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Abstract: The article explores the different discourses about bilingualism and heritage languages produced by early bilingual education initiatives. More concretely, it analyzes the recurring beliefs, ideas, and conceptualizations that circulate about bilingualism and Spanish as a heritage language within bilingual education spaces of different European countries. The empirical analyses addresses presented three research questions: 1) What are the main ideologies about bilingualism and heritage languages circulating in the discourses of these education initiatives? 2) What are their main discursive expressions? And 3) how do they discursively interrelate? The results show how the early bilingual education spaces are framed by a purist idea of bilingualism, a cosmopolitan image of bilingual education, and a vision of Spanish that emphasizes the culture and identity dimensions of heritage languages.

Key words: linguistic ideologies; bilingual purism; discourses; Spanish as a heritage language

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1. Introduction

Heritage languages are a multidimensional phenomenon in which at least five basic dimensions can be distinguished, each affecting their speakers (Moreno Fernández in press). These include an *educational dimension*, which refers to the education of heritage speakers (language didactics, school organization, teacher training, etc.), an *ethnic dimension*, which pertains to the ethnic and racial identity of the speakers and how this is perceived, and a *community dimension*, which involves the actions and attitudes that emerge in everyday socialization. In addition, there is a *linguistic dimension*, which reflects the consequences of contact between the heritage language and the

majority language, and an *acquisition dimension* that encompasses the psycho-cognitive and psycholinguistic processes experienced by speakers.

Among the various definitions that have been given of the concept of “heritage languages”, Silvina Montrul’s (2015: 15-16) is particularly noteworthy; she defines them as immigrant minority languages that coexist with and are learned alongside a majority or socially dominant language. Complementarily, Montrul and Maria Polinsky (2021) propose that a heritage language is one spoken at home or made available to young children, especially, one that is not a national or dominant language in society. These general definitions, while focusing on

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languages, clearly reveal the importance of intergenerational language transmission and family communication. This background will inform the present article, which explores the discursive dimension of the process of linguistic socialization within the family and in educational settings in Europe.

Heritage speakers of Spanish in Europe constitute a large and heterogeneous demolinguisic group, conservatively estimated at 1.2 million people (Loureda, Moreno-Fernández and Álvarez Mella 2023), in which several generations coexist, from the descendants of historical migration (e.g., Spaniards in Germany, Belgium, or Switzerland; Chileans in Sweden, etc.) to the younger descendants of recent migration. In recent decades, Europe has become an important destination for Spanish-speaking migration that is highly diverse in terms of origins and social profiles, and therefore contributes to a complex sociolinguistic reality (Álvarez Mella, 2019; Moreno-Fernández and Álvarez Mella 2023). From the perspective of linguistic socialization, several studies have shown the importance of the different demographic forms of the group, from the high presence of mixed families, their socialization patterns and their expectations regarding the maintenance of Spanish (Ferré-Pérez, Ramos Méndez, and Salaberri Ramiro 2022; Álvarez Mella, Blattner, and Gómez-Pavón Durán 2023) to the different contact dynamics in families formed by Spanish speakers of different dialectal origins (Álvarez Mella and Gómez-Pavón Durán, 2024) or in international families. This socio-demolinguisic panorama coexists with heterogeneous educational opportunities for the development of different heritage language skills (García García and Reimann, 2020; Sánchez Abchi 2021; Blattner, Gómez-Pavón Durán, and Álvarez Mella 2023) in a wide diversity of social, political, and cultural contexts that constitute the ecosystem in which the linguistic socialization of heritage speakers takes place.

One of the most effective ways of approaching the field of heritage languages socialization is through an analysis of the ideologies that emerge in such contexts and that manifest in discourses about the agents involved in the process. By speaking in this case of ideology, we are adopting a broad perspective, referring to the relationships established between individuals, their ideas, the social groups to which they belong, and the communities they inhabit. Such relationships require a process of meaning creation attributed to social realities

in concrete environments, which in our case would be educational centers attended by (potential) heritage language-speaking children with a migratory background in European urban centers. As for discourses, they are understood here as social practices conditioned by ideologies, which at the same time have the capacity to affect the way of acquiring, learning or modifying the ideologies themselves (Van Dijk 2003: 17). This reality connects perfectly with the processes of socialization, since we generally learn ideas by listening, talking or reading with other members of our social environment, especially the family and the school. This means that, just as ideological discourses condition the perception of linguistic reality, perception itself can condition the process of conceptualization or creation of meanings and ideological discourses.

Our analysis has been based mainly on the discourses produced in and by bilingual kindergartens in the European context, insofar as they form part of the public discourse on Spanish as a heritage language. We understand that the ideas circulating in these institutions in fact reflect linguistic ideologies, and contribute to their spread in the family setting. Specifically, the present study is concerned with the public discourse on bilingualism and Spanish as a heritage language in Europe.

The aim of this study is to explore the different discourses on bilingualism and heritage language produced by early bilingual education initiatives. More specifically, the aim is to identify the recurrent beliefs, ideas, and conceptualizations that circulate about bilingualism and Spanish as a heritage language in bilingual educational spaces in different European countries. The empirical analyses were oriented to three research questions: 1) What are the main ideologies about bilingualism and heritage languages circulating in the discourses of educational initiatives? 2) What are their main discursive expressions? And 3) how are they discursively interrelated?

2. Theoretical background

Within the public spheres of European countries, different ideas and evaluations about languages circulate, expressing, reproducing, and constructing particular linguistic ideologies. In the case of heritage languages, the importance of public discourses about languages and migrant multilingualism lies in their ability to influence and guide family language policies (Curdt-Christiansen and Huang 2020). In migratory contexts, the linguistic development of heritage languages depends on families' modes of

language management and practices of language socialization and interaction. Generally speaking, family language management includes both conscious and unconscious strategies as well as intentional and unintentional actions that parents use to try to influence the linguistic socialization conditions and language development of their children (Curdt-Christiansen, Lan, and Silver 2012). In this sense, parents are conceived of and positioned as decisive agents for the linguistic development of their offspring, where notions about their own ability to influence are a decisive factor (De Houwer 1999; Blommaert 2019).

2.1 Public discourse and family language policy

The linguistic socialization of heritage language speakers is not confined solely to the family space (Moreno Fernández and Loureda 2023). It is a polycentric process (Blommaert and Backus 2013) involving, in addition to the home, educational institutions, the community of origin, and centers in charge of organizing activities in the heritage language (Fishman 2001a). To manage this complex ecosystem of linguistic socialization, parents in multilingual families make decisions and develop strategies (with varying degrees of conscious intent) to manage the interaction and/or learning processes that take place within the home itself or in external spaces of linguistic socialization, such as the heritage language-speaking community, or heritage language and bilingual education programs. Family language management is a kind of investment that depends both on available resources (time, educational offerings, purchasing power) and expectations about the social, cultural, and educational effects of language development (Norton 1995, 2000, 2013; Ali 2021).

On the other hand, family expectations consist of a set of beliefs regarding languages (generally shared within a wider community), which are usually based on facts, arguments, knowledge, and beliefs about languages and bilingualism, such as the number of speakers of the languages, the possibilities of cultural, economic and political exchange offered by the mastery of several languages, or the social prestige of bilingualism and language combinations. All this “shared knowledge”, articulated in discourses, influences the decisions of families within their specific socio-political, historical and economic contexts (Mirvahedi 2020). In this framework, ideologies function as a link between discourses and the linguistic practices of families (Coetzee 2018). The field of study of family language policies has shown how parents’ decisions

regarding the linguistic management of the household largely depend on their attitudes and expectations regarding the heritage language and its transmission to the following generations (Álvarez Mella, Blattner, and Gómez-Durán Pavón 2023).

The weight of public discourses in families’ decisions makes sense from a perspective that understands discourses as “phenomena of a socio-cognitive nature that situate the social mind in a specific political-cultural context” (Van Dijk 2016). Parents are therefore immersed in a polyphonic discursive space to which private agents (other parents, for example), expert agents (educators, social workers, etc.) and language policy agents contribute (Lanza and Lomeu Gomes 2020; Ballweg 2022). In this space, not only are ideas and beliefs about heritage languages and bilingualism transmitted and negotiated, but also expectations are established regarding the types of relationships between the different agents involved in language planning (parents, educators, schools, and even heritage speakers themselves).

2.2 Public discourses and ideologies about bilingualism and heritage languages

Language management and planning are a discursive construct (Blommaert 1996). Moreover, language policy has a clear discursive dimension, as all its agents generate discourses shaped by diverse ideologies that impact family language policies (Bezciöglu-Göktolga and Yağmur 2018). The management and planning of heritage languages depends on ideologies manifesting at three levels. The first, most general level concerns the language regime of the countries or regions in question: language policies are often oriented around a self-perception that includes an image of the society’s linguistic composition. As is well known, in many European countries a monolingual ideology, inherited from discourses and practices that contributed to the formation of nation states, predominates and identifies monolingualism as the “natural, normal and desirable” state of societies (Clyne 2005; Ellis, Gogolin, and Clyne 2011; Gogolin 2021). One of the most important characteristics of monolingual ideology is that it assigns domains to the languages within a society, producing a linguistic hierarchy. This hierarchy places national language(s) at the top, followed by international languages normally taught in educational settings, and finally by regional and migratory minority languages (Ellis, Gogolin, and Clyne 2011; Extra 2017). From an educational point of view, this hierarchy results in a sort of oligolingualism (Blommaert 1996):

educational systems concentrate on teaching the official language(s) of the countries and foreign languages considered “valuable”, either for their practical usefulness or for their historical-cultural or academic value (such as Latin and Ancient Greek) (Ellis, Gogolin, and Clyne 2011).

At the second level, are ideas and beliefs about the multilingualism of society and individual bilingualism. Ideologies about multilingualism have various dimensions and present different views on what bilingualism is, how it should be practiced, and its social and individual value. One widespread belief, especially in monolingual societies, is that bilingualism exclusively occurs when two languages are learned simultaneously from early childhood. This purist idea essentially conceives of the bilingual speaker as the sum of two monolingual speakers.

This idea corresponds to what Uriel Weinreich (1974) called “coordinated bilingualism.” Weinreich distinguished between three types of individual bilingualism, according to the relationship between the languages in contact within the bilingual individual: in coordinated bilingualism, the bilingual speaker operates as two juxtaposed monolingual speakers; in composite bilingualism, the two languages share a common conceptual basis; in subordinate bilingualism, the dominated language is learned and used through the dominant language, resulting in a kind of permanent translation (Grosjean 2010; Moreno-Fernández 2023). Coordinated bilingualism has sometimes been explained by comparing it to a switch: that activates the reception and production of one language and deactivates the other. However, this interpretation has been disputed by numerous specialists (Appel and Muysken 2005). Some of these criticisms come from the perspective of translanguaging. Translanguaging assumes the existence of a single repertoire or linguistic complex in bilingual speakers. This complex is made up of components from both languages, integrated and used according to the communicative needs of the speakers in a given context. From this perspective, language alternation and other manifestations of language contact are natural phenomena and not deviations from the established linguistic order (Canarajah 2012; Garcia and Wei 2014). Outside of translanguaging, when speakers’ grasp of one of the languages is precarious, usually in teaching-learning contexts, the term semilingualism is widely used in public discourses, although it has been critiqued for its monolingual bias (Stroud 1978; Grosjean 1985; Salö and Karlander 2018).

Monolingualism-based ideologies often understand the linguistic socialization of

bilinguals as occurring through the acquisition of two separate languages. One of the most persistent pedagogical ideas in the public discourse about bilingual language development is the “one person-one language” (OPOL) approach, commonly recommended as the best practice for bilingual parenting (Piller and Gerber 2021): each parent consistently speaks their “mother” language to the child from an early age, and bilingualism is achieved through distinct sets of monolingual language practices (parallel monolingualism) (Heller 1999). This perspective emphasizes the importance of not mixing languages, implying strict compartmentalization. Public discourses at this second level offer varying assessments of bilingualism: some emphasize its cognitive and social benefits (integration, multilingualism as a resource), while others view it as a threat to attaining sufficient command of both domains (Krüger, Roch, and Dean 2016; Gogolin 2021). At the third and final level of heritage language management and language planning, are ideas and beliefs about the migrant languages themselves. Families’ decisions about heritage language maintenance are based on the values attributed to heritage languages that justify investing in maintaining and learning them (Guardado 2018). Broadly, discourses on heritage languages fall into one of two opposing camps: on the one hand, discourses of pride, oriented toward rights, identity, and linguistic and cultural preservation; and on the other hand, discourses of benefit, oriented toward the added value or social or economic utility of languages and language skills (Heller and Duchêne 2012). From a similar approach, in a study on the linguistic ideologies present in a Latin American school in Bern, Bürki has shown the articulation of three types of discourses: “the identity discourse, as a product of the national linguistic ideology; the discourse of distinction, which comes from the imposition of a national standard; and the instrumental or utilitarian discourse, which appears with the new ideologies of late capitalism” (Bürki 2023: 90).

From the perspective of families, Guardado (2018) offered a broad typology of discourses on Spanish as a heritage language, organized around several axes: the instrumentality axis (the language’s usefulness for the child’s future success, social mobility, and access to more resources); the family cohesion axis (the importance of inherited language skills for family unity and communication with family in the country or region of origin); the identity axis (linked to cultural roots); the affective axis (especially the child’s emotional well-being and self-esteem); the aesthetic axis (an aesthetic appreciation of the language and its varieties); the axis of recognition of the minority culture;

the axis of linguistic correctness; and the axis of cosmopolitanism (especially present in families with high levels of education). Around these axes it is possible to construct a multidimensional approach to analyze how immigrant families assign value to the heritage language and its intergenerational transmission.

3. Methodology

3.1 Method

This study was guided by the following research questions:

- 1) What are the main ideologies about bilingualism and heritage language circulating in the discourses of educational initiatives?
- 2) What are their main discursive expressions?
- 3) How are the ideologies discursively interrelated?

These questions are addressed through two complementary analyses. The first is a quantitative study of texts from the websites of bilingual early childhood education centers in five European countries. The second is a qualitative analysis of several interviews with representatives of community initiatives supporting Spanish as a heritage language in Germany. The application of a mixed methodology allows us to explore public discourses on bilingualism and Spanish as a heritage language in two modalities: texts addressed to parents interested in bilingual early education and communicative interactions with project researchers. Thus, the relationship between the two approaches is not one of deepening, from the general to the concrete (or exemplary), but offers parallel analyses that allow the study of linguistic ideologies in discursive contexts of a different order.

From an analytical perspective, this study adopts an inductive method aimed at identifying values defined based on codes that are then associated with other sociodiscursive elements (agents, institutions, arguments). Through this process, axiological structures are identified, first associated with the ideologies described in the theoretical section and then analyzed in their various expressions. The analysis of the educational initiatives' web pages was carried out using methods specific to corpus linguistics applied to the analysis of language policy and planning (Fitzsimmons-Doolan 2015; Piller and Gerber 2021). The analysis is limited to the study of co-occurrences of lemmatized words (content words only) to identify hierarchical relationships and interrelationships between them. The statistical treatment performed with the text

analysis program T-Lab allows us to map linguistic ideologies (Ajsic and McGoarty 2015) based on the analysis of associations between concepts (Moreno Fernández and Loureda 2021). The textual statistical analyses are complemented by the presentation of fragments illustrating the associations explored. The analysis of the interviews explores the different ways in which the interviewees (agents of the community and heritage language initiatives) value bilingualism and the heritage language, as well as the ways in which they position themselves in relation to the parents. The qualitative approach is oriented towards an analysis of the ideologies and their forms of expression, the different modes of conceptual framing, and the value-axiological modulations present in the discourses.

3.2 Materials and procedure

The corpus is composed of the web pages of 39 bilingual early education centers in the main Spanish-speaking cities in Europe¹ (Loureda, Álvarez Mella, Blattner, and Gutiérrez Palacios 2022). Websites were identified from specialized portals (for Berlin and Paris) or online search tools, using keywords related to early bilingual education. Only active websites with information on Spanish or bilingual education are included. The texts were automatically extracted with the Lancsbox program. Sub-pages and fragments that were not relevant for the study of ideologies, such as contact pages, menus or data protection statements, were removed. As for the profile of the centers, they are mainly day care centers and after-school programs that emerged as educational initiatives of the community itself (parents' associations) or public centers supported by the foreign policy of Spain or the European countries in which they are located. The interviews analyzed are part of a group of interviews conducted with participants in Spanish-speaking community and heritage language initiatives in two large urban areas of Germany. Three of these were selected:

- Interview 1. Two educators from a bilingual early education center.
- Interview 2. Representative of a women's association for the support of migration, motherhood, and parenting.
- Interview 3. Educator of a bilingual early childhood education center.

¹ Most of the texts come from centers in Berlin (22) followed by London (9), Milan (3), Zurich (3), and Paris (2). The distribution reflects the unusually strong presence of bilingual early education in Berlin, as well as their relative absence in other spaces.

Main nodes

agents of early education



linguistic themes

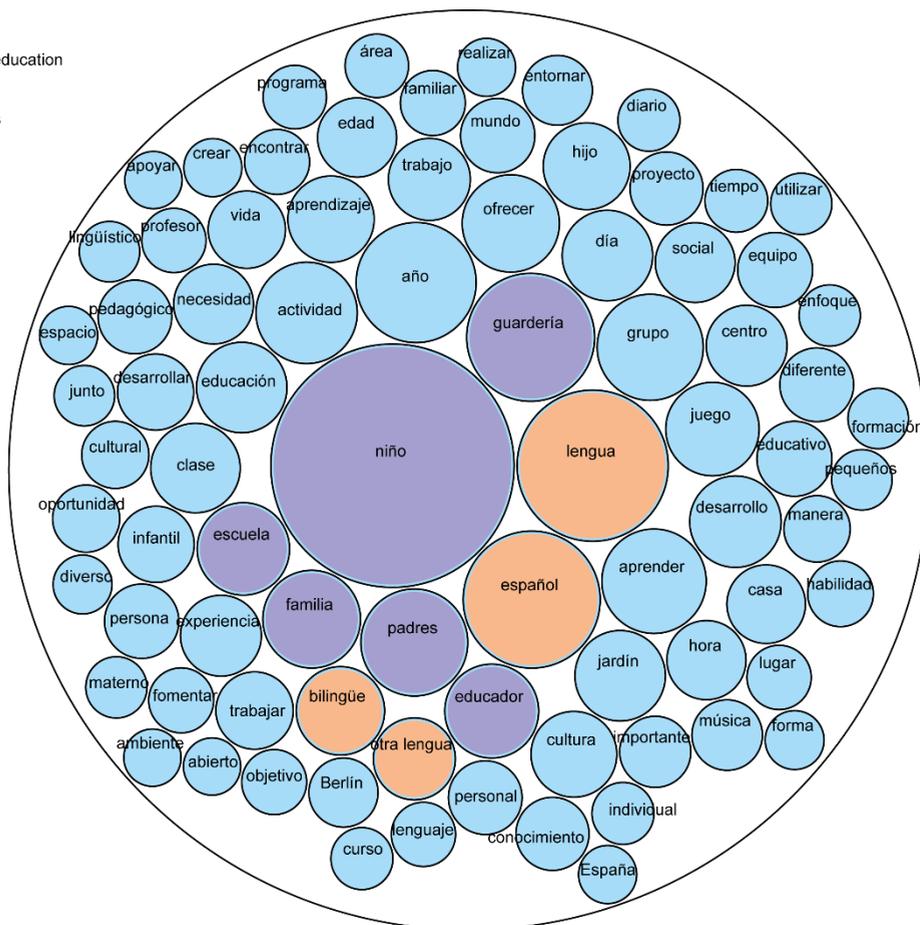


Figure 1. Main conceptual nodes of the corpus and their hierarchy (nodes with a frequency above 30)

4. Analysis

4.1 Corpus analysis

This section presents the quantitative analysis of the corpus built for the research based on the texts of web pages of early bilingual education centers. The objective is to identify their main conceptual axes and describe how their discourses on bilingualism and heritage language are structured. For this purpose, a frequency analysis was first carried out to find the most recurrent concepts; then, discursive patterns were explored by analyzing their main networks of associations.

The overall analysis of the corpus shows a structure in which several conceptual nodes predominate (Figure 1). In the center is the node NIÑO (CHILD) as the main topic (and protagonist) of early education. In a second

circle of recurrent conceptual nodes we find linguistic themes, LENGUA (LANGUAGE, lemma grouping language and tongue), BILINGÜISMO (BILINGUALISM), ESPAÑOL (SPANISH), and OTRA LENGUA² (ANOTHER LANGUAGE, lemma grouping the other languages of the bilingual programs: German; French; English; and Italian), and conceptual nodes linked to the main agents of early education: GUARDERÍA (KINDERGARDEN), EDUCADOR (EDUCATOR), and ESCUELA (SCHOOL), on the one hand, and PADRES (PARENTS) and FAMILIA (FAMILY), on the other.

The analysis of both themes (the linguistic and the agents) allows us to explore the semantic

² For the analysis, the lemmas of the dominant languages in each country were combined into one to reflect the other tongue present in the Spanish bilingual programs.

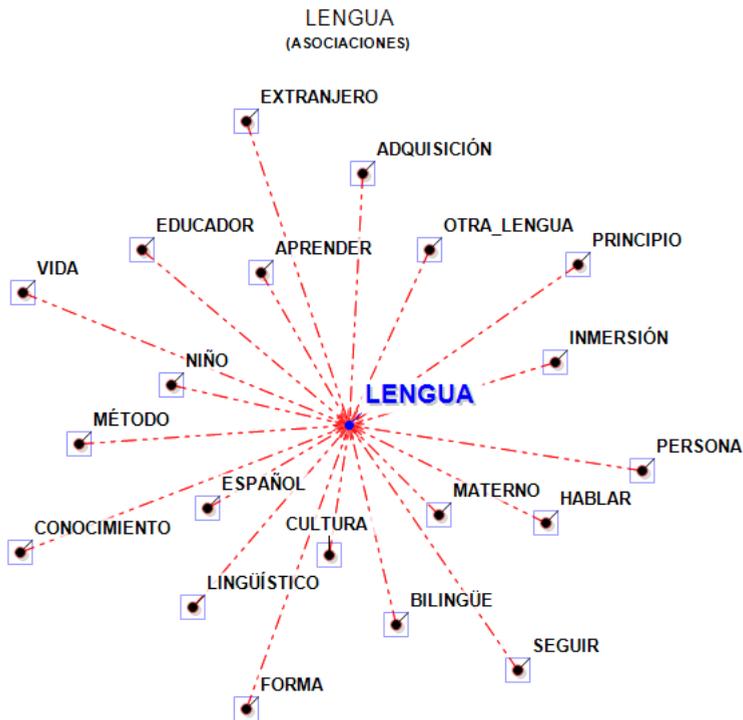


Figure 2. Semantic associations of the node LANGUAGE (language and tongue)

associations of the main conceptual nodes relevant to the study of linguistic ideologies. More specifically, we consider how bilingualism and heritage languages are presented, and what roles and responsibilities are assigned to the main agents. The rest of the conceptual nodes will appear in the analysis subordinate to these main nodes according to their relevance.

Language and bilingualism

The texts of the bilingual daycare centers' web pages heavily feature the concepts of language and bilingualism. As shown in Figure 2, the conceptual node LENGUA (LANGUAGE) is associated with several thematic axes reflecting the pedagogical approach of bilingual daycare centers: the learning or acquisition of the mother tongue(s) (Spanish and the bilingual's "other language") following the immersion method in which educators speak in their respective mother tongues when interacting with the children. In this respect, most of the day care centers work according to the one person-one language principle, which is explicitly mentioned and defined in several of the web pages.

The exploration of associations surrounding the conceptual node BILINGÜE (BILINGUAL) offers deeper insights into the pedagogical approach of daycare centers. The radial diagram of this node (Figure 3) is dominated by associations already seen in the diagram of the LANGUAGE node. Additionally, new themes emerge, such as the axes *facilitate*, *curiosity*, and *values*. Analyzing the contexts in which *facilitate* co-occurs with the BILINGUAL node reveals how the pedagogies of bilingual daycare centers contain ideas based on bilingual purism and ideas that refer to the cognitive benefits of bilingualism:

Teachers often communicate in their mother tongue to make it easier for children to distinguish between the two languages (000021 *CITY_BERLIN).

Studies show that a bilingual child is better able to cope with tasks involving attention, memory and concentration. The mental gymnastics required to constantly manage two or more language systems increases

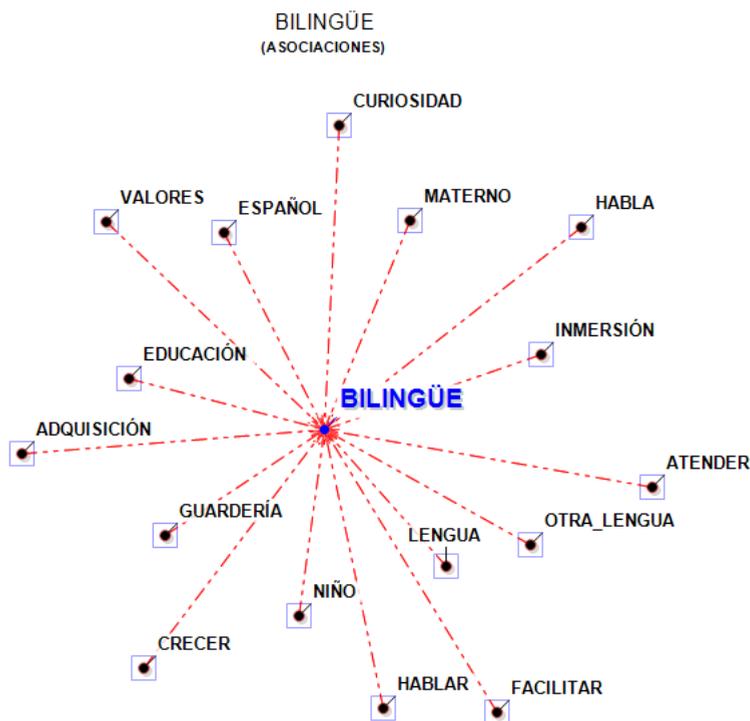


Figure 3. Semantic associations of the node BILINGUAL

cognitive flexibility and facilitates learning. (000027 *CITY_LONDON)

Spanish and dominant languages

Beyond the semantic fields of language and bilingualism, which shape the pedagogical framework of daycare centers, the analysis of the main conceptual nodes reveals two interesting aspects related to linguistic ideologies. First, the SPANISH node is one of the most important in the corpus, although it is usually associated with the dominant languages of the country in which the daycare center is located. The fact that the heritage language, Spanish, tends to appear linked to the socially dominant language indicates a horizontal relationship between the two, reflecting the orientation of many daycare centers towards harmonious bilingualism. However, two pieces of evidence in the texts point to the “discursive priority” of Spanish and reveal that the heritage language is the defining element in these bilingual early education centers. Firstly, the node ESPAÑOL (SPANISH, freq. 202) appears in the corpus more than twice as often as OTRA LENGUA (OTHER LANGUAGE, freq. 68). Secondly, in addition to its

greater prevalence, Spanish receives a different conceptual treatment, which can be seen when comparing the diagrams of both nodes (Figure 4).

As shown in Figure 4, one of the main thematic axes of the conceptual node ESPAÑOL (SPANISH) is the concept of *culture*, which does not appear in the OTRA LENGUA (OTHER LANGUAGE) diagram. Given that cultural identity is one of the most important dimensions of heritage languages, this result is important for understanding the linguistic ideologies present in the discourses of bilingual early education spaces. On the one hand, day care centers highlight the importance of bilingual early education as a way of *transmitting* cultural traits associated with Spanish and *fomenting knowledge* of and *interest* in heritage culture (see Figure 5). Bilingual programs are proposed as spaces that compensate for the possible disconnect from their cultural roots heritage speakers may experience, both at the general level of a Hispanic culture and at the national level of Spanish-speaking countries:

En El Recreo Español, nos comprometemos

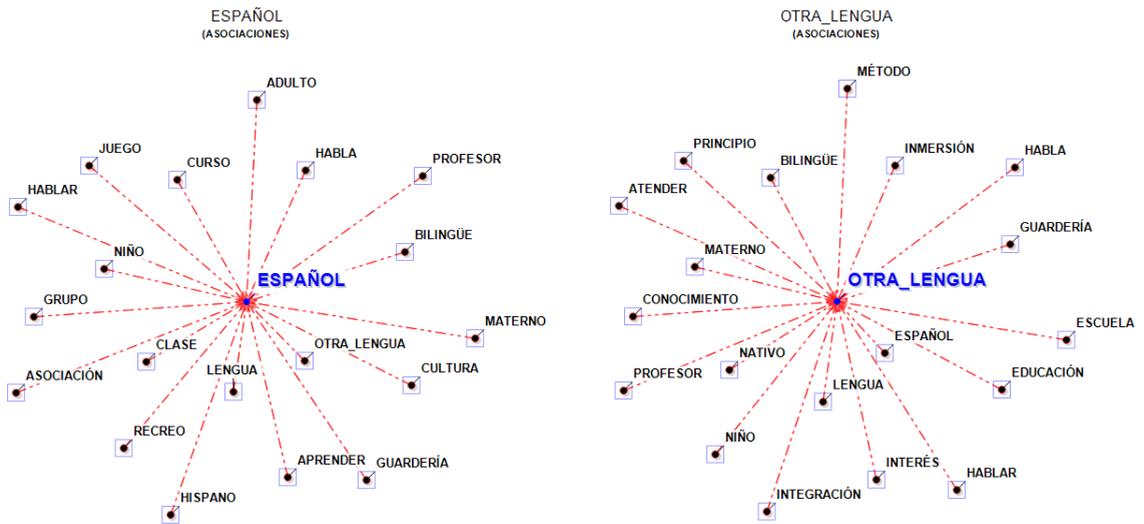


Figure 4. Semantic associations of the nodes *ESPAÑOL* (SPANISH) and *OTRA LENGUA* (OTHER LANGUAGE)

a ofrecer clases de español divertidas y específicas para cada edad, fomentando el amor por la lengua y la cultura españolas. (000025 *CIUDAD_LONDRES)

[At El Recreo Español, we are committed to offering fun, age-specific Spanish classes, fostering a love of the Spanish language and culture.] (000025 *CIUDAD_LONDRES)

Para promover el bilingüismo y el interés por ambas culturas, los niños asisten a representaciones teatrales y lecturas en español y reciben clases de música una vez a la semana de una profesora de música de habla española. (000019 *CIUDAD_BERLÍN)

[To promote bilingualism and interest in both cultures, the children attend theatrical performances and readings in Spanish and receive music lessons once a week from a Spanish-speaking music teacher.] (000019 *CIUDAD_BERLÍN)

El objetivo es profundizar y mejorar el conocimiento del idioma español en los niños a través de varios tipos de laboratorios y juegos didácticos, para dar a conocer la cultura hispana. (000033 *CIUDAD_MILÁN)

[The objective is to deepen and improve the children's knowledge of the Spanish language through various types of laboratories and

didactic games, to raise awareness of the Hispanic culture.] (000033 *CIUDAD_MILÁN)

Los niños más mayores trabajan las habilidades básicas de lectura y escritura, como vocabulario, ortografía y gramática, a la vez que aprenden sobre las culturas latinoamericanas. (000023 *CIUDAD_LONDRES)

[Older children work on basic reading and writing skills, such as vocabulary, spelling and grammar, while learning about Latin American cultures.] (000023 * CIUDAD_LONDRES)

At the same time, kindergartens associate the development of bilingualism with biculturalism and intercultural values. As shown in the radial diagram of the *CULTURA* (CULTURE) node and in that of the *CULTURAL* node, the programs present bilingual education as a way of constructing bicultural identities. Biculturality, however, tends to be conceived in a sequential way, beginning with one specific language and culture, and other(s) progressively added on top:

Damos la posibilidad a cada niño de entrar en un grupo con diversidad lingüística y cultural, que ayuda tanto a identificarse con su propio idioma y cultura, como así también

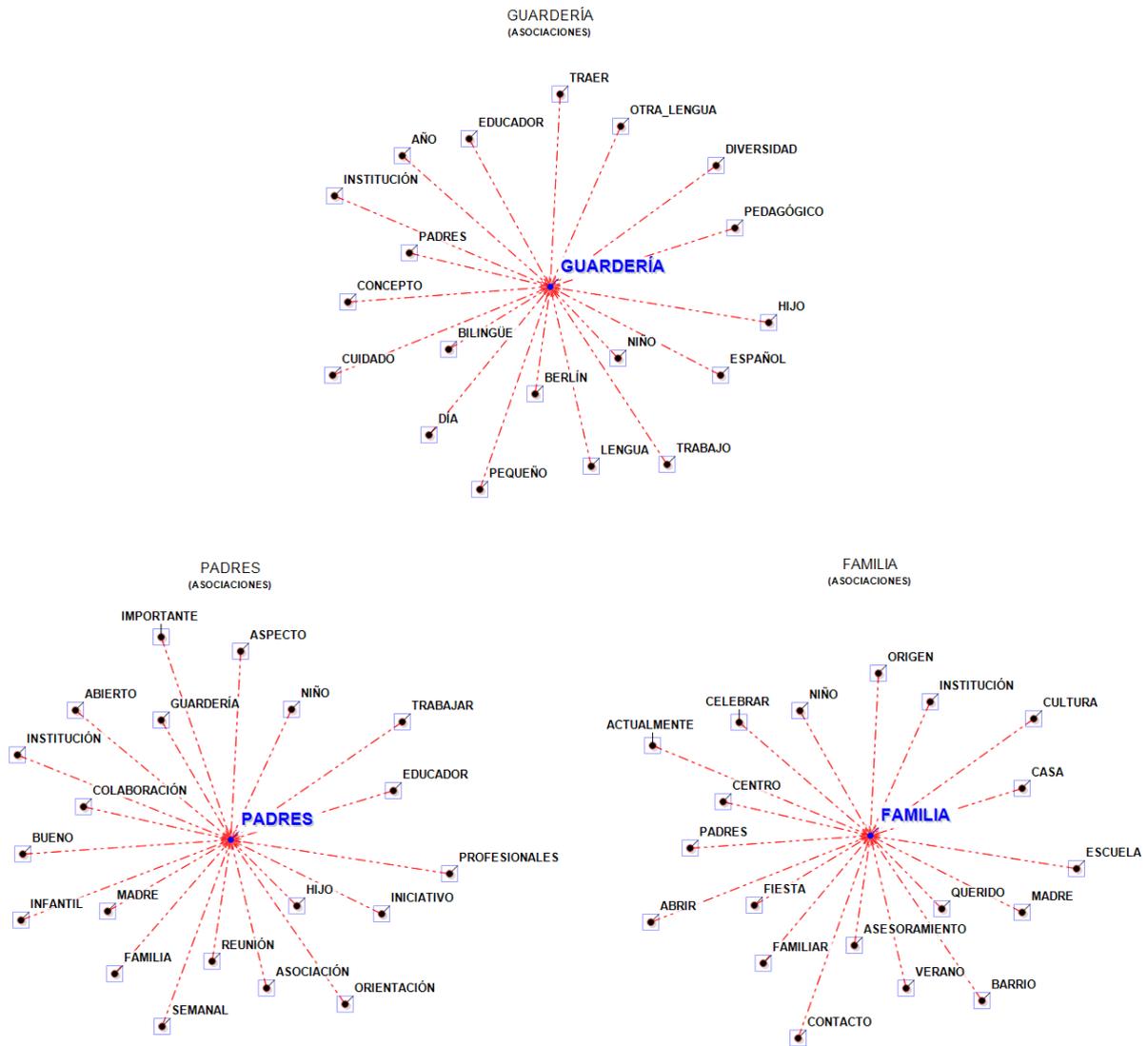


Figure 6. Semantic associations of the nodes *GUARDERÍA* (DAYCARE), *PADRES* (PARENTS), and *FAMILIA* (FAMILY)

a descubrir con curiosidad, ganas, tolerancia y simpatía la otra lengua y las otras culturas. (000008 *CIUDAD_BERLÍN)

[We give the possibility to each child to enter a group with linguistic and cultural diversity, which helps both to identify with their own language and culture, as well as to discover language and cultures with curiosity, enthusiasm, tolerance, and sympathy.] (000008 * CIUDAD_BERLÍN)

The axes of conceptual associations of the CULTURAL node reveal a semantic network that exposes an axiology tied to the cultural dimension of bilingualism. Early bilingualism is promoted as a bridge between cultures, fostering openness to cultural diversity and intercultural values such as empathy:

Nuestro equipo internacional actúa como modelo a seguir, viviendo auténticamente la apertura y curiosidad cultural y lingüística en la vida cotidiana de la guardería, para que los niños sean conscientes de la independencia, el aprecio y la presencia de otras culturas e idiomas. (000015 *CIUDAD_BERLÍN)

[Our international team acts as a role model, authentically living out cultural and linguistic openness and curiosity in the everyday life of the kindergarten, so that the children become aware of independence, appreciation and presence of other cultures and languages.] (000015 * CIUDAD_BERLÍN)

La escuela APEGO-Schule Berlin es un espacio multilingüe e intercultural, un espacio donde cada niño puede practicar sus competencias interculturales y a la vez desarrollar su identidad cultural. La diversidad constituye la identidad de nuestra escuela, la cual se debe tanto a la mezcla de edades como a la heterogeneidad cultural y lingüística. (000002 *CIUDAD_BERLÍN)

[APEGO-Schule Berlin is a multilingual and intercultural space, a space where every child can practice their intercultural competences and at the same time develop their cultural identity. Diversity is the identity of our school, a product of the mix of ages as well as cultural and linguistic heterogeneity.] (000002 *CIUDAD_BERLÍN)

Un programa bilingüe en alemán y español amplía las fronteras lingüísticas de los niños

y les da acceso a muchos aspectos de dos culturas, ayudándoles a desarrollar la empatía y una profunda comprensión de las diferencias culturales. (000005 *CIUDAD_BERLÍN)

[A bilingual program in German and Spanish expands the children's linguistic boundaries and gives them access to many aspects of two cultures, helping them to develop empathy and a deep understanding of cultural differences.] (000005 *CIUDAD_BERLÍN)

The above excerpts provide further examples of the association between early bilingual education and cosmopolitan values. It is important to emphasize that most of these semantic associations occur in texts from the web pages of Berlin kindergartens, where this attitude toward multilingualism predominates (Rasche 2014; Stevenson 2015; Krüger, Roch, and Dean 2016; Heyd, Mengden, and Schneider 2019).

The agents

Finally, the analysis examines how daycare centers refer to themselves and to parents. To this end, the semantic associations of the most frequent conceptual nodes corresponding to each, GUARDERÍA (DAYCARE), on the one hand, and PADRES (PARENTS) and FAMILIA (FAMILY), on the other, were explored. This sheds light on how the main actors are understood, their connections, expectations and the responsibilities attributed to them. As can be seen in the diagram (Figure 6), bilingual daycare centers are presented as institutions dedicated to bilingual education, with a focus on care and diversity. In addition, a direct appeal to parents is observed: they are both the target audience of the daycare centers' texts and essential contributors to the functioning of the center itself. The main association diagrams of the PADRES (PARENTS) and FAMILIA (FAMILY) nodes reveal three dimensions of the relationship with the institution. First, they appeal to collaboration, initiative, partnership, and joint work with centers and educators. Secondly, the daycare centers present themselves to parents as spaces for advice and guidance. And thirdly, they appeal to community-building activities around festive events linked to local environments (neighborhoods). In the diagrams of the PARENTS and FAMILY nodes, we can observe semantic axes that refer to relationships similar to those found in the associations of the GUARDERÍA (DAYCARE) node. Beyond this image, two semantic associations around parents

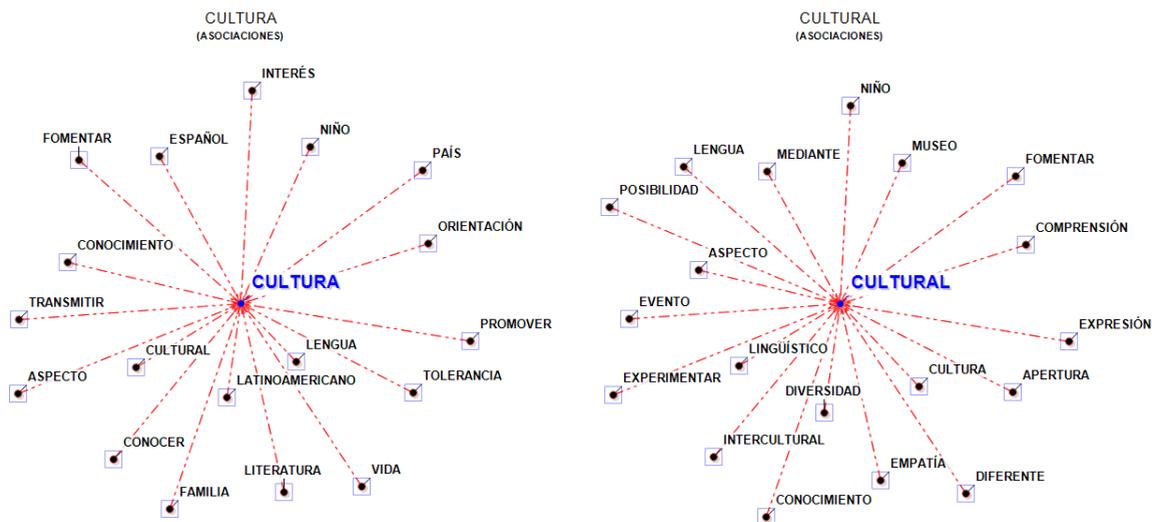


Figure 5. Semantic associations of the nodes CULTURA (CULTURE) and CULTURAL

and families stand out. Firstly, a semantic network is constructed in which parents are associated with families, the home (CASA), and their culture of origin. Secondly, in both the PARENTS and FAMILY nodes, mothers are one of the relevant axes, a fact that points to a gender bias.

4.2. Interview analysis

This section presents the analysis of interviews with actors from Spanish-speaking migrant-led initiatives linked to the maintenance of Spanish as a heritage language in bilingual projects in Germany. From a qualitative exploration of the interviews, several discourses were identified that mobilize linguistic ideologies related to both bilingualism and heritage languages.

Regarding bilingualism, one of the initiatives evidenced a purist conception of bilingual speakers, which postulates the importance of keeping languages separate and negatively values language mixing practices.

[...] no comprenden la importancia de la del idioma materno, es decir, si ellos no llegan a tener un diccionario limpio dentro de su cabeza en su lengua materna, nunca serán capaces de aprender otro idioma en forma fluida.

Así es, es fundamental. Gracias a los estudios que ha hecho [PERSONA], y ha trabajado

muy intensamente con los niños que vienen precisamente de Turquía, por ejemplo, ella ha podido ver y observar que como en casa van mezclando turco y alemán. Nunca los niños son capaces de tener un vocabulario o un diccionario limpio y empiezan a tapar agujeros con otras palabras en turco o con las palabras en alemán y empiezan a tener un lenguaje poco definido y mezclado. Y eso, precisamente porque nunca han aprendido en la base de la lengua materna. [Entrevista 1]

[[...] they don't understand the importance of the mother tongue, that is, if they don't have a clean dictionary in their head in their mother tongue, they will never be able to learn another language fluently.

That's right, it's fundamental. Thanks to the studies that [PERSON] has done, and she has worked very intensively with the children who come precisely from Turkey, for example, she has been able to see and observe that at home they are mixing Turkish and German. The children are never able to have a clean vocabulary or a clean dictionary and they start to fill gaps with other Turkish words or with German words and they start to have a poorly defined and mixed language. And that, precisely because they have never learned on the basis of the mother tongue. [Interview 1]]

As can be seen in the excerpt above, language mixing is considered a deficit for bilingual development. The critique of hybridization (or translingual) practices revolves around two metaphors. The first considers languages as “clean dictionaries” in the minds of speakers. The second considers the translingual practices of mixing (e.g., transfer, code switching) as “filling gaps”, that is, as an accommodation required by a lack of linguistic competence in one of the languages. The implicit conception of the bilingual speaker as two monolingual speakers in one is readily apparent. This conception of bilingualism is widespread in pedagogies based on immersion bilingual education and is related to the “one parent/caregiver - one language” strategy, which, moreover, is recommended to parents as a family practice:

Entonces a los padres, a ver, les ocurre que automáticamente empiezan a hablar de todo un poquito. No, no, nunca hablan su idioma. Entonces les aconsejamos a los padres cuando vienen a [LA GUARDERÍA] que utilicen este método de inmersión que es muy conocido y es uno de los más exitosos dentro del tema bilingüismo: que siempre una persona hable solamente un idioma y nunca mezcle. [Entrevista 1]

[So parents, let’s see, it happens to them that they automatically start talking about everything a little bit. No, no, they never speak their language. So we advise parents when they come to [THE DAYCARE] to use this immersion method, which is very well known and is one of the most successful in bilingualism: that one person always speaks only one language and never mixes. [Interview 1]]

Instruction based on this pedagogical concept is presented as the authentic form of bilingual education in contrast to other kinds of heritage language classes, as seen in the following excerpts from two interviews:

Porque existen colegas que trabajan y ofrecen español y sólo español. Pero les pasa eso que le pasa a todas, comienzan a mezclar. Entonces, cuando los niños no reaccionan en español, equivocadamente ellas les comienzan a hablar en un mal alemán y ahí comienza un desastre. [Entrevista 1]

[Because there are colleagues who work and offer Spanish and only Spanish. But what happens to them is what happens to

all of them, they begin to mix. Then, when the children don’t react in Spanish, they mistakenly start to speak to them in bad German and that’s when a disaster starts. [Interview 1]]

Y, eso es como una estafa. Si te soy sincera, a mí parece una estafa de venta porque de venta, no, como de ofrecer a los papás cosas que... Ah entonces la maestra habla español, entonces el grupo habla español, o sea se habla en español, pero eso no es un concepto bilingüe real del *team*, desde el concepto pedagógico de cómo se arma el grupo, etcétera. [Entrevista 3]

[And, that’s like a scam. If I’m honest, to me it seems like a sales scam because it’s a sales scam, it’s like offering parents things that... Ah, because the teacher speaks Spanish, the group speaks Spanish, that is, they do speak in Spanish, but that is not a real bilingual concept of the team, from the pedagogical concept of how the group is put together, etc. [Interview 3]]

This idea is related to a concept mentioned in the interview that is widespread in public discourses on multilingualism in Germany: double semilingualism (“doppelte Halbsprachigkeit”, see Wiese et al. 2010 for a critique). During the interview, one of the teachers describes it thus:

Participante 1

Halbsprachigkeit se refiere a que no tiene ni uno ni el otro, es decir, tienen la mitad de uno y la mitad del otro, con eso se defienden.

Participante 2

Es un término general, eso no es algo que inventé, solamente que puedo confirmar, que existen muchas familias turcas porque los turcos aprenden el idioma solamente por el oído, pero nunca lo aprenden de leer y escribir. Entonces falta mucho vocabulario. Se hablan en turco y en la frase [para un] término turco usan una palabra en alemán. [Entrevista 1]

[Participant 1

Halbsprachigkeit refers to having neither one nor the other, i.e., they have half of one and half of the other, they get by with that.

Participant 2

It is a general term, that is not something I

invented, only that I can confirm, that there are many Turkish families because Turks learn the language only by ear, but they never learn to read and write. So, they lack a lot of vocabulary. They speak to each other in Turkish and in the sentence [for a] Turkish term they use a German word. [Interview 1]]

As seen in the excerpt quoted above, the idea of dual semilingualism assumes that full linguistic development in bilinguals necessarily involves literacy. The acquisition of the heritage language through orality is associated with incomplete development, not only in relation to literacy skills but also other linguistic features such as vocabulary.

Another element that organizes the positioning of initiatives regarding bilingualism and bilingual education is the metaphor of struggle, linked to the discourse of resistance. In this sense, bilingual education is portrayed as a complex enterprise that must overcome several obstacles. One of them is the monolingual ideology of the authorities, who see bilingualism as a potential source of problems in children's development and integration.

Exacto, no saben qué significa bilingüidad hasta hoy, no lo saben, tienen mucho miedo. Creen que si los niños oyen español van a dejar de aprender alemán o se va a retrasar su proceso de aprendizaje. Y, además, ellos quieren priorizar naturalmente (lo que se puede comprender) el idioma alemán, entonces consideran que el español juega un segundo rol en toda esta historia. [Entrevista 1]

[Exactly, they don't know what bilingualism means until today, they don't know, they are very afraid. They think that if the children hear Spanish they will stop learning German or their learning process will be delayed. And, in addition, they naturally want to prioritize (which is understandable) German language, so they consider that Spanish plays a second role in this whole story. [Interview 1]]

In addition to the institutional obstacles of monolingual policies, the interviewees identify family practices as other difficulties for bilingual development. As seen in the following excerpt, the initiative representative identifies the mixed composition of families as a potential threat

to the maintenance of the heritage language. They also point to the decisions of families, especially mothers, as responsible for language development in Spanish:

Yo tengo muchos ejemplos a mi alrededor de amigas donde los esposos son alemanes o de otra nacionalidad y lo han conseguido exactamente igual, que los chicos sean bilingües o incluso trilingües cuando el padre es italiano, francés o de de otro lugar. Y no han tenido ningún problema tampoco. Eso es un poco... Ya ahí influye mucho lo que la familia quiera, lo que la familia decida, que la mamá en este caso también se imponga. No porque también conozco casos de chicos donde la mamá dice, no, es que mi marido no le gusta que hablemos español cuando él está delante [...]. Otras han sido, por decirlo de alguna manera, un poco más débiles. [Entrevista 2]

[I have many examples around me of friends where the husbands are German or of another nationality and they have managed exactly the same, that the kids are bilingual or even trilingual when the father is Italian, French or from somewhere else. And they haven't had any problems either. That's a bit... There is a lot of influence on what the family wants, what the family decides, that the mother in this case also imposes herself. No, because I also know of cases where the mother says, no, my husband doesn't like us to speak Spanish when he is in front of us [...] Others have been, so to speak, a little weaker. [Interview 2]]

In response to this, the initiative is presented as a complementary space for linguistic socialization and the normalization of migrant bilingualism. At the same time, formal classes are contrasted with the linguistic socialization that takes place in homes, which are understood as private spaces where the heritage language runs the risk of isolating itself in a family bubble:

Por eso les decimos, es importante que los niños vayan a esas clases de lengua materna o academias privadas que ofrecen cursos también para para niños o grupos de juegos, porque también ellos se dan cuenta que no son bichos raros que hay otros niños como ellos, que hay otras mamás que también hablan como su mamá, porque a veces cuando lo tienes de bebé en la casa, claro, el niño vive en una burbuja. [Entrevista 2]

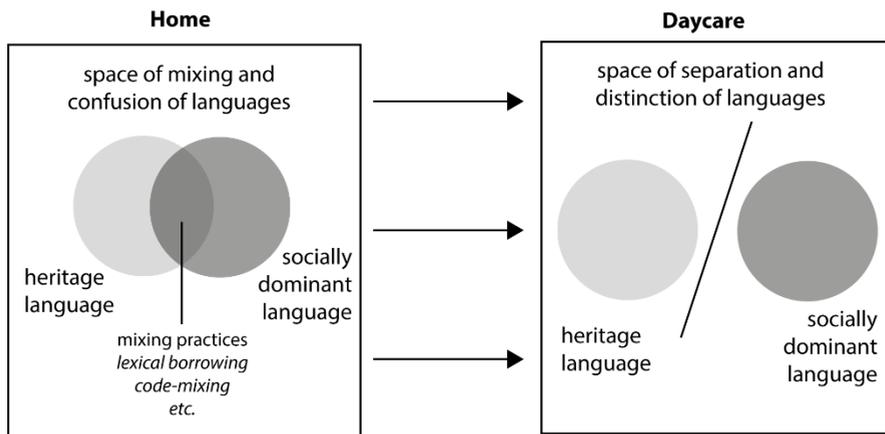


Figure 7. Spaces of linguistic socialization and bilingual purism

[That's why we tell them, it is important that children go to those mother tongue classes or private academies that offer courses also for children or playgroups, because they also realize that they are not weirdos that there are other children like them, that there are other moms who also speak like their mom, because sometimes when you have it as a baby in the house, of course, the child lives in a bubble. [Interview 2]]

Finally, the interviewees discussed bilingualism and Spanish as a heritage language through various conceptual frameworks that convey different values attached to the role of the heritage language within the family. One interviewee expressed a positive evaluation of bilingualism based on its benefits, particularly the cognitive advantages it confers related to the close association between language with thought:

Sí, pienso que los niños tienen otro tipo de forma de pensamiento cuando están envueltos en uno, dos, o sea en dos o más idiomas, digamos, y creo que esa forma de cómo los niños aprenden a pensar es diferente y creo que también abre un potencial gigante para cómo pensar de una manera mucho más divergente. Digámoslo. [Entrevista 3]

[Yes, I think that children have another kind of way of thinking when they are involved in one, two, that is in two or more languages, let's say, and I think that this way of how children learn to think is different and I think it also opens a giant potential for how to think in a much more divergent way, so to speak.

[Interview 3]]

Another initiative presents the maintenance of Spanish from the point of view of family cohesion, emphasizing its role as the family's own language in which it is important for descendants to be able to communicate. As can be seen in the following interview excerpt, the interviewee (who is also a mother) attributes an identity value to the heritage language, reflected in her use of the phrase "our language" and in the idea of "living Spanish" as an experience that goes beyond the mere communicative dimension of the language.

Para nosotros es súper importante que nuestros hijos tengan también nuestro idioma, tengan también y se puedan comunicar y lo puedan vivir. [Entrevista 2]

[For us it is very important that our children also have our language, that they also have and can communicate and live it. [Interview 2]]

Later in the interview, the intergenerational transmission of Spanish is also presented as a gift, or a sort of investment for the future of heritage speakers. In this sense, the value attributed to the heritage language also relates to family cohesion, this time from the perspective of the transnational reality of families and the value of the heritage language as key for maintaining relationships, especially in diasporic contexts.

Yo siempre les decía, me lo vas a agradecer

el día de mañana y efectivamente. Cuando hace unos años fuimos a Perú y mi marido, pues como casi todos los latinoamericanos, tiene familia aquí, tiene familia allá en Canadá, en Estados Unidos no sé dónde. Y hubo una reunión de toda la familia por fin en Perú. Lo que unió a los hijos de los primos de los hermanos fue el idioma español. Si no, no hubieran podido comunicarse entre todos. Y ahí es donde, mira, mis hijos empezaron a darse cuenta lo importante que es no de poder comunicarse con sus primos de España, con los primos de Perú, con los primos de acá, con los primos de allá. Pero claro, hasta que los niños se dan cuenta, es un trabajo de padre y madre de tener que estar ahí, porque les estás haciendo un regalo, el que sean bilingües, trilingües o lo que sea, ¿no? Entonces es esa constancia de decir: no, yo estoy trabajando en el futuro de mi hijo y yo le estoy dando un regalo [...]. [Entrevista 2]

[I always told them, you are going to thank me tomorrow, and indeed. When we went to Peru a few years ago and my husband, like almost all Latin Americans, has family here, he has family there in Canada, in the United States I don't know where. And there was a reunion of the whole family finally in Peru. What united the children of the cousins of the siblings was the Spanish language. Otherwise, they wouldn't have been able to communicate with each other. And that's where, you see, my children began to realize how important it is not to be able to communicate with their cousins in Spain, with the cousins in Peru, with the cousins here, with the cousins there. But of course, until the children realize it, it is a parent's job to have to be there, because you are giving them a gift, the fact that they are bilingual, trilingual or whatever, right? So it is that constancy of saying: no, I am working on my child's future and I am giving them a gift [...]. [Interview 2]]

5. Discussion

Our analysis of the websites of the bilingual early education centers, along with interviews with participants in community and heritage language initiatives, reveals several discourses, as well as the key axes through which these discourses are expressed. The discussion first addresses ideologies related to bilingualism, before moving on to explore those related to Spanish as a heritage language.

The purist idea of bilingualism

The corpus analysis highlights interesting nuances in the purist interpretation of bilingualism. The strictest version of this perspective, based on a monolingual or fractional view of bilingualism (Grosjean 2010), conceptualizes the bilingual speaker as two separate and isolated native speakers in one. As discussed in section 1 of the paper, this perspective is linked to a widespread monolingual mindset. On their websites, the bilingual early education centers analyzed present themselves as spaces for bilingual socialization founded on two principles: nativism and language separation. Nativism (Holliday 2006) takes the view that “native” competence is the highest linguistic achievement and that native speakers are socialized through interaction with other native speakers. The pedagogy of these centers is usually based on linguistic immersion and methods such as “one person-one language” (OPOL), where each adult uses their native language to speak with the child. Piller and Gerber (2021) have shown, after analyzing online discussion forums based in Australia, that monolingual visions of bilingualism and OPOL practices also circulate among parents, forming a shared understanding. The influence of the OPOL approach is evident. It is one of the most commonly recommended strategies by both bilingual educational institutions and parents themselves. Despite this popularity and the various ways in which the strategy is modulated in bilingual pedagogies, its empirical benefits, especially as a family strategy, are not clearly established and it can have both advantages and disadvantages (De Houwer 2007).

According to the analysis, language separation strategies are framed on the centers' websites in opposition to the language mixing practices common in homes, which are seen as hindering bilingual development. In one of the interviews, this view was expressed through two conceptual metaphors: desirable bilingual competencies are seen as “clean dictionaries,” while language mixing practices (such as code-switching) are considered strategies that speakers use to fill gaps, i.e., an expression of a lack of full linguistic competence. These metaphors are exemplary of a discourse that underscores the cognitive “danger” of “vernacular” (domestic) bilingualism and associates it with the concept of double semilingualism. The discourses favouring the purist notion of bilingualism that we have identified can be interpreted as articulations of an *ideology of distinction*, contrasting bilingual early education spaces with domestic spaces. This distinction mirrors the dichotomy between parallel bilingualism, developed through language separation strategies, and translingual bilingualism, acquired orally in contexts of mixing practices (see Figure 7). Bilingual kindergartens are spaces for the “creation” of cultural capital insofar as they contribute to the formation

of native bilingual repertoires through the separation of languages. The positive valuation of language separation is linked with the idea that the development of parallel bilingualism confers cognitive benefits associated with the bilingual mind. This expression of the *ideology of distinction* is distinct from others based on literacy or the management of standard varieties (Bürki 2023).

Cultural and familiar value of the heritage language

The analysis presented also shows several results relevant to the ideologies of Spanish as a heritage language. The most salient finding is that the positioning of bilingual education centers with respect to heritage languages is articulated through ideas that align more closely with discourses of pride than with those of benefit (Heller and Duchêne 2012). Bilingual education centers' websites associate Spanish with its cultural and identity dimension. This result contrasts with other studies that found a utilitarian valuation of bilingualism to be predominant to the virtual exclusion of any link between language and identity (Piller and Gerber 2021). In our study, the heritage language (Spanish) appears to be linked to culture and daycare centers are presented as spaces for the transmission of culture associated with language. This connection between language and culture has an identity dimension that is expressed in two ways. The first is the association of a heritage language with an affiliation and loyalty to an ethnolinguistic group (Fishman 2001b), focusing more on intergenerational transmission and family cultural roots rather than on discourses of national identity (Guardado 2020). Here, the heritage language is presented as a gift, connected to the family's language ("our language") and cultural identity, as well as establishing a relationship to a broader community. In this sense, the websites of bilingual early education centers appeal to the creation of community, consisting of the parents and families of the children who attend them, through cooperation and to the celebration of cultural events (Lee and Chen-Wu 2021). These practices could, in part, present features of banal nationalism expressed in festivities, celebrations and shared cultural references (Billig 1995; Bürki 2023). The second expression of the identity dimension of culture is a multicultural orientation that, complements rather than antagonizes the discourse of identification with a family's cultural roots. The heritage language is framed within a discourse of biculturality articulated by bilingual daycare centers as part of a cosmopolitan worldview in which bilingualism is associated with value of cultural diversity, as well as with the development of openness and empathy. Although there may be tension between

cosmopolitanism and a strong affiliation with heritage language and culture (Blackledge and Creese 2010), our analysis shows that these ideologies coexist within an identity dimension. One of the most important aspects of the analysis of linguistic ideologies considers how agents of language management and planning position themselves. This discourse of linguistic-cultural validation (Guardado 2018) gives space to heritage languages and their bilingual speakers outside of the private sphere of the family home, normalizing bicultural identities.

6. Conclusion

Analyses of bilingual educational settings in Germany reveal a conception of bilingualism as the conjunction of two monolingual speakers in one. This interpretation of bilingualism is widespread in pedagogies based on immersion bilingual education and is related to the "one parent/caregiver - one language" strategy commonly recommended to parents.

The extent to which a purist ideology regarding the learning process, maintaining language separation and negatively evaluating language mixing practices, predominates is evident. It is interesting to note that this conception is framed as a defense of diversity: bilingual education centers are positioned as spaces that promote linguistic and cultural diversity. They are simultaneously presented as spaces that reinforce linguistic-cultural development and encourage bicultural engagement and encounters with diversity. The websites of bilingual day care centers appeal to families as domestic spaces linked to the linguistic-cultural heritage origins.

In the analysis of the interviews, several consistent themes were identified in relation to bilingualism and its acquisition. On the one hand, there is a clear desire to avoid mixing languages, with such practices attributed to the risk of leading to a double semilingualism. The most effective way to avoid these supposed deficiencies is reading and writing. These are viewed as essential competencies for a well-rounded native speaker, while purely oral language acquisition is considered to lead to a limited competence. This emphasis illustrates an ideology of distinction, contrasting bilingual early education spaces with domestic environments. This distinction corresponds to the dichotomy between parallel bilingualism, acquired from language separation strategies, and a translingual bilingualism, acquired in contexts where languages are mixed. Bilingual daycare centers are spaces of cultural capital "creation," contributing to the formation of native bilingual repertoires through the separation of languages,

in contrast to families, where, in an unstructured, oral milieu, semilingualism and mixing practices are made possible.

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