguisticMinorities_EN.pdf [Accessed 19 January 2022]
- James, D. (2015). How Bourdieu bites back: recognising misrecognition in education and educational research. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 45(1), 97–112. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2014.987644>
- Jamshed, S. (2014) Qualitative Research Method-Interviewing and Observation. *Journal of Basic and Pharmacy*, 5, 87-88. <https://doi.org/10.4103/0976-0105.141942>
- Jiménez Raya, M., Lamb, T., Manzano Vázquez, B. (2020). *Insights into Language Education Policies*. Peter Lang Verlag.
- Johnson, N. (1993). Building a nation: an examination of the Irish Gaeltacht Commission Report of 1926. *Journal of Historical Geography*, 19(2), 157-168.
- Kabuto, B. (2010). Code-switching during parent-child reading interactions: Taking multiple theoretical perspectives. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 10(2), 131–157.
- Kagan, O.E., Carreira, M.M., & Hitchens Chik, C. (Eds.). (2017). *The Routledge Handbook of Heritage Language Education: From Innovation to Program Building* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315727974>
- Kara, H. (2023). *Research and Evaluation for Busy Students and Practitioners. A Survival Guide*. Policy Press.
- Kaushik, V., & Walsh, C. A. (2019). Pragmatism as a Research Paradigm and Its Implications for Social Work Research. *Social Sciences*, 8, 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci8090255>
- Kealy, C. (2019). *Parenting in Ireland: Polish perspectives on child-rearing and help-seeking in a culturally diverse neighbourhood* [Doctoral thesis, University of Galway]. <https://aran.library.nuigalway.ie/handle/10379/15808>.
- Keane, E., Flynn, N., & Kealy, C. (2023). Addressing the needs of marginalised young people through school-based catch-up interventions during COVID-19: A case study from Ireland. *Equity in Education & Society*, 2(2), 138-156. <https://doi.org/10.1177/27526461231153667>
- Kellaghan, T., McGee, P., Millar, D., & Perkins, R. (2004). *Views of the Irish Public on Education: 2004 Survey*. Educational Research Centre.
- Kenner, C., & Hickey, T. (2008). *Multilingual Europe – Diversity and Learning*. Trentham Books.
- Keogh-Bryan, K. (2019). *Primary Curriculum Review and Redevelopment Background paper: Integrating modern foreign languages in a redeveloped primary curriculum*. NCCA. <https://ncca.ie/media/4446/background-paper-integrating-modern-foreign-languages-in-a-redeveloped-primary-curriculum.pdf>
- Kerrane, B., & Hogg, M. K. (2007). *Power and influence in family decision-making: child focussed perspectives from 21st century families*. The Department of Marketing.

- Kim, A. Y., Lee, J. S., & Lee, W. (2015). Examining Korean American parent-child relationships through bilingual language use. *Journal of Family Communication*, 15(3), 269–287.
- Kim, L. E., Dundas, S., & Asbury, K. (2021). ‘I think it’s been difficult for the ones that haven’t got as many resources in their homes’: teacher concerns about the impact of COVID-19 on pupil learning and wellbeing. *Teachers and Teaching*, 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2021.1982690>
- Kim, L. E., Leary, R., & Asbury, K. (2021). Teachers’ narratives during COVID-19 partial school reopenings: an exploratory study. *Educational Research; a Review for Teachers and All Concerned with Progress in Education*, 63(2), 244–260.
- King, K.A., Fogle, L. and Logan-Terry, A. (2008), Family Language Policy. *Language and Linguistics Compass*, 2, 907-922. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-818X.2008.00076.x>
- King, K.A., Fogle, L.W. (2017). Family Language Policy. In: McCarty, T., May, S. (Eds.) *Language Policy and Political Issues in Education. Encyclopedia of Language and Education* (pp. 315-327). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02344-1_25
- King, K.A., Fogle, L.W. (2017). Family Language Policy. In: McCarty, T., May, S. (Eds.) *Language Policy and Political Issues in Education. Encyclopedia of Language and Education*. Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02344-1_25
- Kloc-Nowak, W., Lesińska, M., & Pszczółkowska. (2023). *Polacy w Irlandii. Transnarodowe społeczności w dobie migracji poakcesyjnych* [Poles in Ireland. Transnational Communities in the Age of Post-Accession Migration]. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego. <https://doi.org/10.31338/uw.9788323560784>
- Kobińska, E. (2016). Language, identity and social class among Polish migrants in Ireland. In: V. Regan, C. Diskin and J. Martyn (Eds.), *Language, Identity and Migration. Voices from Transnational Speakers and Communities* (pp. 191-216) Peter Lang.
- Koehler, C., Schneider, J. (2019). Young refugees in education: the particular challenges of school systems in Europe. *Comparative Migration Studies*, 7(28). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-019-0129-3>
- Koprukowniak, A. (Ed.). (1980). *Szkolnictwo polonijne po drugiej wojnie światowej* [Polish complementary schooling after WWII]. Wydawnictwo UMCS
- Koprukowniak, A. (Ed.). (1995). *Szkolnictwo polonijne na świecie. Zarys syntezy* [Polish education worldwide. Synthesis]. Wydawnictwo UMCS.
- Krings, T., Bobek, A., Moriarty, E., Salamonska, J., & Wickham, J. (2009). Migration and Recession: Polish Migrants in Post-Celtic Tiger Ireland. *Sociological Research Online*, 14(2), 111-116. <https://doi.org/10.5153/sro.1927>
- Krumm, H.J., & Jenkins, E.M. (2001). *Kinder und ihre Sprachen – lebendige Mehrsprachigkeit: Sprachenportraits gesammelt und kommentiert von Hans-Jürgen Krumm*. Eviva.
- Krzyżanowski, M., Wodak, R. (2008). Multiple Identities, Migration and Belonging: ‘Voices of Migrants’. In: Caldas-Coulthard, C.R., Iedema, R. (Eds.) *Identity Trouble*. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230593329_6
- Kusters, A. M. J., & De Meulder, M. (2019). Language Portraits: Investigating Embodied Multilingual and Multimodal Repertoires. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 20(3), Article 10. <https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-20.3.3239>

- La Morgia, F. (2018). Towards a Better Understanding of Bilingualism: Considerations for Teachers of Children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs. *REACH Journal of Special Needs Education in Ireland*, 31 (1). 79–88.
- Lamb, T. (2015). Towards a plurilingual habitus: engendering interlinguality in urban spaces. *International Journal of Pedagogies and Learning*, 10(2), 151–165.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/22040552.2015.1113848>
- Lamb, T. (2020). Supplementary schools as spaces of hope for a more inclusive world: Challenging exclusion and social injustice in multilingual London. *Journal of Linguistics and Language Teaching*, 11(2), 99–127.
- Lambert, W.E. (1980). The social psychology of language. In H. Giles, W.P. Robinson & P.M. Smith (Eds.), *Language: Social Psychological Perspectives*. Pergamon.
- Lanza, E., & Curdt-Christiansen, X. L. (2018). Multilingual families: aspirations and challenges. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 15(3), 231–232.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2018.1477091>
- Leeson, L., Van den Bogaerde, B., Rathmann, C., Haug, T. (2016). *Sign languages and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Common Reference Level Descriptors*. ECML, Council of Europe.
- Li, M. (2005). The role of parents in Chinese heritage-language schools. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 29(1), 197–207. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2005.10162831>
- Li, Wei. (2006). Complementary Schools, Past, Present and Future. *Language and Education*, 20(1), 76–83. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500780608668711>
- Li, Wei. (2013). Negotiating funds of knowledge and symbolic competence in the complementary school classrooms. *Language and Education*, 28(2), 161–180.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2013.800549>
- Li, Wei. (2014). Translanguaging knowledge and identity in complementary classrooms for multilingual minority ethnic children. *Classroom Discourse*, 5(2), 158–175.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/19463014.2014.893896>
- Liddicoat, A. (1991). *Bilingualism: An introduction*. In *Bilingualism and Bilingual Education*. NLIA Occasional Paper No. 2. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED355759.pdf>
- Lincoln, Y. S., Lynham, S. A., & Guba, E. G. (2011). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions and emerging confluences revisited. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (4th ed., pp. 99–128). Sage.
- Lipińska E. (2013). *Polskość w Australii: o dwujęzyczności, edukacji i problemach adaptacyjnych Polonii na antypodach* [Polishness in Australia: on bilingualism, education and adaptation problems of the Polish diaspora in the Antipodes]. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.
- Little, D. (2003). *Languages in the post-primary curriculum: a discussion paper*. NCCA.
https://www.ncca.ie/media/1808/languages_in_the_post-primary_curriculum_a_discussion_paper.pdf
- Little, D., & Kirwan, D. (2019). *Engaging with Linguistic Diversity. A Study of Educational Inclusion in an Irish Primary School*. Bloomsbury Academic.

- Liu, Y., & Hoare, L. (2023). Complementary schools as heritage language communities of practice: Reaching beyond language maintenance. In H. Pinson, N. Bunar & D. Devine (Eds.) *Research handbook on migration and education* (pp. 203-220). Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781839106361.00020>
- Lo Bianco. (2023). Community/Heritage Language Schools Transforming Education. Beyond complementary, more than integration. In K. Cruickshank, J. Lo Bianco, & M. Wahlin (Eds.), *Community and Heritage Languages Schools Transforming Education: Research, Challenges, and Teaching Practices* (pp. 1-23). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003302704-1>
- Loeb, S.J., Dynarski, S.M., McFarland, D.A., Morris, P., Reardon, S.F., & Reber, S.J. (2017). *Descriptive Analysis in Education: A Guide for Researchers*. National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance.
- Lotty, M. (2021). Reflections on navigating the PhD journey as a social work practitioner. *Qualitative Social Work*, 20(3), 851-865. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1473325020921926>
- Low, W.M., & Lu, D. (2006) Persistent Use of Mixed Code: An Exploration of Its Functions in Hong Kong Schools. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 9(2). 181-204.
- Luykx, A. (2003). Weaving languages together: Family language policy and gender socialization in bilingual Aymara households. In S. Schecter & R. Bayley (Eds.), *Language socialization in bilingual and multilingual societies* (pp.25-43). Multilingual Matters.
- Lyons, T. (2016). Inciting the lawless and profligate adventure'—the hedge schools of Ireland, *History Ireland*, 24(6). <https://www.historyireland.com/inciting-lawless-profligate-adventure-hedge-schools-ireland/>
- Mac Sharry, R., White, P., & O'Malley, J. (2001). *The Making of the Celtic Tiger: The Inside Story of Ireland's Boom Economy*. Mercier Press.
- Machowska-Kosciak, M. (2020). *The Multilingual Adolescent Experience: Small Stories of Integration and Socialization by Polish Families in Ireland*. Multilingual Matters.
- Machowska-Kosciak, M., & Barry, M. (2022). *Experiences of second-generation ethnic minority young people in Ireland*. Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. <https://www.ihrec.ie/documents/experiences-of-second-generation-ethnic-minorityyoung-people-in-ireland-2/>
- Mackey, W. F. (1968) The Description of Bilingualism. In: J. Fishman, (Ed.) *Readings in the Sociology of Language* (pp. 554-584). Mouton.
- MacLeroy, V., & Anderson, J. (2023). New possibilities for heritage languages within a reshaped language education landscape: Lessons from the critical connections multilingual digital storytelling project. In K. Cruickshank, J. Lo Bianco, & M. Wahlin (Eds.), *Community and Heritage Languages Schools Transforming Education: Research, Challenges, and Teaching Practices* (pp. 62-79). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003302704>
- Mancini, S., & de Witte, B. (2008). Language rights as cultural rights: A European perspective. In F. Francioni & M. Scheinin (Eds.), *Cultural human rights* (pp. 247-284). Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.
- Mann, S. (2010). A Critical Review of Qualitative Interviews in Applied Linguistics. *Applied Linguistics*, 32(1), 6–24, <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amq043>

- Marino Institute of Education. (2022). *Report on the Consultation with Children on the new Draft Primary Curriculum*. MIE & NCCA. <https://ncca.ie/en/resources/final-report-on-the-consultation-with-children-on-the-new-draft-primary-curriculum/>
- Marshall, J., & Foster, N. (2002). "Between Belonging": Habitus and the migration experience. *Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien*, 46, 63-83. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1541-0064.2002.tb00731.x>
- Martin, P.W., Bhatt, A., Bhojani, N., & Creese, A. (2003). *A Preliminary Report on a Survey of Complementary Schools and their Communities in Leicester*. University of Leicester.
- Martyn, H. (2000). *Developing reflective practice. Making sense of social work in a world of change*. Bristol University Press.
- Maylor, U., Glass, K., Issa, T., Abol K., Minty, S., Rose, A., Ross, A., Tanner, E., Finch, S., Low, N., Taylor, E., Tipping, S., Purdon, S., & Purdon, B. (2010). *Impact Of Supplementary Schools On Pupils' Attainment: An Investigation Into What Factors Contribute To Educational Improvements*. London Metropolitan University.
- Maylor, U., Glass, K., Tozun Issa, T., Kuyok, K.A., Minty, S., Rose, A., Ross, A., Tanner, E., Finch, S., Low, N., Taylor, E., Tipping, S. & Purdon, S. (2010). *The impact of supplementary schools on pupils' attainment: An investigation into what factors contribute to educational improvements*. Department for Children, Schools and Families. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/4150856.pdf>
- Mc Daid, R., & Nowlan, E. (2022). Barriers to recognition for migrant teachers in Ireland. *European Educational Research Journal* 21(2), 247-264.
- McAleese, D. (2017). The Celtic Tiger: Origins and Prospects. *Policy Options*. <https://www.tcd.ie/Economics/staff/dmcaleese/Web/mcaleese.pdf>
- McCarty, T., May, S. (Eds.). (2017). *Language Policy and Political Issues in Education. Encyclopedia of Language and Education*. Springer.
- McChesney, K., & Aldridge, J. (2019). Weaving an interpretivist stance throughout mixed methods research. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 42(3), 225–238. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1743727X.2019.1590811>
- McCoy, S., Smyth, E. (2021). *Submission on Leaving Certificate reform to the Joint Committee on Education, Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science*. ESRI. <https://www.esri.ie/publications/submission-on-leaving-certificate-reform-to-the-joint-committee-on-education-further> [Accessed 21 January 2022]
- McDermott, P. (2017). Language rights and the Council of Europe: A failed response to a multilingual continent? *Ethnicities*, 17(5), 603-626. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796816654725>
- McGinnity, F., Privalko, I., Russell, H., Curristan, S., Stapleton, A., & Laurence, J. (2022). *Origin and Integration: Housing and Family Among Migrants in the 2016 Irish Census*. ESRI and Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. <https://www.esri.ie/publications/origin-and-integration-housing-and-family-among-migrants-in-the-2016-irish-census>
- Mercer, J. (2007). The challenges of insider research in educational institutions: wielding a double-edged sword and resolving delicate dilemmas. *Oxford Review of Education*, 33(1), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03054980601094651>

- Merton, R. K. (1972). Insiders and Outsiders: A Chapter in the Sociology of Knowledge. *American Journal of Sociology*, 78(1), 9-47. <https://doi.org/10.1086/225294>
- Mhic Mhathúna, M., & Nic Fhionnlaioich, F. (2021). Why parents chose to send their children to Irish-medium immersion preschools: Learning from parental choice strategies in Celtic countries. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 29(3), 441-454. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1350293X.2021.1928718>
- Milroy, L., & Muysken, P. (1995). *One speaker, two languages: Crossdisciplinary perspectives on code-switching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Miodunka W. (2003). *Bilingwizm polsko-portugalski w Brazylii* [Polish-Portuguese Bilingualism in Brasil]. Universitas.
- Miodunka, W. (1998). *Stan badań nad Polonią i Polakami* [Paper presentation]. Stała Konferencja MABPZ. Raperswil, Switzerland. <https://mabpz.org/publikacje/stan-badan-nad-polonia-i-polakami>
- Miodunka, W. (Ed.). (1990). *Język polski w świecie* [Polish language worldwide]. Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe.
- Miodunka, W., Tambor, J., Achtelek, A., Cudak, R., Krzyżyk, D., Mazur, J., Niesporek-Szamburska, B., Ożóg, K., Pawłowski, A., Praszałowicz, D., Seretny, A., Szul, R., Tambor, A., & Zgółka, T. (2018). *Nauczanie i promocja języka polskiego w świecie: Diagnoza – stan – perspektywy* [Teaching and Promotion of the Polish Language in the World: Diagnosis – Condition – Perspectives]. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego
- Montero-Marin, J., Hinze, V., Mansfield, K., et al. (2023). Young People's Mental Health Changes, Risk, and Resilience During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *JAMA Network Open*, 6(9), e2335016. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2023.35016
- Morgan, D. L. (2014). Pragmatism as a Paradigm for Social Research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 20(8), 1045-1053. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800413513733>
- Mother Tongues. (2022). *One school, many languages Creating an environment where all languages are valued A toolkit for schools*. https://mothertongues.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/toolkit_ECML_updated.pdf
- Mu, S., Li, A., Shen, L., Han, L., & Wen, Z. (2023). Linguistic repertoires embodied and digitalized: A computer-vision-aided analysis of the language portraits by multilingual youth. *Sustainability*, 15(3), 2194. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15032194>
- Murphy, K., & Sheridan, A. (2023). *Annual report on migration and asylum 2022: Ireland*. ESRI. https://www.esri.ie/system/files/publications/SUSTAT124_1.pdf
- Myers-Scotton, C. (1993). *Social motivations for codeswitching: Evidence from Africa*. Clarendon.
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, Department of Education and Skills, Government of Ireland. (2020). *Polish Curriculum Specification. Leaving Certificate, Ordinary and Higher Level*. <https://curriculumonline.ie/Senior-cycle/Senior-Cycle-Subjects/Polish/>
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (1999a). *Pilot Project on Modern Languages in the Primary School. Draft curriculum guidelines*. NCCA. https://ncca.ie/media/1822/pilot_project_on_modern_languages_in_the_primary_school_draft_curriculum_guidelines.pdf

- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (1999b). *The Junior Cycle Review - Progress Report: Issues and Options for Development*. NCCA.
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (2001a). *Leaving Certificate Applied. Programme Statement & Outline of Student Tasks*. NCCA. https://www.ncca.ie/media/2554/lca_programme.pdf
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (2001b). *Modern Languages in Primary School. Teacher guidelines*. NCCA. https://ncca.ie/media/1811/modern_languages_in_primary_schools_teacher_guidelines.pdf
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (2004). *Update on the Junior Cycle Review*. NCCA. https://ncca.ie/media/1840/update_on_the_junior_cycle_review.pdf
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (2005a). *Report On The Feasibility Of Modern Languages In The Primary School Curriculum*. NCCA. http://www.onevoiceforlanguages.com/uploads/2/4/6/7/24671559/modern_languages_in_the_primary_school_2005.pdf
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (2005b). *Review of Languages in Post-Primary Education. Report of the First Phase of the Review*. NCCA. https://ncca.ie/media/1828/review_of_languages_in_post-primary_education_report_of_the_first_phase_of_the_review.pdf
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (2008). *Modern Languages in the Primary School Curriculum. Feasibility and futures*. NCCA. https://ncca.ie/media/1876/mod_langs_in_psc_feasibility_and_futures_2008.pdf
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (2009a). *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework and Siolta, The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education Audit: Similarities and differences*. NCCA. https://ncca.ie/media/4152/aistear_siolta_similarities_differences_.pdf
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (2009b). *Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework. Principles and Themes*. NCCA. https://www.curriculumonline.ie/getmedia/484bcc30-28cf-4b24-90c8-502a868bb53a/Aistear-Principles-and-Themes_EN.pdf
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (2014). *Consultation on the Draft Primary Language Curriculum Junior Infants to Second Class. Interim report*. NCCA. <https://ncca.ie/media/2046/consultation-on-the-draft-primary-language-curriculum-interim-report.pdf>
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (2018). *Primary Developments: Primary Language Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile. Report on the Consultation for the Draft Primary Curriculum Framework*. NCCA. https://ncca.ie/media/3626/plc_consultation-report.pdf
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (2019). *Interim Report of review of senior cycle education*. NCCA. <https://ncca.ie/media/4025/senior-cycle-review-interim-report-july-2019.pdf>
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (2020). *Draft Primary Curriculum Framework*. NCCA. <https://ncca.ie/media/4870/en-primary-curriculum-framework-dec-2020.pdf>

- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (2022a). *Phase 1 consultation by Maynooth University, Stranmillis University College and Early Childhood Ireland*. NCCA. <https://ncca.ie/en/resources/phase-1-consultation-by-maynooth-university-stranmillis-university-college-and-early-childhood-ireland-with-babies-toddlers-and-young-children-to-include-their-voices-in-the-updated-aistear/>
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (2022b). *Primary Developments: Primary Language Curriculum/Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile. Report on the consultation on the Draft Primary Curriculum Framework*. NCCA. https://ncca.ie/media/5902/consultation-on-the-draft-primary-curriculum-framework_december-2022.pdf
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (2022c). *Senior Cycle Review Advisory Report*. NCCA. https://ncca.ie/media/5399/scr-advisory-report_en.pdf
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. (2024). *Frequently asked questions on the Draft Primary Curriculum Specifications*. NCCA. https://ncca.ie/media/spbfvpo3/faqs_primconsultation2024.pdf
- National Disability Authority. (2021). *Report on the Operation of the Irish Sign Language Act 2017*. Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/ad30f-publication-of-the-report-on-the-operation-of-the-irish-sign-language-act-2017/>
- National University of Ireland. (2021). *NUI Matriculation Regulations*. http://www.nui.ie/college/docs/matricRegs/matricRegs_2021_2022_ENG.pdf
- Nestor, N. (2014). The Polish complementary schools and Irish mainstream education: Past, present and future. *The Irish Polish Society Yearbook*, 1, 29–5.5
- Ní Dhiorbháin, A., Nic Aindriú, S., Connaughton-Crean, L., & Ó Duibhir, P. (2023). It's more the invisible benefits – multilingual parents' experiences of immersion education and their reasons for choosing immersion. *Language and Education*, 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2023.2238680>
- Ní Dhuinn, M., & Keane, E. (2023). 'But you don't look Irish': identity constructions of minority ethnic students as 'non-Irish' and deficient learners at school in Ireland. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, 32(4), 826–855. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09620214.2021.1927144>
- Nordstrom, J. (2016). Parents' reasons for community language schools: insight from a high-shift, non-visible, middle-class community. *Language and Education*, 30(6), 519–535. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2016.1168431>
- Nordstrom, J. (2019). Students' reasons for community language schooling: links to a heritage or capital for the future? *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 25(2), 389–400. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2019.1688248>
- Nordstrom, J. (2020). Teaching in the periphery: Teacher identity in community language schools. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 96. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2020.103192>
- Nordstrom, J., & Zhang, R. (2023). Micro level language planning, agency, and ICT in community language schools: before, during and after the pandemic. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14664208.2023.2237376>
- North B. & Piccardo E. (2016), *Developing illustrative descriptors of aspects of mediation for the CEFR*. CoE, Education Policy Division.

- Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. (2022). *Census 2021. Main statistics for Northern Ireland. Statistical bulletin. Language*. NISRA.
<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/system/files/statistics/census-2021-main-statistics-for-northern-ireland-phase-1-statistical-bulletin-language.pdf>
- Norton Peirce, B. (1995), Social Identity, Investment, and Language Learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29, 9-31. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3587803>
- Norton, B. (2000). *Identity and language learning: Gender, ethnicity, and educational change*. Longman/Pearson Education.
- Norton, B. (2001). Non-participation, imagined communities and the language classroom. In M. Breen (Ed.), *Learner contributions to language learning: New directions in research* (pp. 159-171). Longman/Pearson Education.
- Norton, B. (2013). *Identity and language learning: Extending the conversation* (2nd ed.). Multilingual Matters.
- Norton, B., & McKinney, C. (2011). An identity approach to second language acquisition. In Atkinson, D. (Ed.), *Alternative approaches to second language acquisition* (pp. 73–94). Routledge.
- Nowicka, E. (2010). Migracje powrotne: powrót do domu czy nowa migracja [Return migration: returning home or another migration]. In H. Grzymała-Moszczyńska (Ed.) *Drogi i rozdroża*. NOMOS.
- Ó Duibhir, P., & Cummins, J. (2012). *Towards and Integrated Language Curriculum in Early Childhood and Primary Education (3 - 12 Years)*. NCCA.
https://ncca.ie/media/1503/towards_an_integrated_language_curriculum_in_early_childhood_and_primary_education_rr_16.pdf
- Ó Laoire, M. (2012). Language policy and minority language education in Ireland: re-exploring the issues. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 25(1), 17-25.
- Ó Laoire, M. (2018). Minority and heritage language in Ireland. In C. Seals and S. Shah (Eds.), *Heritage Language Policies around the World* (pp. 97-108). Routledge.
- O'Mahony, P. (2013). Rethinking foreign language proficiency: (what the 'new' Irish can offer us). *IVEA*, 2013(Spring), 14–18.
http://www.onevoiceforlanguages.com/uploads/2/4/6/7/24671559/rethinking_foreign_language_proficiency_-_pom.pdf
- Okyere, E., Salusalu, M., Goundar, R., & Marfoh, K. (2023). Online teaching during COVID-19 pandemic in Fiji: Challenges, facilitators and improvement strategies. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 23(1), 62-82. <https://doi.org/10.1108/QRJ-03-2022-0041>
- Olmos-Vega, F. M., Stalmeijer, R. E., Varpio, L., & Kahlke, R. (2022). A practical guide to reflexivity in qualitative research: AMEE Guide No. 149. *Medical Teacher*, 45(3), 241–251. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0142159X.2022.2057287>
- Omidire, M. & Ayob, S. (2022). The utilisation of translanguaging for learning and teaching in multilingual primary classrooms. *Multilingua*, 41(1), 105-129. <https://doi.org/10.1515/multi-2020-0072>
- Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Leech, N. L. (2005). On Becoming a Pragmatic Researcher: The Importance of Combining Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methodologies. *International Journal*

- of Social Research Methodology: Theory & Practice*, 8(5), 375–387.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13645570500402447>
- Oppenheim, A. N. (1992). *Questionnaire, design, interviewing and attitude measurement*. Pinter Pub Ltd.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2020). *Education in Ireland: An OECD Assessment of the Senior Cycle Review*. OECD. <https://ncca.ie/en/senior-cycle/senior-cycle-review/oecd-report-education-in-ireland/>
- Orzeł-Dereń, K., & Sufa, B. (2021) Historia szkolnictwa polskiego w Brazylii na przykładzie wybranych stanów [History of Polish education in Brazil based on selected states]. *Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis. Studia Geographica*, 17, 159-174.
- Paradis, J. (2011). Individual Differences in Child English Second Language Acquisition: Comparing child-internal and child-external factors. *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism*, 1(3), 213–237.
- Paradis, J., Genesee, F., & Crago, M. (2021). *Dual Language Development and Disorders*. Brookes Publishing.
- Paradowska, K. (1992). Polacy w Wielkiej Brytanii do 1939 [Poles in Great Britain until 1939]. In B. Szydlowska-Ceglowska (Ed.), *Polonia w Europie*. (pp. 411-421). Polska Akademia Nauk.
- Patterson, V. (2019). *Supplementary Schools: Sites of Social Capital?* [Doctoral thesis, University College London]. <https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10085052/>
- Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Sage.
- Paulsrud, B. A., Rosén, J., Boglárka, S., & Wedin, Å. (2017). *New perspectives on translanguaging and education*. Multilingual Matters.
- Pavlenko, A. & Blackledge, A. (2004). *Negotiation of Identities in Multilingual Contexts*. Multilingual Matters. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781853596483>
- Pavlenko, A., & Norton, B. (2007). Imagined Communities, Identity, and English Language Learning. In J. Cummins & C. Davison (Eds.), *International Handbook of English Language Teaching* (pp. 669-680). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-46301-8_43
- Pearson, B. (2002). Narrative competence among monolingual and bilingual school children in Miami. In Oller, K. & Eilers, R. (Eds.), *Language and literacy in bilingual children* (pp. 135–174). Multilingual Matters.
- Pearson, B. (2008). *Raising a Bilingual Child. Step by Step Guide for Parents*. Living Language.
- Pedrak, A. (2019). An evaluation of Polish supplementary schools in Ireland. *TEANGA, the Journal of the Irish Association for Applied Linguistics*, 10, 162–171.
- Pedrak, A. (2022). ‘In between’ two Educational Settings: Experiences of Bilingual Children attending Polish Supplementary Schools in Ireland in light of Translanguaging Pedagogy. In: B. Cortina-Pérez, A. Andúgar, A. Álvarez, S. Corral, N. Martínez, A. Otto (Eds). *Addressing Future Challenges In Early Language Learning And Multilingual Education*. Dykinson.
- Peyton J.K., Ranard D.A., & McGinnis S. (2001). *Heritage languages in America: Preserving a national resource*. Center for Applied Linguistics & Delta Systems.

- Phillimore, J., Sigona N., Tonkiss, K. (Eds.). (2020). *Superdiversity, Policy and Governance in Europe: Multi-scalar Perspectives*. Policy Press.
- Pillas, K. (1992). *Motivational and attitudinal aspects of ethnic supplementary school attendance: application of Lisrel and Fishbein to a study of Greek supplementary schools in London* [Doctoral thesis, London: Institute of Education].
- Piqueray, E., Clycq, N., & Timmerman, C. (2016). The Polish community school in Flanders: bridging the gap between school and home environment. In Timmerman, C., Clycq, N., Mc Andrew, M., Balde, A., Braeckmans, L., & Mels, S. (Eds.), *Youth in Education: The necessity of valuing ethnocultural diversity* (1st ed., pp. 71-86). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315658148>
- Plachecki, J. (2015). Retaining the national identity. 35 years of the Irish Polish Society. *The Irish Polish Society Yearbook*, 2, 13-20.
- Plachecki, J. (Ed.) (2012). *Polish Emigration in Ireland in the 20th and early 21st Centuries*. Irish Polish Society.
- Plachecki, J., Smuniewski, C., & Kochańczyk-Bonińska, K. (2023). Polish Organizations in Ireland. A Stimulus for Research on the National Security of the Republic of Poland. *Studia i Analizy Nauk o Polityce*, 1, 121–142.
- Polinsky, M. and Kagan, O. (2007). Heritage languages: In the ‘wild’ and in the classroom. *Language and Linguistics Compass*, 1(5), 368–395.
- Post Primary Language Ireland. (n.d.). *My Language Passport*. <https://languagesconnect.ie/primary-module-resources/>
- Post Primary Languages Ireland. (2019). *Specification for Junior Cycle Short Course in Polish as a Heritage Language*. <https://ppli.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/JCSH-Polish-SPECIFICATION-Final.pdf>
- Post Primary Languages Ireland. (2021). *Annual Report 2020*. PPLI. <https://ppli.ie/publications/>
- Post Primary Languages Ireland. (2022). *Annual Report 2021*. PPLI. <https://ppli.ie/publications/>
- Post Primary Languages Ireland. (2023). *Annual Report 2022*. PPLI. <https://ppli.ie/publications/>
- Post Primary Languages Ireland. (2024). *Annual Report 2023*. PPLI. <https://ppli.ie/publications/>
- Post-Primary Languages Ireland. (2017). *Audit of Foreign Languages Provision in Post-Primary Schools 2017*. <https://ppli.ie/news/audit-of-foreign-languages-in-schools/>
- Potowski, K. (2013). Language maintenance and shift. In R. Bayley, R. Cameron, & C. Lucas (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Sociolinguistics* (pp. 321-339). Oxford University Press.
- Powney, J., & Watts, M. (1987). *Interviewing in Educational Research*. Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Radzik, T. (1986). Szkolnictwo w Wielkiej Brytanii po II wojnie światowej [Schooling in Great Britain after the Second World War]. In A. Koprukowniak (Ed.), *Szkolnictwo polonijne w XX wieku. Studia i rozprawy* [Polish schooling in the 20th century. Studies] (pp.65-148). Wydawnictwo UMCS.
- Radzik, T. (1992). Społeczność polska w Wielkiej Brytanii w latach 1945-1990 [Polish community in Great Britain in 1945-1990]. In B. Szydłowska-Ceglowska (Ed.), *Polonia w Europie*

- [Polish diaspora in Europe] (pp. 437-468). Polska Akademia Nauk, Zakład Badań Narodowościowych.
- Ralph, D., & Staeheli, L. A. (2011). Home and migration: Mobilities, belongings and identities. *Geography Compass*, 5, 517-530. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-8198.2011.00434.x>
- Riach, K. (2009). Exploring Participant-centred Reflexivity in the Research Interview. *Sociology*, 43(2), 356-370. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038508101170>
- Röder, A., Ward, M., & Frese, C. (2015). *New Irish Families: Successes and Challenges in Heritage Language Acquisition for Second Generation Migrant Children*.
- Rogers, A. A., Ha, T., & Ockey, S. (2021). Adolescents' Perceived Socio-Emotional Impact of COVID-19 and Implications for Mental Health: Results From a U.S.-Based Mixed-Methods Study. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 68(1), 43–52.
- Rothman, J. (2009). Understanding the nature and outcomes of early bilingualism: Romance languages as heritage languages. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 13(2), 155–163.
- Royal Irish Academy, National Committee for Modern Language, Literary and Cultural Studies (2011). *National Languages Strategy*. RIA. <http://www.onevoiceforlanguages.com/uploads/2/4/6/7/24671559/ria-national-languages-strategy.pdf.pdf>
- Ruiz, R. (1984). Orientations in Language Planning. *NABE Journal*, 8(2), 15-34. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08855072.1984.10668464>
- Sahlberg, P. Does the pandemic help us make education more equitable?. *Educational Research for Policy and Practice*, 20(1), 11–18 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10671-020-09284-4>
- Sala Rothen, M.F. & Mc Daid, R. (2023). Someone like me? Minority ethnic children reflect on the need for minority ethnic teachers. In E. Keane, M. Heinz & R. Mc Daid (Eds.), *Diversifying the teaching profession: Dimensions, dilemmas and directions for the future* (pp. 166-177). Routledge.
- Sammons, P., & Davis, S. (2017). Mixed Methods Approaches and their Application in Educational Research. In D. Wyse, N. Selwyn, E. Smith, & L. E. Suter (Eds.), *The BERA/Sage Handbook of Educational Research*. Sage Publications.
- Saville, N., & Gutierrez Eugenio, E. (2016). *Research for Cult Committee-European Strategy on Multilingualism-Policy and Implementation at the EU Level*. European Parliament.
- Schaefer, R. T. (2017). *Sociology: A brief introduction* (12th ed.). McGraw-Hill. <http://www.sociology.org.uk/setvpdf/sociology-a-brief-introduction.pdf>
- Schofield, J. (1990). Increasing the generalizability of qualitative research. In Eisner, E., & Peshkin, A. (Eds.), *Qualitative inquiry in education* (pp. 201–232). Teachers College Press.
- Schwandt, T.A. (2001). *Dictionary of qualitative inquiry* (2nd ed.). Sage.
- Schwartz, M. (2010). Family language policy: Core issues of an emerging field. *Applied Linguistics Review*, 1, 171-192.
- Schwartz, M. (2024). *Ecological Perspectives in Early Language Education: Parent, Teacher, Peer, and Child Agency in Interaction* (1st ed.). Routledge.

- Seals, C.A., & Shah, S. (Eds.). (2017). *Heritage Language Policies around the World* (1st ed.). Routledge.
- Seidlhofer, B. (2007). Common Property: English as a Lingua Franca in Europe. In J. Cummins & C. Davison (Eds.), *International Handbook of English Language Teaching* (Vol. 15). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-46301-8_11
- Sękowska, E. (2010). *Język emigracji polskiej w świecie. Bilans i perspektywy badawcze* [The language of Polish emigration in the world. Balance and research prospects]. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.
- Serwański, J. (1992). Polacy w Wielkiej Brytanii w latach II wojny światowej [Poles in Great Britain during the Second World War]. In B. Szydłowska-Ceglowska (Ed.). *Polonia w Europie* (pp. 423-436). Polska Akademia Nauk. Zakład Badań Narodowościowych.
- Shohamy, E. (2006). *Language Policy: Hidden agendas and new approaches*. Routledge.
- Skutnabb-Kangas, T. & Phillipson, R. (2012). 'Mother Tongue': the Theoretical and Sociopolitical Construction of a Concept. In U. Ammon (Ed.), *Status and Function of Languages and Language Varieties* (pp. 450-477). De Gruyter.
- Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (1994). Mother Tongue Maintenance: The Debate. *Linguistic Human Rights and Minority Education. TESOL Quarterly*, 28(3), 625–628.
- Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (1998). Human rights and language wrongs - a future for diversity. In P. Benson, P. Grundy, & T. Skutnabb-Kangas (Eds.), *Language rights* (Special issue). *Language Sciences*, 20(1), 5–27.
- Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (2000). *Linguistic Genocide in Education--or Worldwide Diversity and Human Rights?* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410605191>
- Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (2008). Human rights and language policy in education. In S. May & N. H. Hornberger (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Language and Education* (2nd ed., Vol 1, pp. 107-119). Springer.
- Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (2012). Linguistic Human Rights. In L. Solan & P. Tiersma (Eds.), *Oxford Handbook on Language and Law* (pp. 235–247). Oxford University Press.
- Slany, K., Ślusarczyk, M. (2013). Migracje zagraniczne Polaków w świetle NSP 2011. Trendy i charakterystyki socjo-demograficzne [International migration of Poles in the light of the NSP 2011 : trends and socio-demographic characteristics]. In D. Praszałowicz, M., Łuźniak-Piecha, & J. Kulpińska (Eds.), *Młoda polska emigracja w UE jako przedmiot badań psychologicznych, socjologicznych i kulturowych EuroEmigranci.PL* (pp.1-26). Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Umiejętności.
- Smith-Christmas, C. (2022). Using a 'Family Language Policy' lens to explore the dynamic and relational nature of child agency. *Child Development*, 36, 354–368. <https://doi.org/10.1111/chso.12461>
- Smolicz, J. (1984). Multiculturalism and an Overarching Framework of Values: Some Educational Responses for Ethnically Plural Societies. *European Journal of Education*, 19(1), 11–23. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1503255>
- Smolicz, J., & Secombe M. (1977). A study of attitudes to the introduction of ethnic languages and cultures in Australian schools, *Australian Journal of Education*, 21, 1–24.

- Smolicz, J., & Secombe M. (1983). Future teachers' attitudes to community languages in Australia. *Unicorn: Bulletin of the Australian College of Education*, 9, 63–66.
- Song, J., & Wu, A. E. (2024). Intergenerational autoethnography of heritage language maintenance: Focusing on emotion, identity, and power. *Modern Language Journal*, 108, 14–36. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12898>
- Souza, A., & Arthur, L. (2020). The impact of leadership on the professional development of teachers in complementary schools. *Management in Education*, 34(4), 141–148. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0892020620942509>
- Spolsky, B. (2004). *Language Policy*. Cambridge University Press.
- Stanley, R., & McLaren, S. (2007). Ethical issues in health and social care research. In A. Leathard, & S. McLaren (Eds.), *Ethics: Contemporary challenges in health and social care* (pp. 35–53). Bristol University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt9qgv9b>
- Steenwegen, J., Clycq, N., & Vanhoof, J. (2022a). How and why minoritised communities self-organise education: a review study. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 53(7), 1281–1299. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2021.2022458>
- Steenwegen, J., Clycq, N., & Vanhoof, J. (2022b). The what and why of supplementary schooling in Flanders: purposes and underlying motives as perceived by initiators. *Research Papers in Education*, 38(6), 1029–1051. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2022.2065524>
- Strand, S. (2007). Surveying the Views of Pupils attending Supplementary Schools in England, *Educational Research*, 49(1), 1–19.
- Sulimirski, T. (1955). Nauka polska na obczyźnie 1939–1954 [Polish education abroad 1939–1954], *Nauka Polska na Obczyźnie*, 1, 3–5.
- Szczepaniak-Kozak, A., & Wąsikiewicz-Firlej, E. (2024). Teacher agency in the times of crisis: A situational analysis of school environment after the 2022 Russian invasion in Ukraine. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 15.
- Szydłowska-Ceglowska, B. (Ed.) (1992). *Polonia w Europie* [Polish diaspora in Europe]. Polska Akademia Nauk, Zakład Badań Narodowościowych.
- Tadesse, S. & Muluye, W. (2020). The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on education system in developing countries: a review. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 8(10), 159–170. <https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2020.810011>
- Talmy, S. (2010). Qualitative Interviews in Applied Linguistics: From Research Instrument to Social Practice. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 30, 128–148. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190510000085>
- Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (2003). *The SAGE handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research (1st ed.)*. SAGE Publications.
- Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (2010). *The SAGE handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research (2nd ed.)*. SAGE Publications.
- Teddlie, C. and Tashakkori, A. (2009) *Foundations of Mixed Methods Research: Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches in the Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Sage.

- Teddlie, C., & Sammons, P. (2010) Applications of mixed methods to the field of educational effectiveness research. In B. P. M. Creemers, L. Kyriakides, and P. Sammons (Eds.) *Methodological advances in educational effectiveness research*. Routledge.
- The Council of the European Union. (2019). Council Recommendation of 22 May 2019 on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages. *Official Journal of the European Union*, C189/15. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.C_.2019.189.01.0015.01.ENG&toc=OJ%3AC%3A2019%3A189%3ATOC
- Theofanidis, D., & Fountouki, A. (2019). Limitations And Delimitations In The Research Process. *Perioperative nursing*, 7(3), 155–162. <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.2552022>
- Thorpe, A. (2018). Leadership succession as an aspect of organisational sustainability in complementary schools in England. *Leading & Managing*, 24(2), 61-73.
- Thorpe, A. (2023). Leading community/heritage language schools. In K. Cruickshank, J. Lo Bianco, & M. Wahlin (Eds.), *Community and Heritage Languages Schools Transforming Education: Research, Challenges, and Teaching Practices* (pp. 101-112). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003302704>
- Toma, J. (2011). Approaching rigor in Applied Qualitative Research. In C. Clifton, & R. C. Serlin (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook for Research in Education: Pursuing Ideas as the Keystone of Exemplary Inquiry*. Sage Publications.
- Trifonas, P. and Aravossitas, T. (2014). *Rethinking Heritage Language Education*. Cambridge University Press.
- Trifonas, P. P., & Aravossitas, T. (Eds.). (2018). *Handbook of Research and Practice in Heritage Language Education*. Springer International.
- Trinity College Dublin. (2014). *Policy on Good Research Practice*. TCD. <https://www.tcd.ie/graduatestudies/assets/pdf/good-research-practice-policy.pdf>
- Trinity College Dublin. (2014). *Trinity Policy on Good Research Practice*. TCD. https://www.tcd.ie/media/tcd/about/policies/pdfs/Policy-on-Good-Research-Practice_1.1.pdf
- Trinity College Dublin. (2020). *Data Protection Policy*. TCD. https://www.tcd.ie/dataprotection/assets/docs/dataprotectionpolicy/Trinity_College_Dublin_Data_Protection_Policy_16122020.pdf
- UN General Assembly. (1966). *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*. United Nations, Treaty Series, 999, 171. <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b3aa0.html>
- UN General Assembly. (2012). *Report of the Independent Expert on minority issues, Rita Izsak (A/HRC/22/49)*. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G13/100/19/PDF/G1310019.pdf?OpenElement>
- Quinn, P., McGilloway, S., & Burke, J. (2021). COVID-19 and the class of 2020: a national study of the mental health and wellbeing of Leaving Certificate students in Ireland. *Irish Educational Studies*, 40(2), 375–384. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03323315.2021.1916564>
- UNESCO, Institute for Statistics. (n.d.). Home language. In *The UIS Glossary*. Retrieved April 4, 2024, from <https://uis.unesco.org/en/glossary>

- UNESCO, UNICEF, & The World Bank. (2020). *What have we learnt? Overview of findings from a survey of ministries of education on national responses to COVID-19*. UNESCO.
<https://data.unicef.org/resources/national-education-responses-to-covid19/>
- UNESCO. (2024). *Multilingualism and language diversity for inclusion in education. Brief on inclusion in education*. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000389960>
- United Nations. (1948). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights. 217 A (III)*.
<https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b3712c.html>
- United Nations. (1989). Convention on the Rights of the Child. Retrieved from
<https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b38f0.html>
- United Nations. (1992). Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities. A/RES/47/135. Retrieved from
<https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b38d0.html>
- United Nations. (2020). Education, language and the human rights of minorities. Report of the Independent Expert on minority issues, A/HRC/43/47. Retrieved from <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G20/003/58/PDF/G2000358.pdf?OpenElement>
- Valdés, G. (2000). The teaching of heritage languages: An introduction for Slavic-teaching professionals. *The learning and teaching of Slavic languages and cultures*, 375-403.
- Valdés, G. (2005). Bilingualism, Heritage Language Learners, and SLA Research: Opportunities Lost or Seized?. *The Modern Language Journal*, 89, 410-426.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2005.00314.x>
- Valenzuela, A. (1999). *Subtractive schooling: U.S.-Mexican youth and the politics of caring*. State University of New York Press.
- Vallejo, C., & Dooly, M. (2020). Plurilingualism and translanguaging: emergent approaches and shared concerns. Introduction to the special issue. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 23(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2019.1600469>
- Van Der Spoel, I., Noroozi, O., Schuurink, E., & Van Ginkel, S. (2020). Teachers' online teaching expectations and experiences during the Covid19-pandemic in The Netherlands. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 43(4), 623-638.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1821185>
- Vogel, S., & García, O. (2017). *Translanguaging*. CUNY Graduate Center Publications and Research. https://academicworks.cuny.edu/gc_pubs/402/
- Wacquant, L. (1989). Towards a reflexive sociology: a workshop with Pierre Bourdieu. *Sociological Theory*, 7(1). 26 – 63.
- Wald, B. (1974). Bilingualism. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 3, 301–321.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2949293>
- Wallen, M. & Kelly-Holmes, H. (2006) “I think they just think it’s going to go away at some stage”: policy and practice in teaching English as an additional language in Irish primary schools’ *Language and Education* 20(3): 141-161.
- Walsh, J. (2012). Language policy and language governance: a case-study of Irish language legislation. *Language Policy*, 11, 323–341. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10993-012-9238-7>
- Walsh, J. (2022). *One Hundred Years of Irish Language Policy, 1922–2022*. Peter Lang Verlag.

- Walsh, J., & Day, R. (2018). *Discussion paper on Irish language radio broadcasting*. NUI Galway and Mary Immaculate College, UL. <https://doi.org/10.13025/S8VH1S>
- Wang, H., & Hatoss, A. (2024). Language policy and planning for heritage language maintenance: a scoping review. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14664208.2024.2341203>
- Watkins, D. C., & Gioia, D. (2015). *Mixed methods research*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199747450.001.0001>
- Weekly, R. (2020). Attitudes, beliefs and responsibility for heritage language maintenance in the UK. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, 21(1), 45–66. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14664208.2018.1554324>
- Weick, K. E. (2002). Essai: Real-Time Reflexivity: Prods to Reflection. *Organization Studies*, 23(6), 893–898. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840602236011>
- Weinreich, U. (1953). *Languages in Contact: Findings and Problems*. The Hague: Mouton Publishers.
- Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511803932>
- Wiley, T. G. (2001). On defining heritage languages and their speakers. In J. K. Peyton, D. A. Ranard, & S. McGinnis (Eds.), *Heritage languages in America: Preserving a national resource* (pp. 29–36). Center for Applied Linguistics & Delta Systems.
- Winter, J., & Pauwels, A. (2006). Language maintenance in friendships: second-generation German, Greek, and Vietnamese migrants. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 180, 123–139. <https://doi.org/10.1515/IJSL.2006.044>
- Wiśniewska, M. (2019). Szkolnictwo polonijne po II wojnie światowej – stan badań. [Polish diaspora education after World War II – the state of research]. *Przegląd Historyczno-Oświatowy*, 1(2), 257–284.
- Wu, H. P., Palmer, D. K., & Field, S. L. (2011). Understanding teachers' professional identity and beliefs in the Chinese heritage language school in the USA. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 24(1), 47–60.
- Young, S., & White, A. (2024). The challenges of language teaching in Polish complementary schools in the UK during the COVID-19 lockdown. *Educational Review*, 76(2), 354–370. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2022.2035686>
- Zontini, E. (2004). Immigrant women in Barcelona: Coping with the consequences of transnational lives. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 30(6), 1113–1144. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183042000286278>
- Zontini, E. (2006). Italian families and social capital: Care provision in a transnational world. *Community, Work & Family*, 9(3), 325–345. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13668800600743636>