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MultiMe- multicultural children's experiences and perceptions of selves and relationships

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to examine the narratives of multicultural children. This study sought to fill a gap in the literature by focusing on the experiences of primary-aged children with parents from different cultures. This study examined four children's experiences, relationships, identities, and sense of belonging. Two unstructured play-based interviews were conducted with the children at school and at home. A 'small stories' approach was used to analyse the narratives, which examined how individuals construct their identities and self within everyday interactions with everyday language. Complications (or conflicts) and resolutions (coda) were identified throughout each narrative. Overall, the findings indicate that the children had a positive experience of being multicultural. Multicultural identity was formed through different mechanisms; their sense of belonging to their different cultures varied; and their internal tensions differed. The findings further suggest that children do not accept their identities mechanically but use their relationships, interactions, interests, and values to accept and reject elements of their identities. In addition, they have a flexible approach to identity and culture and presented interest and tolerance to diversity. The implications for educational psychology are discussed.

Declaration

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I declare that while registered as a research degree student at UEL, I have not been a registered or enrolled student for another award of this university or of any other academic or professional institution.

I declare that no material contained in the thesis formed part of a submission for an academic award.

I declare that my research required ethical approval from the University Ethics Committee (UREC) and confirmation of approval is embedded within the thesis.

I declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own and has been generated as a result of my own original research.

Signed: I. Sayag

Date:

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1 Introduction

Chapter overview

The purpose of this study is to examine the experiences, relationships and identities of children of multicultural backgrounds (children who have parents of two different cultures) or 'multicultural children'. Many terms describe these children, such as 'culturally' or 'ethnically' mixed; children with mixed heritage; children with multicultural background/ heritage; multi-ethnic; and multicultural/ bicultural children. As multicultural and bicultural are terms often used in research to describe similar identities, individuals and competencies, the researcher chose to use the term 'multicultural children' in the body of the research and 'mixed' in the interviews with the children.

This chapter will address this study's key concepts and theoretical underpinning. It will include an overview of the development and epistemological aspects of Self and identity and their formation, cultural and bicultural identity and competence, and developmental issues that are relevant to this study. Furthermore, this chapter will include the background and rationale overview for conducting this research.

1.1 Culture and Psychology

1.1.1 What is culture?

Defining culture is not a straightforward process. In fact, there are numerous definitions for culture from different and distinct fields of knowledge including psychology, anthropology, sociology, political science, education and more (Faulkner et al., 2006). Overall, Baldwin et al (2006) identified six different categories or layers of meaning that underlie these definitions.

1) The normative layer refers to shared values, beliefs, and ideals between members of society. 2) The historical layer comprises a society's history, traditions, and experiences. 3) the psychological layer, referring to a society's shared patterns of thinking, emotion, and behaviour. 4) the structural layer, referring to how people interact and relate to each other as a result of social and organisational patterns. 5) the functional layer, in which culture serves to meet a society's basic needs, including survival, reproduction, and socialisation, in various ways. In addition, there is 6) A symbolic layer, which describes how culture serves as a means of creating and communicating meaning through language, art, and other forms of expression. These interrelated layers work together to create a culture's complex and

dynamic concept. They also suggest that different cultural definitions emphasise different layers of meaning. Understanding the complexities and nuances of these definitions is essential for developing a comprehensive and accurate understanding of culture. As demonstrated by Baldwin et. al (2006) culture is a dynamic, multidimensional concept encompassing many aspects of social life. It is neither static nor fixed but rather a dynamic phenomenon influenced by various factors, including history, politics, economics, and technology. Researchers must adopt a contextualised and nuanced approach when studying culture as they contend that culture cannot be reduced to a single, uniform definition. Hence, a culture can be defined as the shared values, beliefs, and assumptions that influence human behaviour and provide people with a viewpoint from which to view the world. Members of a group usually share these values, and they govern their behaviour both in familiar and unfamiliar circumstances. Childhood socialisation and educational expectations are influenced by culture, a dynamic process that evolves over time (García & Guerra, 2006).

The definition of culture is also used to make the distinction between such terms as race, ethnicity and culture. While these terms are often used interchangeably, their meanings are actually quite different. In general, race refers to physical characteristics such as phenotype (Rodríguez-García et al., 2021). An ethnic group is distinguished by its cultural traits such as its language, ancestry, and religious beliefs. In contrast, culture encompasses various characteristics, including beliefs, values, customs, behaviours, and artefacts that define a society or group (Phinney, 1990). Thus, race is based on physical characteristics, while ethnicity and culture are based on shared experiences and practices. A person can be of different races but share the same ethnicity or culture, or one can be of the same race but come from different ethnic or cultural backgrounds.

It is important to note, however, that these definitions (culture, race, ethnicity) could be viewed as social constructs that are built in the process of relationships and interpretations between the person and their environment (Baldwin et al., 2006; Dein, 2006). Social constructionism and interpretive approaches view culture, ethnicity and race as flexible and shifting according to the context, situation and discourses. Thus, a person can identify themselves differently in different situations; and the definition of what is considered an ethnicity could shift or change in itself across places and time.

1.1.2 Culture from a psychological perspective

According to cultural psychologists, culture plays an important role in influencing psychological behaviour and processes, such as beliefs about the self, the nature of relationships, and the role of emotion. In addition, how people perceive and respond to their environment is significantly influenced by their cultural background (Van den Heuvel et al., 1992), as well as their happiness, wellbeing and mental health (Kitayama & Markus, 2000; Oishi & Gilbert EA, 2016). Critical cultural psychology emphasises that many psychological theories and concepts are based on Western Eurocentric cultural ideas, concepts and language (Awaad & Reicherter, 2016).

As Dein (2006) argues, culture, race, and ethnicity are not only social constructs but also lived experiences. An individual who belongs to a distinct cultural or ethnic group will have different experiences from an individual from another cultural group, depending on political, societal and discursive factors. These lived experiences might impact the person psychologically in varied ways (Rivas-Drake et al., 2014; Rogers-Sirin & Gupta, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2015).

Cultural psychologists hold the belief that individuals from different cultures may form and create different psychological structures or ways of viewing the world (Yeh & Hunter, 2004). They may vary in their cognition (Y. Hong et al., 2016; Tadmor et al., 2009) differ in parenting practices and styles (Demezier, 2021; Kil et al., 2021; Lorenzo-Blanco et al., 2013; Tan, 2002; Yaman et al., 2010) and their emotional experiences.

To summarise, culture influences psychological behaviour, perceptions, and responses to the environment. Different cultural or ethnic experiences may have different psychological impacts on individuals. A culture can also be thought of as a social construct and as a lived experience whereby individuals from different cultures create different psychological structures or ways of viewing the world. Cultural differences are observed in cognition, parenting practices and styles, and emotional experiences. The concept of critical cultural psychology refers to the study of the influences of Western Eurocentric cultural ideas and concepts on psychological theories and mental health concepts.

1.2 Self and Identity

1.2.1 a preliminary discussion of concept development and Epistemology

The self, under different names, has been an object of interest in social sciences for many years, including psychology, education and psychoanalysis (Bleidorn & Ködding, 2013). Thus, Self-theory evolved along with the shifts and movements such disciplines experienced (Fairfield, 2001; K. J. Gergen, 2004; Hoskins & Leseho, 1996).

‘Modernistic’ or ‘realistic’ psychology views the self as something that can be discovered, studied and analysed in much the same way as any natural or physical object (M. Crossley, 2012; Ewing, 1990). A traditional psychological view of the self believes there is a single, stable, consistent identity across time and situations, which is called a “unified or nuclear self.” According to this view, each individual has a fundamental essence that defines them. There is a close relationship between the concept of a unified self and modernist and positivist epistemological positions that emphasise objectivity, rationality, and autonomous thinking.

In contrast, postmodern theories consider the Self as more flexible and contextual. According to such theories, individuals possess multiple identities and selves that depend on context and are constructed through social interactions (Stern, 2002). In this perspective, identity is shaped by social and cultural contexts and is fluid and malleable.

Social constructionist theories describe the self as “characterised by interpretation, variability, relativity, flux and difference. From this perspective, it is impossible to make universal claims about the nature of human selves and personal experiences because such selves and experiences differ in relation to historical, cultural and practical contexts” (M. Crossley, 2012, p. 132). Social constructionism emphasises the role of the social and cultural context in shaping identity. Social constructivism suggests the term ‘subjectivity’ as “a person’s experience of being in the world” (Fairfield, 2001, p. 223). In this perspective, there is no single Self, but rather multiple selves that are shaped by different social contexts and interactions. Identity is viewed as a process of negotiation and change that is constantly evolving.

1.2.1.1 Psychological Self and Identity: Key Theories in this Research

As the scope of this chapter is limited, there is not enough space to include all theories which discuss identity and self. The researcher will discuss some key psychological theories that informed her during this research. While conducting the research and analysing the data, the researcher referred to different theories at different moments.

Cultural psychology perspectives consider the Self as a construct that is “the ‘me’ at the centre of experience—a continually developing sense of awareness and agency that guides action and takes shape as the individual, both brain and body, becomes attuned to the various environments it inhabits” (Markus & Kitayama, 2010, p. 421). According to a traditional, realistic definition of the Self, all aspects of behaviour are affected by the Self, including attention, perception, cognition, emotion, motivation, relationships, and group dynamics. They argue that studying culture and self is concerned with how the world around us implicitly and explicitly shapes psychological processes, through the context, or sociocultural system in which people live. There is a constant relationship between the self (i.e., the body, the brain, and psychological tendencies) and sociocultural content (i.e., ideas, practices, institutions, products, and artefacts). Consequently, the mediating self and psychological functioning change as cultural content changes. Therefore, culture is a product of human activity; it results from a person’s behaviour and the thoughts, feelings, and actions of those who have come before them.

Narrative psychology emphasises how people create meaning and form identities by constructing stories or narratives about themselves and their experiences in order to make sense of their lives. Thus, individuals are able to better understand who they are, how they became the way they are, and what their future may hold (M. L. Crossley, 2000, 2002; McAdams, 2001). This approach is based on the idea that the self is not a fixed entity, but rather is constantly evolving and changing. Through the stories told (to oneself as well as others) the self is constructed and reconstructed. Narrative psychology differs in how it perceives the Self as a construct and how that construct is formed. McAdams argues that individuals construct their identities through the stories they tell about their lives, and that these stories are shaped by cultural and historical factors (McAdams, 2001). However, his approach also highlights that Self-development is viewed as a complex and multifaceted process that involves the development and maintenance of a coherent and stable sense of

self over time (McAdams, 2013). Thus, McAdams emphasises the individual psychological need to create a coherent and resolved 'life' story.

By contrast, Gergen's social constructionist approach emphasises how the Self or identity is constructed within a social and cultural context (K. J. Gergen, 1993). A person's self, in his view, is more than a concept that exists within him or her. As a result, it is shaped continuously by the interactions we have with others and the cultural and historical context in which we find ourselves (K. Gergen & Gergen, 1988). He coined the term 'saturated self' to describe how in contemporary Western societies, individuals are constantly confronted with competing narratives about who they are and what they should achieve. This results in fragmentation and disorientation as individuals struggle to make sense of the conflicting messages they receive. Gergen suggests that one way of coping with this state of affairs is by embracing a more fluid and flexible understanding of the self, instead of trying to achieve a fixed, stable identity. Individuals can view themselves as constantly evolving and changing, shaped by their interactions with others and the cultural context in which they find themselves (K. J. Gergen, 2015).

The relational Self-theory is a psychoanalytic theory attempting to reconcile psychoanalysis and the postmodern paradigm (Rubin, 1997). According to the Relational Self-theory, a person's self is not a fixed entity but one that is continually shaped and reshaped as a result of interpersonal relationships. Relationships create internalised mental representations, or "internal working models," influencing individuals' perceptions and interactions with the world. Thus, a person's sense of self or the manner in which they experience themselves may change in response to an interaction or context (Mitchell, 1993).

Positioning theory argues that the self is not a solitary entity but rather is embedded in a broader social and linguistic context (Bamberg, 2006; Davies & Harré, 1990). It emphasises the manner in which individuals present themselves in their stories and the relationships that they develop with others. In this approach, the importance of examining the broader context in which social identities are constructed and negotiated, as well as how language is used to construct and negotiate those identities, is highlighted.

1.2.2 Identity Formation in Childhood

The following paragraph will discuss some theories which offer possible explanations to the process of Self and identity construction in childhood. Like previously, the theories outlined

are these which informed the researcher during the research and are not presuming to encompass all such theories. This paragraph will outline Erikson's psychological development theory, Marcia's identity status theory and Henri Tajfel and John Turner's social identity theory.

Erikson's theory proposes that our personalities evolve through eight stages. The social experience is valuable throughout life, with each stage characterised by a conflict between our psychological needs and the surrounding social environment. In order to be fully functional and confident members of society, we need to accomplish each stage.

Erikson perceives the process of forming one's identity as a complex one that takes place throughout an individual's lifetime. Children begin to develop a sense of self during early childhood (ages 2 to 6), when they begin to differentiate themselves from others (Sokol, 2009). Psychosocial development is characterised by the conflict between autonomy and shame and doubt, during which children learn to assert their independence while also seeking approval from caregivers, according to Erik Erikson's theory.

Children in middle childhood (ages 6 to 12) continue to develop their sense of self, but they are also beginning to understand how they fit into larger social groups. Between the ages of 6-12, children become focused on improving their sense of competence (industrious vs. inferiority stage). Their peer group becomes increasingly important. As a child matures, he or she takes on characteristics and attributes admired by parents or significant others, a process Erikson referred to as identification (Sokol, 2009). Sokol explained that identity formation begins when identification is no longer useful; it is a transitional space when the children must explore their Self and identity directly.

Children entering pre-adolescence (ages 10 to 14) may experience a period of identity exploration in which they question who they are and what they wish to become. In order to successfully transition into adulthood, adolescents must resolve Erikson's conflict 'identity versus role confusion' and form a clear sense of identity. During adolescence (ages 14-18), individuals continue to refine their sense of identity as they adjust to the increasing independence, changing social roles, and increasing autonomy of adolescence. This stage is also facilitated by "dramatic biological changes [that] occur with equally dramatic shifts in social behaviour and expectations" (Batra, 2013, p. 267). James Marcia (2012) expanded Eriksonian theory in his identity status theory which holds that an individual goes through four stages of identity development: diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium, and achievement.

Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory and James Marcia's identity status theory are person-driven and place a lot of value on the individual or the inner crisis they experience.

As Henri Tajfel and John Turner (2004) suggested, children in middle childhood derive their sense of identity from their social groups and from identifying or rejecting them. It can include things such as family, school, and sports teams.

1.2.2.1 Culture and Identity

Cultural identity is the identification with or feeling of belonging to a group. It is part of a person's self-conception and self-percept and is related to nationality, ethnicity, religion, social class, generation, locality or any kind of social group that has its own distinct culture. Cultural identity formation can be explained by the theories of developmental psychologists such as Lev Vygotsky (Shute & Slee, 2015; Wertsch, 1985). Vygotsky places greater emphasis on contextual, social and cultural factors. Within Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, individuals develop through interaction with their social and cultural environments, and cultural tools (such as language and cultural practices) play a crucial role in forming their identities.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory also considers context essential to shaping a person's identity. According to this theory, children develop and form an identity within a series of contexts including microsystems (families, schools), mesosystems (relationships between microsystems), and exosystems (external systems such as government or media). These systems interact with one another and within themselves.

Accordingly, self-concepts may vary from culture to culture, as they encompass "the images, ideas (including beliefs, values, and stereotypes), norms, tasks, practices, and social interactions that typify various social environments and reflect differences in the way in which people attune to those environments." (Markus & Kitayama, 2010 p. 241).

Thus, culture contributes to how people understand their world and form their values and their identity; however, people's identities and Self also influence how they interact with the systems around them, how they interpret human behaviours, communicate and interact with others, as well as their societies and cultures in general. When considering children with a multicultural background, i.e. who live with parents from different cultures and move between different communities, one can assume they will be influenced by these cultures

when their identity is formed. Additionally, it is possible that identity, or multiple identities, could impact how they experience and interpret the world around them.

1.2.2.2 *Cognitive and language development considerations*

Cognitive processes and identity formation are closely related; how we perceive ourselves and the world can influence who we are. A person's identity can also influence cognitive processes, such as perceiving and interpreting information (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Tadmor et al., 2009).

The developmental stages theory of Piaget (Hoy, 2021) indicates that children's thinking is concrete and realistic during middle childhood and early adolescence (from the age of six to eleven); however, as adolescence progresses, they develop more abstract reasoning, including considering multiple perspectives. They also become more concerned with their identity and socially aware. An interest in higher cognitive activities (a need to know) and reflections were found to be related to forming an identity (Njus & Johnson, 2008). An individual's ability to question their conceptions, reflect on their values and beliefs and examine their life experiences increases during adolescence, in keeping with Eriksonian theory (Erikson, 1963). There is evidence to suggest that younger children understand concepts such as race and ethnicity differently to than adolescents. The concept of ethnicity and race is formed in children, understood in their (presumed) literal sense, and observed in their concrete manifestations in everyday life, but adolescents understand it in a more abstract and complex way (Rivas-Drake et al., 2013)

Cultural knowledge and competency acquisition depend on understanding symbolic and abstract concepts (Bruner & Bruner, 1990; Faulkner et al., 2006). These symbols can be concrete or material (e.g., artefacts and places) (Y. Y. Hong et al., 2000; Luna et al., 2008; Verkuyten & Pouliasi, 2002), which facilitate feelings of identification, emotions and cognition, often implicitly or unconsciously. Additionally, they may refer to abstract cultural signs, such as symbolic representations, language, and other means of nonverbal communication.

Vygotsky argued that culture influences cognition and identity by providing individuals with signs such as language, writing, numerical systems, and art. By incorporating these sign systems into individual mental functioning, they act as a medium between the culture and the developing individual (Shute & Slee, 2015). As a result, differences between cultures can

be observed by comparing concepts in different languages (one language may possess many words that others lack), which can impact the lived experiences, Self, identity and relationships (Awaad & Reicherter, 2016; Boroditsky, 2011).

Language acquisition occurs through social interactions, particularly during infancy and childhood (Kuhl, 2011; Lesaux et al., 2007). Language plays an important part not only in making meaning but in creating bonds between individuals of the same culture (or heritage) (Johnson-Beykont & Beykont, 2010; Kanno & Norton, 2003) or in forming a bridge between people of diverse cultures or heritage (Sari et al., 2019). For ethnic minority or bilingual children, language is often seen as an advantage, source of pride or cultural capital (S. X. Chen et al., 2008; Francis et al., 2009; Peace-Hughes et al., 2021).

As such, it appears that the combination of maturation of cognition and an expressed desire to understand and know oneself and the world while moving away from contact with caregivers drives adolescence to form an identity, including a personal identity. Language plays an essential role in the cultural development of children. This has led most research on cultural or multicultural identity to focus on adolescents or older ages. However, as can be derived from identity theories and implicit cognitive research on cultural awareness, the roots of cultural identity and awareness start at an earlier age ((Sokol, 2009; Verkuyten & Pouliasi, 2002).

1.3 Biculturalism and mulicturalism

1.3.1 Bicultural and multicultural identity formation

Being a bicultural or multicultural person involves being exposed to distinct contextual experiences, values and relationships that help shape one's identity and Self, as well as being expected to adapt and adjust one's behaviour according to the context (Berry et al., 2006; S. X. Chen et al., 2008; Phinney, 1990).

"Multiple identities" (Pescosolido & Rubin, 2000) theory attempts to explain how cultural identities are constructed within a multicultural context. It refers to the different social roles and affiliations people may hold in multicultural settings, where conflicting social expectations and norms may lead to multiple identities. In this situation, an individual may be expected to identify differently depending on the cultural expectations of different

groups. As a result, he or she may live with multiple identities in order to satisfy the expectations of their various social groups.

Multicultural situations present several challenges when it comes to sustaining multiple identities because it is highly dependent on whether the identities are complementary or conflicting. Complementary identities complement each other and can coexist, for example, being both a proud member of a specific ethnic group and a citizen of a certain country are complementary identities. The concept of contradictory identities, however, refers to a set of expectations and values that conflict. For example, a member of a particular religious group that finds itself at odds with the dominant cultural norms of their society is considered contradictory.

Various coping strategies can be used to maintain multiple identities, including compartmentalising, integrating, or prioritising between them. It is possible to prevent conflict between different identities by compartmentalising, as they are kept separate in order not to conflict. The process of integrating involves finding ways to reconcile and merge the different identities harmoniously. In certain situations, prioritisation involves choosing one identity based on the circumstances. These ideas are similar to Gergen's 'Saturate Self' concept that was discussed earlier, as both discuss an attempt to reconcile multiple streams of information by accepting the multiplicity of experiences.

1.3.1.1 Bicultural identity formation

The concept of bicultural identity was developed to understand the psychological development of people of an ethnic minority, migrants and children of migrants (1.5 and second generation). Much research in the area of culture is occupied with such populations. Biculturalism is one of the responses to the acculturation conflict: the degree to which individuals are motivated or permitted to retain identification with the culture of origin; and their ability to identify and participate in the mainstream, dominant culture (Berry et al., 2006). Numerous studies demonstrate biculturalism (or integration) as a positive resolution that is correlated with positive adjustment, psychologically and socially (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013).

Developing a bicultural identity refers to the process of incorporating aspects of both a person's primary culture and the culture of their broader social environment (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; LaFromboise et al., 1993; Phinney, 1990; Schwartz et al., 2016) Bicultural identity is therefore defined as the ability of an individual to move between

cultures without experiencing tension emotionally, cognitively or socially (LaFromboise et al., 1993).

As such, developing bicultural competence, or integrating bicultural identity, can take a considerable amount of time and may require learning a new language, becoming familiar with the other culture, and interacting with people in a manner that is acceptable to that culture. This process can take a long time for children who are new to a culture and do not possess the necessary skills and knowledge. A child could generally be considered bicultural if he or she belongs to an ethnic minority group; is a member of a second generation of migrants; or is a member of a 1.5 generation that has lived in the country for a minimum of five years (Berry et al., 2006; Phinney, 1990).

It could be argued that children with parents of different cultural backgrounds (Multicultural children) are not only second-generation but also experience a constant bicultural environment at home and interact with a third external culture. They must learn to navigate at least two cultural systems with distinct values, perspectives, symbols and codes. Unlike other bicultural children, these children are singular in their identity and experiences not only from their peers but also from their parents. Bicultural and multicultural children will be explored more in-depth in the literature review.

1.4 Reasons for conducting this study

As a trainee educational psychologist who has a background in behavioural sciences, the researcher has a keen interest in culture and society and how they affect individuals in their everyday lives. With a critical cultural perspective and experience working with diverse populations, the researcher strongly believed in promoting culturally sensitive research and practice considering cultural and linguistic differences. Her interests lie in how culture shapes human reality and how it is shaped by human action as a flexible and non-essentialist entity.

As reviewed in this chapter, culture is a social construct but one that can influence psychological processes and human behaviour. These ideas will be discussed further in the following chapter when the literature concerning biculturality and multicultural children will be explored more in-depth. The meeting point (or intersectionality) of more than one culture and in some cases three, may result in a different and distinct psychological experience. It is the aim of this study to explore the narratives of children who experience

such intersectionality, to see whether they experience themselves as culturally 'fluent' or experiencing tension. The narratives also might express the discourses about diversity the children experience in their everyday life, their self-confidence and cultural appreciation. Children from multicultural backgrounds are a rapidly growing demographic in a city as diverse as London. There is, however, a lack of quantitative as well as qualitative research involving this population. Multicultural children are often categorised by ethnicity or race. However, they can be both or neither, as discussed in this study. In addition, most studies conducted on children and young people who are multicultural take place during their pre-adolescent or adolescent years, when the children are likely to talk about their identities openly. The researcher, however, was interested in the roots of identity formation, i.e., how experiences and relationships contribute to identity formation. There is evidence that these roots can be observed even prior to adolescence, as discussed in this chapter. For example, the researcher is interested in who the children identify with, whether they show preference in their friendship selections or not, whether they are aware of the cultural backgrounds of their friends, etc. Additionally, the researcher is interested in learning what the narratives tell us about what experiences are important for the children in their Self and identity formation, as well as their everyday lives.

Lastly, exploring the narratives and experiences of multicultural children and how they form their identities in middle childhood (junior school ages) may assist professionals working with children in this phase in uncovering challenges (if such exist) and strengths and help shape a more inclusive practice. It can also inform educational systems as to the appropriate manner to approach discussion and understanding of Self, identities and cultures during primary years.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Systematic Literature Review

The purpose of this section is to provide a brief overview of the methodology used to conduct the literature review.

The review has several aims: firstly, identifying and comparing the terms and definitions used in the literature to discuss multicultural identity and comparing them with similar ones used in the psychological field. Secondly, critically evaluating the literature on the researched phenomenon of children with multicultural identity, including the approaches to the study of it. Thirdly, finetuning the definitions and approach the researcher take in my research. Lastly, the researcher have used the literature review to explore the different fields of knowledge in which multiculturalism as an identity in children is explored, including psychology, sociology, education anthropology and human development, etc., and the paradigms (immigration studies, minorities studies, etc.) used to explore this area.

2.1.1 Method:

To conduct the systematic literature review, the researcher formed a question broader than my planned research question: What is the impact of living with more than one cultural identity on children's experiences and development?

The review question was written considering SPIDER (i.e. Sample, Phenomenon of Interest, Design, Evaluation, Research Type) (Cooke et al., 2012), which was later used to inform the searches and create inclusion and exclusion criteria. SPIDER was chosen as it can address both qualitative and mixed method research, as well as descriptive or exploratory studies.

2.1.2 Eligibility criteria

Eligibility criteria were based on the SPIDER tool. Pursell and McCarren (2020) recommended that eligibility criteria are constructed to fit the logic of the review question, be specific and clear and minimise any subjectivity.

2.1.3 Inclusion

Inclusion criteria were selected so the emphasis would be given to the cultural aspect and impact of children from diverse families and heritage. However, the criteria were revised during the search as

it became clear that studies targeting children from mixed-cultural backgrounds with a focus on cultural contribution to their identity and experiences are scarce.

- Subject: Multicultural identity, bicultural/ cultural identity or mixed ethnicity.
- Exploring identity construction, psychological adjustment, psychological /development, relationship, self or experiences.
- Sample of children of multicultural, bicultural or mixed-ethnicity/multicultural children or 1.5 generations and up. This was later broadened to include children of ethnic minorities.
- Children and young people: ages between 2-18. In one instance only, a study on young adults was included as it answered all other criteria perfectly.
- Peer reviewed
- Language: English and Hebrew
- Type of literature: Research, articles, book sections and reviews.

2.1.4 Exclusion

- Subjects: race or mixed-race, monocultural individuals, recent/first-generation immigrants, refugees or asylum seekers.
- Research that did not specify the length of time living in the host/ majority culture.
- Exploring how external bicultural or multicultural factors impact individuals of diversity, focusing on the environment's response to multicultural people.
- Research focusing on bilingualism, learning/ acquisition of knowledge as the primary focus.
- Cross-cultural comparisons only.
- Infants or adults only.
- Type of literature: commentaries, policy documents, dissertations and grey literature.

2.1.5 Search strategies

Initial scoping reviews in EBSCO (Psych Info) using the terms multicultural identity or multiculturalism or diverse identity yielded above 22,000 results. It was clear that the terms used needed refinement and consideration. After consultation with the department's librarian, it was decided to search in several stages:

1. Several separate, database-specific searches using the database's thesaurus or index subject terms.
2. Scopus search to detect any complimentary articles in other academic fields or any missed literature.
3. Incorporating literature found in other sources such as Google Scholar or previously known to the researcher.
4. After several relevant articles have been evaluated, use Science Direct in order to identify any appropriate literature that has cited the article or was cited by it (Snowballing).

2.1.5.1 SPIDER- Inclusion/ exclusion criteria

Sample	<i>Children with more than one culture identify children who assume at least two cultures.</i>
Phenomenon of Interest	<i>Impact of having a multicultural or bicultural identity on the individual's development, experiences, self and well being</i>
Design	<i>Qualitative. Quantitative, exploratory and descriptive</i>
Evaluation	<i>Experiences. Psychological adjustment, development, well-being, relationship, self.</i>
Research Type	<i>Any peer-reviewed research, no grey literature, no book reviews or commentaries.</i>

Table 1 Exclusion and Inclusion criteria

After the first few searches, it became clear that articles targeting children of mixed cultures/who are from mixed families (multicultural) substantially limited the results. The inclusion criteria were expanded to include children from minority and immigrant groups with bicultural identity and competence. They are assumed to have integrated into the host culture after living there for at least five years from an early age. It was decided to avoid samples of refugees as other complexities (psychological, political etc.) may impact their psychological development and identity.

Another dilemma was the inclusion of mixed ethnicity and mixed race samples. It was decided to include this population in the searchers and keywords. However, after reviewing the articles, it became clear that the focus of the research was more on the children's experiences of responses to their mixed-racial identity (phenotype) and less on the experience of growing up with these diverse influences. Most articles were not considered relevant except for studies that touched on the cultural aspects or parenting perspectives of growing up 'mixed'.

Two further two exceptions were made. Although the population was young adults, one article was included, as all other criteria, including the qualitative nature of the article, fit the current research. Additionally, it was decided to include an article focused on parents' perspectives of parenting in mixed ethnic and cultural families.

Overall, nine searches were made, of which only 7 yielded relevant articles. Forty-six articles were picked for further evaluation, of which ten were found eligible for the literature review and synthesis. Further six articles were identified through other means, such as citation exploration and Google Scholar searches. Articles identified through these means were used only after clearing their peer-reviewed status in Science Direct or Scopus.

Search terms DE "Multiculturalism") AND (DE "Self Psychology" OR self OR relationships OR development) AND ("children" OR "Youth")					
Databases	Date conducted	<i>No. of papers initially found before applying parameters</i>	<i>No. of papers initially found After applying parameters</i>	<i>Papers retrieved for evaluation</i>	<i>Papers accepted as eligible</i>
Psych info	26/7/2022	544	82	24	8

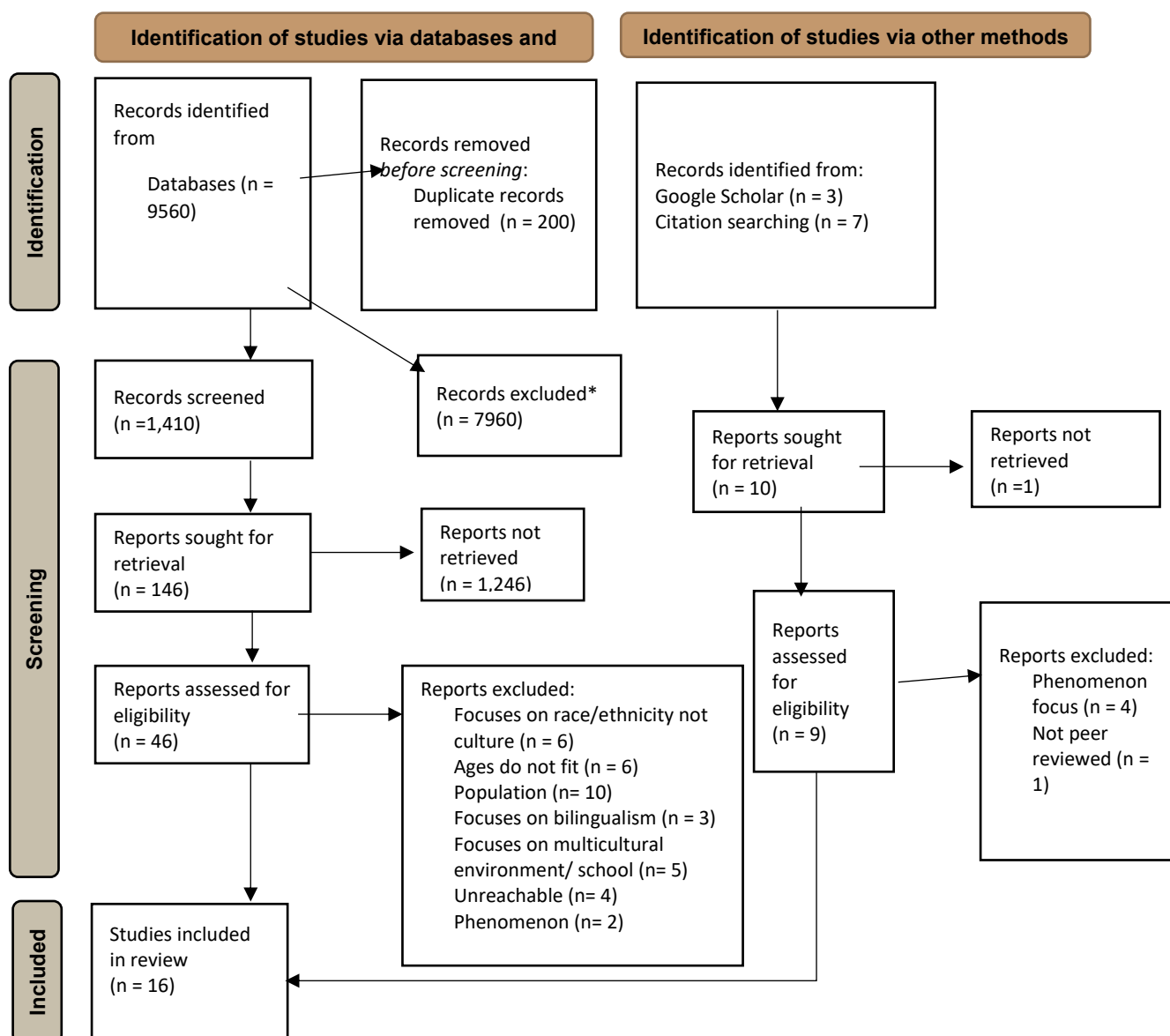
Search terms ("multiculturalism" OR "cultural identity") AND ("self" OR "relationships" OR "Experiences") AND ("children" OR "youth")					
Databases	Date conducted	<i>No. of papers initially found before applying parameters</i>	<i>No. of papers initially found After applying parameters</i>	<i>Papers retrieved for evaluation</i>	<i>Papers accepted as eligible</i>

<i>parameters</i>					
Child development and educational studies	26/7/2022	72	65	7	0
Search terms	((((ZU "multiculturalism")) or ((ZU "cultural identity"))) and ((ZW "experience"))) or ((ZW "self") or ((ZW "interpersonal")))and ((ZW "children")))				
Databases	Date conducted	<i>No. of papers Initially found before applying parameters</i>	<i>No. of papers Initially found After applying parameters</i>	<i>Papers retrieved for evaluation</i>	<i>Papers accepted as eligible</i>
Child development and educational studies	27/7/2022	82	78	3	0
Search terms	("multiculturalism" OR "cultural identity") AND ("self" OR "relationships" OR "Experiences") AND ("children" OR "youth")				
Databases	Date conducted	<i>No. of papers Initially found before applying parameters</i>	<i>No. of papers Initially found After applying parameters</i>	<i>Papers retrieved for evaluation</i>	<i>Papers accepted as eligible</i>
Child development and educational studies	26/7/2022	72	65	11	0

**educational
studies**

Table 2 Literature Searchers

Figure 1 PRISMA flow diagram



* Records removed after initial filtering for peer reviewed and language.

2.1.6 Criteria used to evaluate the research

The papers chosen were appraised using the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP, 2018) to ensure the quality of the articles on such factors as validity, methodology, effectiveness, ethical considerations etc (see Appendix A).

Additionally, articles were evaluated and reviewed to determine whether they were appropriate and fit this systematic literature review question. To this effect, the following criteria were used:

- 1) Importance was placed on the definitions used by the researchers and how well they matched with the methodology and population picked for the research. For example, an article which considered biculturality but has not controlled for age and exposure to host culture (recent immigrants or older age) was not chosen.
- 2) Qualitative articles exploring the children's point of view were preferred if they were appropriate.
- 3) Careful consideration was given to possible alternative hypotheses and explanations for the phenomenon observed, especially to different perspectives in qualitative research.
- 4) Another criterion for reviewing the literature was the focus of the research and how well it fitted the review question. For example, considering culture (values, traditions, language etc.) as part of the identity.
- 5) Lastly, importance was given to reflexivity and any acknowledgement of the agenda made by the researchers, including in quantitative research. It was valued when researchers clarified their objectives or interests in pursuing a particular phenomenon or considered their own identity, race or personal reflexivity.

2.2 Synthesis

Although multicultural children are a growing population, it is a population that is little researched in Educational Psychology. Most studies identified in the literature review come from adjacent fields of Child Development, Developmental psychology, Education or Social, Cultural psychology and Cross-cultural studies. Many studies explore adults, young adults and adolescents; or focus on minority children, race, ethnicity or mixed race. Studies focusing on younger multicultural children or mixed-heritage children, where the impact of culture was explored, were hard to come by.

In the following paragraphs, the researcher will explore the articles found according to themes the researcher identified. As the articles covered a wide range of topics, this method was preferred over describing each study in detail.

Five themes were identified: biculturality and bicultural competence; identity formation, developmental outcomes and Self development; Adjustment and wellbeing; race and ethnicity; family relationships and parenting.

The researcher will critically examine how these articles link to her research and what knowledge is still missing.

2.2.1 Biculturality and bicultural competence.

Biculturality, as described by LaFromboise et al. (1993), is the ability of some individuals to belong and move between cultures without feeling tension. It suggests that these individuals, usually those from immigrant, minority or mixed heritage backgrounds, possess the cultural capital to understand, behave and interact within the different cultures they belong to. In this sense, biculturalism encompasses more than just identification; it also refers to competence. Hence the fact that someone has mixed parenthood does not mean they are necessarily bicultural (Benbow & Rutland, 2017; Cheung & Swank, 2020; Lam et al., 2020; Yoo, 2021).

Cheung & Swank (2020) noticed that their Asian American participants had a high bicultural competence (e.g. strong understanding and identification with their heritage culture as well as the majority culture) despite living in areas with little exposure to their own heritage culture. They suggested that within Asian communities, the distinction of the heritage culture from westernised culture and the importance of family and rearing practices (as offered by the authors) has enabled the process of multiple identification and knowledge to take place naturally. Another possible explanation is that the difference from peers in the participants' immediate environment pushed them to learn about and connect with their heritage culture while still being able to communicate and belong to the society around them.

Bicultural competence could be promoted not only by family and parents but also by the community and educational settings. Heritage language schools, for example, serve as agents of bicultural competence and identification (J. Kim & Lee, 2011; Lam et al., 2020). In their research, Lam et al. (2020) showed how a complementary school for British Sikhs, through heritage language learning, promote cultural understanding and bicultural adaptation in children. The children's perspectives of learning their heritage language showed awareness of the benefits of additional language as a communication method, a bridge between their cultures and a means of belonging.

While most of the research on bicultural identification and competence is based on explicit measures (self-identifications or school/ parental identification), bicultural identity could be implicit or unconscious, as Marks et al. (2011) demonstrated. Their study shows that people (or children) do not need to be aware of consciously identifying with two different cultures to hold biculturality or bicultural competence. These results may have many interesting implications. For example, they imply younger children can maintain bicultural competence before the identified age of identity formation in early adolescence. Additionally, they suggest that a person can naturally belong and implicitly be aware of values, positions, norms, and behaviours in more than one culture without actively considering their identification. Lastly, the research showed that exploring cultural identities and perspectives is possible without seeking conscious and explicit views. Some of these suggestions are implied in another study that examined how priming bicultural (minority) children with cultural meanings (language, heritage/ national properties) impacted their psychological perspectives and interpretation of behaviours (Verkuyten & Pouliasi, 2002).

2.2.2 Identity formation, developmental outcomes and Self development

Developmental psychology approaches, including Bronfenbrenner's ecosystemic model (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), consider culture as one of the factors impacting children's development, personality and interpretation of the world.

Verkuyten & Pouliasi (2002) demonstrated how culture establishes the context for children's self-attributions to human behaviour, a view of family integrity, obedience, and self-view. For example, children living in individualised cultures tend to rationalise human actions with internal reasons and motivations. In contrast, children in collectivist cultures highlight situational and external causes and place more importance on the salience of the family and less importance on their personal self. This study shed light on the complex and bi-directional ways in which culture and society may influence people's lives. Culture influences and shapes internalised values, thoughts, ideas and development and also activates them. Bicultural children (those that grow up with more than one cultural tradition/ background) attribute different interpretations based on context, unlike monocultural children, a phenomenon the researchers refer to as "cultural frame switching". Those results suggest the possibility of multiple self-representations children

possess and can move between without feeling a conflict. While the study explores how minority children can shift their perceptions according to the context, it did not examine children of mixed or multicultural backgrounds. Furthermore, the study was focused on the cognitive processes involved in frame switching. Still, it did not consider the emotional or psychological aspects that may be related to such switching or how the children 'feel' in each context.

Multiple self-representations were found in a qualitative study on Korean minority preschool children (J. Kim & Lee, 2011). Exploring name practices and the children's relationships with their different names (Korean, English, Christian), the researchers discussed how children's identities and social selves were constructed and negotiated by them and others through their multiple names and context: "by sharing various names with which adults and peers address them in different contexts, the young Korean American children may well develop an understanding of their and their peers' multiple and "contextualised selves" (J. Kim & Lee, 2011, p. 224). Also, naming practices were linked to the guardians' cultural values and belief systems.

Similarly, Children of Iranian heritage in Sweden also demonstrated a complex, shifting and multiple sense of Self. The children shaped their identities through Iranian cultural experiences and Swedish experiences, preferring a hybrid and shifting sense of Self, valuing aspects of both heritage and primary cultures and defying and rejecting any assumption of a rigid identity or constructs. Interestingly, the multiplicity of Self allowed many conflicting perceptions and values without causing a conflictual experience (Moinian, 2009). The children negotiated and positioned their identity not only among themselves but with others as well.

The formation of multiple identities and self-concepts was also discussed regarding children and adults of multicultural backgrounds (Joerchel, 2006; Yampolsky et al., 2013). Joerchel (2006) discussed how children of diverse cultural backgrounds (two different parental cultures, growing up in a third culture) experience and negotiate their multiple social identities, including conflictual and conflicting components (language, religion, appearances) with an element of fluidity. While the qualitative research presented a deep and thoughtful analysis, the fact that it was not psychologically oriented led to some lack of psychological perspectives on some of the narratives and phenomena explored, including

the family's background (divorce). Moreover, the researcher failed to address the apparent differences between the narratives of her participants and how such differences might relate to issues of race and culture (such as when their parents were of similar cultural backgrounds, identities, or races or different cultures, identities, or races). A child of Austrian-German heritage might have a different experience than an Italian-Lebanese child due to external and cultural factors.

2.2.3 Adjustment and wellbeing

According to the literature, bicultural competence and identity appear to be connected to positive outcomes such as adjustment, well-being and positive social relationships (Benbow & Rutland, 2017; Brown et al., 2013; Cheung & Swank, 2020; Lundén et al., 2019; Méroc et al., 2019; Yoo, 2021).

Bicultural competence was found to contribute to higher peer acceptance and social competence in adolescence and early childhood (Benbow & Rutland, 2017; R. Brown et al., 2013). British minority female adolescents living in London with high bicultural competence (understanding of role repertoire, ethnic and British cultural knowledge and bicultural efficacy) also had better social support and better psychological adjustment- they were open to the other group, were accepted by their peer group and had higher self-esteem (Benbow & Rutland, 2017). Furthermore, bicultural adolescents were likelier to maintain their culture of origin but were still interested in contacting peers outside their culture groups (other-group). Based on these results, multicultural children are described as flexible, able to adapt to different contexts, maximise their social relationships, be interested in others, and understand diversity. In addition, these children seem to have high self-esteem, which could be caused by their positive social experiences- feeling valued and wanted- and by their bicultural identity, which protects them against discrimination or racial shame. There was no explanation provided by the researchers as to why their study was gender-specific and looked only at girls. Similar results were found in a study with East Asian American adolescents and young adults (Cheung & Swank, 2020), who found that "Participants who reported higher levels of cultural competence (behaviour, thinking, and attitudes) had higher levels of subjective well-being." (2020, p. 46).

The above literature focused on adolescence and early adulthood, and research that examines biculturalism at younger ages is limited for several reasons. It is generally believed that identity is formed around early adolescence. Additionally, considering and discussing identity and culture requires understanding and communicating abstract and complicated concepts, and young children may lack the appropriate language skills needed. Brown et al. (2013), however, explored acculturation attitudes and social adjustment in primary-aged British South Asian minority children living in southern England. Their findings partially supported previous literature partially. An integration acculturation approach (biculturalism - integration of both heritage and main cultures) resulted in children being more socially accepted by their peers and demonstrating better social competence over time. However, they also observed increased negative emotional problems among the children. There are several explanations offered by the researchers for this contradiction; for example, in seeking more interactions with the outer group, the children are more susceptible to culture or race-based rejections, or they lack the social support needed to support their integration approach. To these, the researcher would add that it is possible that the children were forming complex, multiple and subjective 'Selves' constructs (as opposed to a singular 'Self' construct) and switching between them constantly. Moreover, forming a multicultural identity is more complex than forming a monocultural one. These processes require personal cognitive and emotional resources that could be channeled into regulating and coping with other emotions or situations.

Studies that explore children or individuals of cultural or mixed heritage reveal a similar picture. These studies suggest that adopting a bicultural identity and possessing knowledge of the different cultures of that identity (integration rather than separation or assimilation) leads to better psychological outcomes (Yampolsky et al., 2013; Yoo, 2021).

Yoo (2021) demonstrated that allowing Korean children of multicultural families (a Korean dad and a mother of different culture) to learn and embrace their mother culture resulted in better life satisfaction. The researcher focused on culture as opposed to race by considering only two parents of the same 'race' (Asian) but different cultures and nationalities (Philippines, China, Thailand etc.). Differences between genders were found. Furthermore, the research demonstrates how factors such as resilience, national identity, parental neglect, parental acculturative stress, friend support, family support, and teacher support

predict acculturation strategies. Unlike most of the research included in this review, this study was done in South Korea and is based on data from a national survey. According to the study, Korea has unique characteristics in its high value for unified Korean identity, suspiciousness of non-Korean cultures and higher rates of men marrying foreign women than vice versa- all leading to specific circumstances for multicultural children.

2.2.4 Race and ethnicity

Interestingly, there is an abundance of research done on race and minorities. Here, the focus might be a critical exploration of the experience, outcomes, and power dynamics of children from such communities. Research of this nature is significant but might miss out on the specific influence of culture on the development, experience and interpretation of the world involved. However, it offers some information on how power and marginalisation might impact multicultural children who consider themselves multi-racial or mixed-ethnic.

According to the systematic literature review, children from multi-racial or multi-ethnic backgrounds face particular and unique circumstances that may impact their development, experiences and psychological well-being (Lorenzo-Blanco et al., 2013; Nishina & Witkow, 2019; Rodríguez-García et al., 2021).

Nishina & Witko (2019) argue that bi-racial, multiracial and multiethnic children should be considered separate in developmental research and psychology. According to the writers, these children have unique experiences and characteristics that influence their development. For example, multiethnic and multiracial children are exposed to and navigate between parents from different backgrounds and racial experiences. In addition to not fitting with a non-binary ethnic category, they need to cope with society's response and expectations in regard to their racial function, ethnicity or culture (confusion about their race or ethnicity). The writers also suggest that children and young people of multiethnic backgrounds might also have specific developmental tasks and different developmental pathways. According to the literature they reviewed, these children's Ethnic- Racial Integration (ERI), social-cognitive development and peer interaction influence and is influenced by their multiracial background.

Multiracial and multiethnic youth experiences and identity formation are diverse and heterogeneous, with some children finding resilience and strengths in their different identities and some experiencing it as challenging to navigate. Narratives of adolescents and young adults reveal the impact of visibility on their personal outcomes when individuals who share common characteristics with the main population get to develop a more advantageous and strong identity. At the same time, others are subjected to marginalisation, discrimination or negative response (Rodríguez-García et al., 2021). The research is not a psychological study, and while it examines the individuals' narratives in response to the main population and the greater political and cultural atmosphere, citing specific stigmas and stereotypes, it does not engage with the agency and psychological resilience the children possess to negotiate their identity or positioning nor with other psychological contributors to resiliency and identity development. Little reflexivity from the researchers into their ontological and epistemological perspectives or a clear explanation of the methodology used to analyse the narratives implies that it is unclear whether the researchers genuinely engaged in an unbiased analysis.

2.2.5 Family relationships and parenting

Parenthood and family relationships are strongly connected with children's adjustment and development. Multiethnic, multiracial and multicultural children differ from their monoracial and monocultural peers in their parenting experiences, family relations and family structures. (Lorenzo-Blanco et al., 2013; Lundén et al., 2019).

Multicultural or multiethnic children are exposed to unique primary and secondary cultural differences in their family structure (Lorenzo-Blanco et al., 2013). A primary source of cultural differences is that before two people of different minorities came into continuous contact and started to form a family, they had their own distinct ways of behaving, thinking and feeling. Intercultural couples need to negotiate these differences and, many times will adopt parenting practices that are unique to their family. Furthermore, secondary cultural differences are caused by the responses of racial and ethnic minorities to their circumstances within the main culture or society, which may be different to each minority. Hence, parents who are multicultural couples will adjust their parenting styles and advice to fit their 'mixed' children according to their lived and past experiences.

Exploring the parenting practices and values of dual (Russian- Finish) and monocultural families (Finish) in Finland on the children's adjustments in a longitudinal study, Lundén et al. (2019) found interesting differences and implications on children's short and long-term outcomes. Researchers examined how different cultural backgrounds (Finnish individualism versus Russian collectivism) influence parenting practices, such as coregulation, the expression of emotions, and hierarchical child-rearing beliefs, and their effects on children. According to the research, cultural differences in parenting were related to emotional difficulties, such as affective difficulties (as reported by the parents) at four years but not at seven years. Furthermore, cultural differences did not contribute to long-term challenging well-being, and the dual parents in the study did not differ significantly between them in values and practices. It is interesting to note a few considerations that were not explored in the research. First, the study only considered Russian mothers and not fathers, with no explanation. Second, those described as Russians were, in fact, from Russian-speaking countries, some of which significantly differ. When considering cultures, inter-diversity should be accounted for. Third, the researchers did not consider the possible mediated role of the Finnish fathers on the children's development and affective outcomes. Fourth, coregulation and interaction styles were observed only at seven months and not after. Moreover, the measurement of children's behaviour difficulties based only on parental reports is subject to cultural differences and interpretations. Russian mothers perceived their children as having more emotional difficulties than their spouses at both data measuring points. This finding opens an interesting route for debating what is considered 'a problem' or challenging behaviours among different cultures and whether the expectation of obedience or emotional regulation could influence parents' perceptions. A qualitative, in-depth method would have been well-positioned to explore intricate differences in the rearing experiences of the parents, differences in values, and interpretations based on cultural experiences.

There is evidence in the literature that multicultural, multiracial, and multiethnic youth experience parenting and family structures differently. A study based on a large survey indicated that multiethnic youth received more support from their fathers than minority but less support from their mothers. Additionally, they were less involved with their families than the majority youth and were more independent than the minority youth. They did not differ otherwise in the quality of parenting (Lorenzo-Blanco et al., 2013). Despite some

pertinent findings, this study has several limitations. According to the study, the sample size of the multiethnic or multiracial group was much smaller than the sample size of the other groups, reducing its statistical power. In addition, data from 25 years ago may not reflect current youth experiences, parenting differences, family structures and relationships, or interaction with society. As this is a quantitative study with a very large sample, it is impossible to explore the cultural aspects (or primary differences) in greater detail. The question remains whether the children noticed any differences in parenting or disagreements/lack of cohesion. Ideally, the researcher would like to know how parents' practices differ according to their ethnicity or if there is a disparity between them. It is unclear what ethnicities and races are in the group described as 'mixed' or as 'others' so intergroup heterogeneity may have compromised the study results. Furthermore, the research was conducted in the United States and may not be representative of the experiences, family relationships, or characteristics of multicultural or multiethnic youth in the United Kingdom.

2.2.6 Summary

In my literature review, the researcher have attempted to answer the question: what is the impact of living with more than one cultural identity on children's experiences and development?

Current literature identifies some key issues and concepts in youth cultural identity formation, family relationships, development, skills and well-being; however, these are more explored in minority populations cross-culturally rather than with multicultural or mixed populations. Furthermore, much of the research that considered 'mixed' individuals did so with multiethnic or multiracial populations and young adults or adolescents.

Key findings in the literature indicate that minority or multicultural youth with more than one culture (heritage and main usually) who have bicultural competence tend to have better well-being, better interpersonal skills and be more accepted by their peers. Literature also indicates that mixed children have unique circumstances in how they are raised, which might result in different development trajectories, such as cognitive flexibility (frame switching). Multicultural children may also experience different patterns of parenting than their monocultural counterparts.

Additionally, some literature highlights the process of identity formation and how children can negotiate it, take agency and position themselves within themselves and others, responding to different contexts and adopting more than one selfhood.

2.3 Considerations for future research- what is missing

Several essential findings can be identified in reviewing the literature concerning mixed children's current or past experiences, including development, well-being, parental involvement, and family relationships. However, it is apparent from the above systematic literature review and the limited studies that exploration of the experiences of children of different backgrounds or cultures can add to our knowledge.

Evidence of the experiences of multiracial or multiethnic children, while shedding essential light into some of the issues that relevant to multicultural youth, is incomplete and usually does not focus on cultural traditions, values and practices influencing their development. Parenting studies involving interethnic or intercultural couples are typically focused on the parents' perspectives or observations of their parenting. They do not consider how the children perceive these differences and often do not consider the impact on development.

According to the literature review, many studies conducted with a multicultural population are not conducted through psychology but through other fields of knowledge.

Consequently, these studies lack psychological explanations regarding the development of these children's self-concept, emotional-cognitive psychological processes, or interpersonal relationships. Psychological research that explores bicultural identity or psychological processes in diverse children focuses primarily on monoethnic minority children and not on those with multicultural or mixed backgrounds.

Another issue is the need for more research focusing on the impact of culture or cultural differences on multicultural children. Some cross-cultural studies examine the differences between children of different minorities or cultures concerning self-development, attributions, relationships, parenting and values. However, these studies did not include children from more than two cultural backgrounds (concentrating primarily on the difference between minority and dominant cultures). This is remarkable, as culture is acknowledged to be an important, influential factor in human development by many

theoreticians, including Bronfenbrenner (1979), who considers culture as part of the Macrosystem. Suppose many studies, including those cited here, find culture to influence the development of minority children and adults (often through family and parenting); why is similar consideration not given to children with more than one cultural influence?

Studies that consider intercultural families tend to focus on the parents' perceptions and perspectives of raising children together; or explore the perceptions of multicultural adults and their experiences of growing up multiculturally. These studies focus on the family's racial or ethnic composition, its challenges, and the experience of negotiating two cultures or parenting practices. More research is needed into how young people experience or understand these differences, negotiations, and questions.

Studies into young children, multicultural or bicultural identity or experiences were generally uncommon. Most studies were conducted with adolescents and young adults. Indeed, identity formation, including cultural identity, is a major part of the developmental 'tasks' in adolescence and usually begins around these ages. However, experiences of 'otherness', the ability to observe differences between people or interpersonal relationships (or parental treatment), could start, consciously or not, earlier, as was shown by some of the literature reviewed. Similarly, children's sense of self or self-concepts begins forming at birth.

Interestingly, studies that considered multicultural, or 'mixed' children, were mostly not from the United Kingdom. Instead, they were from different areas and places, such as Korea, Finland, Spain and the United States. This leaves a question about the validity of findings and transferability to children of multicultural heritage in the UK. Korea, for example, has unique characteristics in its approach to 'Korean-ness' and the value of the unified Korean identity. It is also unclear what and how different societies respond to multicultural families, how multicultural the environment is, and what access families have to keep their traditions. Such considerations can influence multicultural children.

The psychological literature focusing on multicultural or 'mixed' children in this review is primarily quantitative. Several studies have resulted in valuable and significant data that may be used to develop frameworks and models to understand youth with multicultural backgrounds better. Education and therapeutic practices may also be affected by these

models. However, there are some drawbacks. The knowledge derived from such research may lack depth and richness and is not able, in many ways, to give a complete 'sense' of an individual's experiences. Moreover, it prefers generality over differences, which may become reductionist and cause significant knowledge loss. It may also struggle to measure complex definitions or constructs.

2.3.1 Difficulties in the research

It is possible that defining 'multicultural', compared with a monocultural minority, is more challenging. When considering cultures, one must take into account traditions, values, beliefs, role repertoire and behaviours that might alter between groups from similar ethnicity or race. As shown in the above review, not everyone identified as belonging to a specific 'culture' (or self-identifies as such) possesses this knowledge or traits. Furthermore, the multicultural or 'mixed' group is by their very nature heterogeneous and holds many differences within them. Can we argue that a multicultural youth of European white heritage is like a multicultural person of European- Asian heritage?

Another challenge is in researching younger children's self and cultural concepts. These concepts may require a higher level of language and cognition if explored directly. Indirectly exploring them may need time and innovative approaches- although a cleverly constructed method could indeed succeed, as was described in the literature above (Marks et al., 2011). That may well be why most research focuses on older groups.

A third challenge lies in the incidence of multicultural children in the general population. Possibly in the last century, intercultural or interethnic relationships resulting in children were less common. Additionally, societal response, approach and perception of such relationships and families have progressed. In this sense, the researcher have the advantage of working in a multicultural city that embraces multiculturalism as part of its ethos.

Most psychological approaches prefer quantitative research, as discussed before. This research constrains it to clear definitions and measurements, and the risk of missing relevant information exists. By exploring well-being from teachers' perspectives, a study may miss other aspects of well-being. Although the scope of qualitative research cannot be extended indefinitely, it has the greater potential to stray from the planned direction or explore these concepts to define and measure. Thus, qualitative research could be helpful

to explore younger children's perspectives and to help the literature create a richer, more holistic understanding of how it 'feels' to be bi or multicultural.

2.4 The current study

In the current study, the researcher attempts to address some gaps and limitations identified in the above literature review.

First, the researcher would like to focus on children from multicultural family background, as the main population for this study. Unlike previous studies, the researcher do not want to focus on racial or minority populations or migrant children, but on children who are navigating between two distinct cultural traditions at home.

Secondly, the researcher would like to explore the views and experiences of younger children, in order to understand how younger children engage and form their identity and whether they can recognise the different cultural experiences in their lives. The researcher will try to elicit the children's views and experiences navigating different parenting, relationships with friends, peers and other adults and their perceptions of themselves in relation to their cultures. To do so, the researcher suggest play-based, unstructured interviews with the children.

Thirdly, the researcher suggest that a qualitative, narrative exploration and analysis of the children's perspectives will offer a deeper understanding and meaning to the children's experiences and self-concepts. This approach is better suited to provide context and explore difficult and abstract concepts like cultures and parenthood, gathering less reductive information and analysis.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research aim and questions

Having a behavioural sciences background, the researcher believes there are many different realities. The assumptions made in Western psychology about various psychological concepts may not be applicable to all realities and societies. Even though we live in a Western society, it is imperative that we understand that not all parts of society share the same experiences. The importance of understanding the personal reality of the diverse children that make up the educational system we are working in cannot be overstated.

As outlined in the literature review, the current study will be exploratory, attempting to narrow some gaps in the literature relating to the experiences of children with more than one cultural background (referred to as multicultural children in this study). As previously demonstrated, there is a lack of research focused on this specific population of children regarding their development, Self and identity-formation, interaction and relationship and culture's influence (or lack thereof) on their development.

Following the literature review and the theoretical positions outlined in the introduction and literature review chapters, this research aims to explore how multicultural children perceive and interpret themselves and their relationships within different contexts, interactions, and cultures. What are the stories young children tell themselves about their cultures, experiences, self-perceptions and relationships; how do they feel about living with more than one culture, and how does it impact on how they perceive their lives? Are they going to perceive themselves in a cohesive or complex manner? Is there a story they tell about the multiple cultures and contexts in which they find themselves?

3.1.1 Research questions

1. The main research question for this study is: what are the experiences, stories and identities of multicultural children?

There are three sub-questions as follows:

- a. How do multicultural children experience themselves in the different cultures they move within?

- b. Do children's stories reveal different interactions and relationships within their different cultures?
- c. What narratives do multicultural children use to form their Selves and identities?

3.2 Ontology and epistemology positions

In conducting this research and approaching its concepts and objectives, the researcher moves between critical realism and relativism. According to relativism, knowledge and reality are socially, culturally, historically, and politically constructed (Raskin, 2008; Slife & Richardson, 2011). This means that power, position, and interaction will always obstruct any attempt to establish truth or reality. Moreover, this view considers how everything is perceived, interacted with, or acted upon in relation to context when there is a meeting point between individuals; and examines how perceptions, interactions, and actions are interconnected (Margolis, 2000; Raskin, 2001). Critical realism, on the other hand, combines elements of both realism and social constructionism. It asserts that there is an objective reality that exists independently of all human perceptions and interpretations while at the same time acknowledging that social institutions influence our understanding of that reality. Critical realists emphasise the role context plays in shaping our perceptions of reality (Bhaskar, 2008).

The researcher will approach this research from a moderate relativist and a critical realist points of view. In this research, the researcher is interested in concepts such as cultural perceptions, experiences and relationships of multicultural children and how these are used to construct and form the children's sense of Self and cultural identity. She will attempt this by examining the stories multicultural children tell themselves. In addition, the researcher is interested in discovering whether their belonging to and knowledge of different cultures (cultural efficacy) affects how they interact with others, build relationships with them, and perceive themselves. Consequently, the researcher assumes that concepts or constructs such as cultural efficacy and Self exist in reality and can be explored, from a critical realist approach. However, she believes such concepts, especially identity and Self, are created and formed through interactions, internalised discourses and the individual's interpretations of the world (Y. Y. Chen et al., 2011; K. J. Gergen, 2004). Her analysis highlights the individual's

and researcher's interpretations and construction as rooted in social and interpersonal processes.

So, the researcher acknowledges that her interactions with the participants could influence the story they will share according to their interpretation of the situation and context. Additionally, those interactions with the researcher's professional, contextual, social and cultural background might influence her interpretation of the story.

To analyse any subjective experiences, self-representations, or stories that the researcher may encounter, she must consider the subjective interpretations of the person who shared or experienced them. Additionally, the researcher believes those stories and experiences result from co-construction between the researcher and the participants throughout this study. Hence, any interpretation or analysis she would offer is subjective and does not represent the whole, objective truth.

3.3 Design

3.3.1 Qualitative research: choosing the appropriate research method and design

As previously stated, most of the research on multicultural children is quantitative (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Brown et al., 2013; Y. Y. Chen et al., 2011; K. J. Gergen, 2004; Le et al., 2009; Schwartz et al., 2016; Verkuyten & Pouliasi, 2002; Yoo, 2021). Although this type of research provides important information, it does not fit the researcher's ontological and epistemological position. Furthermore, as much quantitative research is influential in its ability to be generalised, it could lack the richness and wealth of knowledge that could be obtained from qualitative research (E. Lyons & Coyle, 2012; Ponterotto, 2005, 2010).

Besides the general advantages of qualitative research, multicultural psychology and cultural psychology is particularly suited to qualitative inquiry (Ponterotto, 2010). It often involves a lengthy, emotive and interactional process that is transformative both for the participants and the researcher (Ponterotto, 2005). This involves listening to and respecting our participants' own voice and their interpretations of life events to gain a better understanding of their worldview. Qualitative research has the power to create social change by giving voice to the participants and helping them to navigate their life, sometimes

through oppressive systems (Kearns, 2014; R. Lyons & Roulstone, 2018; Moran et al., 2021a; Saldanha & Nybell, 2017)

3.3.2 Narrative Inquiry and data gathering

The researcher proposes conducting a narrative study to gain a deeper understanding of the children's experiences of themselves, self-representations, and stories.

As a qualitative research method, narrative inquiry focused on the stories and lived experiences of individuals and groups. Participants can share their perspectives and construct their own meanings rather than being influenced by the researcher's preconceptions or hypotheses. The process of narrative analysis involves interpreting the narratives collected. The method is useful for identifying patterns, themes, and perspectives within narratives and understanding how they relate to broader social, cultural, and historical contexts.

In the following paragraphs, the researcher will detail and explain the reasoning behind the chosen methodology regarding the ontological and ethical position, the participant population and the subjects and constructs explored.

3.3.2.1 *Epistemological and ontological position*

Narrative research and inquiry are aligned well with the critical realist and interpretive positions.

In this approach, narratives and stories are used to assist individuals in making sense of their lives. Narrative psychology is based on the idea that stories and narratives help people make sense of their decisions and understand the events in their lives. In this sense, a narrative is an existential tool for creating meaning. In essence, storytelling involves social interaction and the sharing of meaning created by the storyteller. (Riessman, 2008). As part of narrative inquiry and research (Warham, 2012), the teller of the story co-conceives and co-constructs the story's narrative with the listener: the teller tells the story, while the listener adds their own meaning to it (Warham, 2012). In that, narrative inquiry and research accept the relativist assumption of 'subjectivity': reality and constructs are a product of social, political and historical processes. 'Facts' or constructs exist but have different meanings for different

people (Hiles et al., 2017). The meanings that can be attributed to these realities and facts have to be interpreted to discover the underlying meanings for each individual person of the events and experiences.

3.3.2.2 Positioning theory and power imbalance

When planning research with young children, researchers may need to consider their and the participants' positions. Positioning theory focuses on how individuals and groups construct and maintain their social positions through interactions with others (Harre, 2012). In any social interaction, individuals and groups hold different levels of power and privilege, and these power imbalances may affect the way they position themselves and others. It could be argued that research has inherent power imbalances, where the researcher is in a position of power as an expert who 'controls' the interaction and communication. Power imbalances can occur in the relationship between a researcher and a research participant, particularly when working with vulnerable populations such as children (Christensen & Prout, 2002)

The use of narrative inquiry and analysis is one method of addressing power imbalances in research with children. There is a strong link between positioning theory and narrative inquiry and analysis because both are concerned with understanding the perspectives and experiences of individuals and groups that are situated within a given social context. While positioning theory highlights the power imbalances that can shape social interactions and identities, narrative inquiry and analysis serve as a method for understanding and representing these perspectives and experiences more ethically and respectfully.

A Narrative Inquiry approach considers the position of both the interviewer and the interviewee, allowing each participant in the interview to take control over their story in order to shift their positioning (Hiles et al., 2017; Warham, 2012). By providing a space for children to share their own stories and make their voices heard, narrative inquiry and analysis can help counteract power imbalances in research with children. Moreover, it enables the researcher to gain a greater understanding of the children's perspectives and experiences rather than imposing their own interpretations or assumptions on them. Hence, it is considered an ethical approach to work with children who might be marginalised (Kearns, 2014).

In summary, reflexive practices and being mindful of the researcher's position in relation to the children can help minimise power imbalances and ensure ethical and respectful research.

3.3.2.3 Narrative, Self-psychology and Identity formation

An important aspect of narrative psychology is the exploration of concepts related to 'the Self'.

As discussed earlier, the narrative Self can be viewed as a collection of stories a person maintains about himself/herself, or it can be seen as a conflicting set of stories (M. L. Crossley, 2002; K. Gergen & Gergen, 1988). Narrative psychology focuses on the concept of Self as being not a fixed entity but rather a construct that is shaped by the social context and by the narratives that we engage with throughout our lives.

Narrative psychology explores the methods by which a story is constructed, why and what meaning it conveys, and how it is used to form an identity. As Crossley (2012) explains, narrative inquiry is an attempt to gain insight into the individual's 'inner world' and to weave their own narrative. Clandinin & Connelly (2000) discuss how experiences people share can be woven into a narrative that reveals a person's self and how they perceive the world. Riessman (2008) discusses how the language and discourses in the narratives help shape the interviewee's sense of Self, and how narrative inquiry and analysis could be used to explore them.

Narrative inquiry approaches differ in the type of stories they seek, in their analysis and in what data is considered appropriate. Some researchers are focused on 'Big' or autobiographical narratives and examine how these form a Self and identity. This type of inquiry will explore what stories a person tells and will examine how 'life chapters' or meaningful episodes are connected into a life story. (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; M. Crossley, 2011; M. L. Crossley, 2000; Squire et al., 2019). Unlike 'Big' narratives, Small Stories approaches examine how identity and Self are constructed through everyday stories, conversations and interactions (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008; Baynham, 2010; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008; Georgakopoulou, 2006).

Both approaches consider the underlying psychological, discursive, social and cultural influences on the narratives; however Small Stories pay greater attention into the context of an interaction and the language used (Squire et al., 2014).

Due to its purpose of exploring Self and identity (and weaving them into a cohesive story), it is highly appropriate to explore not only self-representation but also relationships and inner conflicts. This renders the methodology highly appropriate for my research questions as well as the participants' population, who belong to different ethnicities and cultures and diverse heritages, which might suggest fluidity and complexity of inner experiences.

3.3.2.4 Narrative research and culturally sensitive research

Narrative research is an appropriate method for exploring cultural experiences since it allows one to understand individuals' perspectives within their cultural context.

Its origins can be traced back to anthropology and social research, where narrative research was used to understand the cultural beliefs and practices of different communities.

Culturally sensitive research methods, such as narrative research, allow the inclusion of multiple voices and perspectives in the research process since they recognise the role of context and meaning in shaping individuals' experiences (Hiles et al., 2017; Riessman, 2008). Various cultural experiences, including migration, identity formation, and acculturation, have been explored through this methodology. For example, Alvarez (2018) demonstrated how narratives in children's drawings and textual descriptions exposed the children's social interpretations that resonated with a macro narrative embedded in their larger culture and community.

3.3.2.5 Narrative research and research with children

Storytelling and narrative inquiry are natural ways to engage young children since they align with their natural ability to make sense of their experiences. Throughout their lives, children are naturally drawn to stories and narratives that help them make sense of and understand the world around them. Younger children who might struggle to articulate their thoughts often use stories and imagery to describe their experiences (Moran et al., 2021a).

By using narrative inquiry and storytelling, researchers are able to tap into this natural inclination by allowing children to tell their stories in their own words. By utilising this

approach, researchers are able to gain a deeper understanding of the child's lived experiences and capture the nuances and complexities of their lives. (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). Moreover, it allows children to make sense of their own lives, an important aspect of their cognitive and emotional development (Nelson, 2003).

The use of story telling and narrative inquiry is also aligned with children's cognitive and emotional development, as demonstrated by (Bohanek et al., 2008). They are still learning about the world around them, and through storytelling and narrative inquiry, they are able to make sense of their own experiences and understand others' experiences. Children possess a strong sense of imagination, and storytelling allows them to express their thoughts and emotions in a creative manner, which can be beneficial for their emotional well-being (Sunderland, 2017).

According to (R. Lyons & Roulstone, 2018; Moran et al., 2021b), narrative inquiry and storytelling can also be effective methods for engaging children in the research process. The storytelling format can be a less intimidating way for children to share their experiences, and children are often more inclined to participate in research when presented in a story-like format. It has been demonstrated that researchers can build trust and rapport with children by using narrative inquiry and storytelling, thus creating a more comfortable and safe environment for them to be able to tell their stories.

To summarise, a narrative inquiry and analysis provide a creative framework for exploring and giving voice to children and young people. The narrative approach recognises that children and young people have unique perspectives and experiences that are often overlooked or dismissed in traditional research methods. As Moran et al. (2021b) suggested, narrative inquiry and analysis enable children and young people to advocate for themselves and have a greater sense of agency within the research process. Giving voice to children's own narratives and words enables us to position them as political players and shift power dynamics in their favour. Instead of focusing on adult-centric perspectives, this approach prioritises the perspectives and experiences of children and young people.

3.3.3 Sample and Recruitment

In order to participate in this study, participants must have at least two or more cultural identities, be born and raised in London or elsewhere in the UK (at least a second generation or 1.5 generations of the family) and attend a state school. This requirement ensures that participants have a variety of experiences and perspectives from both their home cultures and the larger (main) culture as they have been exposed to it from birth.

In congruence with the gaps identified from the literature review, the age chosen for the study was older primary ages (Key Stage 2). The majority of studies explored focused on early and late adolescence as well as young adulthood, which are considered the ages of identity formation, leaving a gap in knowledge as to the experiences and cultural awareness of younger children that form the basis self-representations. In addition, the research explored the impact of growing up multiculturally and the latent awareness of culture, relationships, and self-representations of children rather than their identities.

Based on the literature review, biculturality and bicultural competence are acquired skills and competencies that are directly influenced by parents' worldviews and attitudes, along with exposure to heritage (or ethnic) culture through cultural festivals, participation in heritage communities, and language (Alvarez, 2018; Cheung & Swank, 2020; J. Kim & Lee, 2011; Lam et al., 2020; Lu, 2001). Accordingly, The researcher assumed that children more immersed in their heritage cultures or communities might have a greater sense of bicultural awareness. In addition, they may have a stronger sense of bicultural identity.

As this research aims to explore how children experience themselves in different cultures and how their self-perceptions are reflected in their narratives as a reflection of their self-perceptions, participants needed to be able to think about personal and cultural issues during their participation. Children within the 7-11 age range were considered appropriate because children at this age range can reflect on their own experiences and can articulate their thoughts in a meaningful way. Additionally, they are often still developing their own cultural identity, making their perspectives valuable for this research (de Carvalho et al., 2014; Marks et al., 2011; Rutland et al., 2012).

3.3.3.1 Number of participants

An intended number of four participants was considered appropriate due to the complexity and in-depth nature of the questions, project aim and design.

3.3.3.2 Recruitment

The recruitment plan changed during the course of the research.

The original plan was to direct all recruitment efforts to the local authority where the researcher practices as a Trainee Educational Psychologist. The local authority is a diverse inner-city borough, both in ethnicity and social-economic status. There is a high percentage of children attending state schools in the borough who are from second and 1.5-generation families. These families often have cultural and heritage ties or speak multiple languages.

The plan was to recruit in three tiers:

1. Approaching the schools with which the researcher was linked;
2. Sending a recruitment email to the Educational Psychology Service;
3. Approaching the Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) in the local authority via email and the SENCO conference.
4. A further option for recruitment was 'snowballing': recruiting participants through referrals from existing participants. This method is particularly useful for hard-to-reach populations or those not easily identified through other methods.

Given the pressures on schools within the Local Authority at the time of the research, the researcher was unable to recruit all four from within the LA schools, and the plan was amended, to extend the participant search to other London Local Authorities where there was a high proportion of children who fitted the criteria. The children additional Local Authority that was also substantially ethnically diverse.

3.3.3.3 Participants

Overall, five children were recruited. Two children were in Year 3, two were in Year 6, and one was in Year 5. All children were born in England but had at least one parent who migrated to the UK from another country. All the children were fluent in English, and some were bilingual.

However, one of the children was not responsive during the interview process, and the information gathered from him could not be used. After the first interview, his parents were notified that his participation in the research has ended and the information was deleted and not used in the final analysis.

Aliases	Cultures	Year	Age	Languages spoken	
Looney Tooney	Irish- Indian, Polish	Y6	11	English	
Mateo	British (Jewish), Italian (Catholic)	Y6	10.5	English (basic Italian)	
Elisa	Italian, Brazilian	Y5	9.5	English, Italian, Portuguese	
Black Dot	Spanish, English	Y3	7.5	Spanish, English	
Raul	Italian, Brazilian	Y3	7	English	Info not used

Table 3 Participants

3.3.4 Consent and ethical considerations

Ponterotto and Grieger (2008) suggested ethical competencies for psychologists conducting research with culturally diverse communities. They emphasize that to research ethically with diverse communities, researchers should (among other competencies):

- be knowledgeable and acknowledge their epistemological positions;
- minimise and limit any deception;
- be able to argue that the research contributes to the studied community tangibly and pragmatically;
- be sensitive to the appropriate procedures and methods of working with that community;
- take care not to become overly involved during the interviews and have a clear awareness of the distinction between the role of a researcher and the role of the therapist;
- be aware of the impact of terminating the research
- and be careful to represent the viewpoint and voices of the participants accurately.

The purpose of the research was explained authentically and truthfully at the beginning of the study to all involved. There was no deception regarding the subjects or aims of the study.

As this research aims to gain the children's narratives and give them a voice, consent was sought from the parents and the children. The parents were asked to discuss the research with their children and explain the aims and procedure so they could be fully understood. Also, the researcher provided clear and concise documents to both the parents and the children to ensure that any questions and concerns were addressed before consent was granted. The researcher also provided contact information should any additional questions be raised. Consent files were disposed of following scanning.

The researcher explained to the children the purpose and process of the research at the beginning of the interview sessions. Each child had the option of participating or not in every session. At any point during the session, the children had the option to stop and allowed to finish the session there.

All information was anonymised, and participants' pseudonyms were used as identifiers. The children were given the opportunity to choose their own aliases if they wished to and if not, the selected pseudonym was shared with them. Participants' names were kept in a separate file.

The video recordings of the sessions were uploaded to the university's OneDrive account with the child's pseudonym and visit number as soon as possible. They were then deleted from the camera

It is acknowledged that considering and reflecting upon one's experiences, self-representations and questions of identity and culture might lead to upsetting memories or emotions, and in such cases there is a risk of the children becoming upset or emotional during the interviews. Additionally when working with children and young people, there is a possibility of disclosures during the interviews. It was explained to the children that they did not have to discuss questions they find difficult, and the researcher was careful to not overstep her role as interviewer, and to explain to the children the boundaries of

confidentiality. Prior to the interviews, the children's parents were directed as to appropriate services upfront should these be required.

3.3.4.1 Ethical considerations of power within the interview process

In every research relationship, there is an inherent power imbalance. Researchers are in a powerful position based on prestige, expertise, and in this case, age and maturity. Also, intention to 'explore' the participants emotions and thoughts could affect the interaction and position, as Kearns (2014) described. To address the power imbalance, the researcher tried to make the object of the study explicit and create an environment that supports the children in gaining control over the situation. As part of those attempts, the researcher met with the children at school and in their homes, which are familiar places. It could be argued that the children had greater control in the home sessions, as the researcher was a guest in their own natural environment and the presence of their parents.

3.3.5 Data Collection

3.3.5.1 Unstructured play-based sessions.

Data were collected in two 1:1 sessions for each participant, lasting approximately an hour (45 to 75 minutes). In most cases, the sessions were done 1-3 weeks apart, allowing for some time for the children to consider the topics we discussed. The original plan was to conduct one session at the child's school and one at home to facilitate different cultural contexts. As previously reviewed (Verkuyten & Pouliasi, 2002), environmental factors such as language and artefacts could 'prime' bicultural individuals for one of their cultures ('frame switching'). In this context, school represents the majority culture (English/British), while at home, children experience 'home culture', which in these cases might be different. In light of this, the researcher felt that interviewing them in both environments might result in different cultural experiences. It enables them to experience themselves as part of the different cultures they are moving between and their relationships and interactions. That is significant because it allows children to explore and express their identity as both a member of the majority culture and a member of the minority culture. Additionally, the researcher believes that interviewing the children in their home environment would increase their confidence, comfort and sense of power and invite more playfulness and creativity. She wondered if interviewing the children at home would create a greater 'transitional space'

(Winnicott, 1971) that would allow greater movement. In two cases, the school were unable to accommodate an interview on the premises. In these cases, both interviews took place at home. In the discussion chapter, additional thoughts will be shared regarding the experience of working with both systems. Children were interviewed individually with parents and teachers nearby.

Unstructured interviews supported by play-based techniques were chosen as the primary data gathering tool. Based on my critical realist and interpretive position, an unstructured interview allows the child to explore their own stories and create narratives (Koller & San Juan, 2015). Unstructured interviews are seen as a more natural interaction that lends themselves well into narrative story telling (Creswell, 2009; Hiles et al., 2017) and is seen as allowing the participant a greater sense of control over the interaction (Corbin & Morse, 2003).

Unstructured play-based techniques were chosen to elicit the stories of the children. Play-based techniques, especially drawings, small-world figures and sand play, are valuable tools to help children express their inner world in practice and research (Alvarez, 2018; Holmes, 2019; Lyndon, 2019). These techniques allow the child to express their feelings and experiences in a way that is safe, creative, and non-judgmental. They also provide a platform for the child to process emotions, practice problem-solving, and build positive relationships (Kearns, 2014; Koller & San Juan, 2015). Play is a method of inquiry that children understand well because it relates well to their daily practices and imaginative worlds and is a non-threatening method (Holmes, 2019). Play will direct children to the world of imagination and storytelling.

The tools and toys used in the research process are drawings, Dixit Cards, small world figures, kinetic sand or play-dough and story dice. These items were used to provoke the children's thinking, help them creatively represent ideas and thoughts and share them. Examples of the materials and toys used can be found in Appendix H. In most cases, the children chose what toy and game they wanted to engage with unless they did not know what to choose or when the researcher wanted to get more in-depth information through another method.

During the play sessions, the researcher used questions and prompts to encourage the children to think about their different cultures, their understanding of behaviours and norms in their different cultures, experiences of belonging to different cultures, family interactions and friendships. Although the sessions were intended to be more free-flowing and less structured, the researcher discovered that because of the abstract nature of the subjects explored, the children needed more focused and guiding questions.

Kearns (2014) described visual Images as an effective method for eliciting stories with deeply intrinsic meanings and beliefs. The researcher used the toys, cards, and images to encourage the children to represent their thoughts as stories using the different items. The small world people were used to represent behaviours and interactions; story dice to create stories. Additionally, the children were asked to draw images of themselves, their families and friends, according to their children's preferences.

3.3.5.2 Raw data- recording and transcriptions

The sessions were videoed to record voices, facial expressions and engagement in play. When possible, the researcher recorded the toys and images used. All recordings were kept under the GPDR guidelines and transcribed verbatim. Any descriptive and identifying information was erased from the transcripts.

When doing narrative research, the aim is to let the participants tell their stories. Saldanha & Nybell (2017) describe how 'direct scribing' by the researcher could "elaborate the roles of the interviewees as authors of the narratives that they create" (2017, p. 206). While direct scribing is not suggested for this research, the researcher wished to retain the authenticity of the words and narratives. Thus, the transcripts will include pauses, and the data will not be corrected for grammar or vocabulary (Bamberg, 2006; Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008; Riessman, 2008). Raw data will be shared with the supervising researcher during the analysis progress.

3.3.6 Data Analysis

The suggested analysis will be a small stories approach to narrative analysis.

The "small stories" approach to narrative research emphasises the everyday, mundane, and often unnoticed stories people tell about themselves and their lives, often told in everyday conversations (Bamberg, 2006; Georgakopoulou, 2006). They may cover various topics, from personal experiences to gossip to news events. The value of these stories lies in the fact that they provide a glimpse into the ways in which people construct and understand their identities and experiences (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008; Georgakopoulou, 2006; Squire et al., 2014). Using these stories to gain a deeper understanding of how people navigate social interactions and make sense of their environment, researchers are able to gain better insights into how people make sense of the world around them (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008).

One of the key characteristics of the small stories approach is its emphasis on context (Riessman, 2008). This includes cultural and social norms of both parts of the interaction and the interpretations they might offer. Moreover, the focus is also placed on the narrative process itself. Researchers in this field are interested in the ways in which stories are constructed and negotiated during the process of telling rather than treating them as static objects to be analysed. As part of this process, the storyteller uses language, sequences events, and interacts with the audience (Baynham, 2010; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2008).

When the researcher approached each child's narratives, she considered not only the language and context of the narrative but also what the child was trying to tell in relation to his or her relationship with their culture and identity. The key points focused on were adapted to this research from Waletzky and Labov (1967) (Josselson & Hammack, 2021):

1. The overall tone of the narrative,
2. What were, if any, the key complications or conflicts they conveyed (a conflict or tension that the child was engaging with as part of having a multicultural background)
3. The process of co-constructing identity within the interaction with the researcher
4. The resolution, or coda- if existed: how did the child attempt to solve their conflict?

The researcher aims to co-create with children narratives describing their experiences in the various cultures they belong to. The narrative analysis allows researchers to explore the meaning and significance of events in the lived experiences of children. It allows researchers

to explore how they perceive, construct, and make sense of the world around them. It also allows for analysing how culture, history, language, and context shape these experiences, representations, conflicts, and relationships. (Hiles et al., 2017) It is essential for narratives to be living, breathing accounts of experiences, representations, conflicts, and relationships. (Riessman, 2008).

The researcher analysed the data in several layers: Text, visual- videos, imagery and play-based materials. The approach is outlined at the beginning of the next chapter.

3.3.7 Reflexivity

The researcher believes it is essential to identify the reasons for interest in conducting this research to be able to conduct it successfully. Besides her professional interest, the researcher has an outsider-insider perspective on the experience of London's multiculturalism and the constant movement between different cultures for which this city is known.

The fact that the researcher is a migrant living in London, and is of multicultural background, made her interested in the experiences of children who are able to cross over between these multiple cultures on a regular basis as a part of their daily lives.

The researcher is not seeking to answer these questions or to become a 'Tabula Rasa'. Instead, the researcher acknowledges these issues, accepts them, and attempts to use them transparently in her research. As a critical realist, the researcher accepts such factors will influence her ability to observe the constructs or the reality analysed.

The researcher applied a number of strategies to deal with the possible influences of her diverse background on her objectivity and assumptions. She also applied these strategies to the interactions with the children and the analysis process. First, the researcher met with the children twice, so they will have ample time to reflect on the concepts discussed. Second, she sought more than textual information to gather her data (i.e. drawings, play materials) and for her analysis, to avoid basing solely on verbal communication. Third, the researcher brought the transcripts and anonymised images to supervision for an outsider's

appraisal. Lastly, the researcher kept a private reflection diary.

4 Findings

4.1 Layers of Narrative analysis

4.1.1 Text

The main analysis was on the verbal data- the text of the unstructured interviews. The researcher engaged with the text through several readings, stages and layers:

1. A first reading was accompanied by videos and sounds. Great detail was given to the tone of voice and facial and emotional expressions, and these were noted by the researcher. The researcher also familiarised herself with the texts and noted down reflections and observations.
2. Second reading: Identification of key concepts and themes: what narrative themes that the child engaged with, what language (or imagery) they used to convey it, any changes to the tone of voice.
3. Identifying the key complications or conflicts the child dealt with regarding his identity, cultures, and relationships; and the coda or resolution within the stories.
4. Weaving the stories and evaluating the identity the child presented to the researcher, including consideration of the co-construction and interaction with the researcher.

4.1.2 Visual data

The session's videos and drawings, and play material used or created by the children were analysed to enrich their verbal narratives (Kearns, 2014). The play material, drawings and videos were other dimensions of the narrative and story, so the researcher wanted to explore whether they complemented and empowered the story or conflicted with it. To analyse the videos, the researcher used some of the ideas suggested by Riessman (2008).

Catherine Riessman's (Riessman, 2008) method of interpreting visual information such as photographs, videos, and other visual materials as part of narrative analysis was adapted to fit the research. The focus of the analysis was understanding the context in which the visual data was produced and how it is used to convey meaning. The method involves analysing

the visual elements of the data, such as composition and symbols as well as their social and cultural context. In addition, it examines how visual data is used to construct and convey a narrative, including the role of the creator, viewer, and subject.

Her suggested process follows the following steps:

1. Identifying the context in which the visual data was created, including the social and cultural context and the purpose and intended audience.
2. Identifying composition, symbols and overall engagement with the visual data.
3. The interpretation step involves interpreting the meaning of the visual data, including the ways in which it is used to create and convey a narrative. During this step, we may examine the roles of the creator, viewer, and subject and how visual data shape our understanding of the world.
4. An interpretation is verified by cross-checking it against other sources of information, such as written texts, interviews, or other visual data.

This process is not necessarily followed linearly, and some steps may overlap, as in this study. The researcher used visual narrative analysis to extend, deepen, and emphasise the textual information. In addition, The researcher wanted to explore the emotional reaction the subjects discussed brought, as might be expressed through engagement with play. Thus, the analysis focused on the fourth step of cross-checking streams of stories with textual information. The analysis considered tone of voice, facial expression, engagement and playfulness.

After an initial stage of analysis and weaving of narratives, The researcher met with the second researcher and academic supervisor to have an additional read of the narratives and anonymised transcripts, to improve the validity and rigour of the analysis.

4.1.3 Feedback and cross-checking with the participants

Once narratives were weaved and formed into meaningful stories, they were introduced to the participants, to make sure they represented their voices, thoughts and beliefs. The children were given an opportunity to respond to their narratives.

The researcher's name was abbreviated to IS in the transcripts and the vignettes.

4.2 Looney Tooney's Story: Being mixed heritage and mixed racial

Pseudonym: Looney Tooney	Cultural background: Irish- Indian father, Polish mother
East London	Year 6

[complications: hierarchy of cultures; being mixed racially (visibility/ phenotype)]

[Interactions: active exploration; questioning]

[Resolution/coda: Embracing multiplicity and diversity; finding pride in being mixed; acknowledging her strengths and support]

Looney Tooney's name was abbreviated to LT during this chapter.

Looney Tooney described her father's heritage as "Indian." While the researcher is aware of the common preference for "South East Asian," Indian will be used.

Looney Tooney is a Year 6 child. She was born in the UK to a mother from Poland and a British mixed-heritage father: his mother is Irish, and his father is Indian.

LT's story is about belonging and acceptance. She is exploring her place in different aspects of her life: her nuclear and extended family, her peers and friendships, and within herself and her identities. During the interview process, her story evolves, and her identity transitions, develops, and takes shape.

LT understands culture as a 'distant' or abstract concept and as something personal and connected to someone's family.

LT: and, but I think it's like. Something to do with yourself? (interview 1; 8)

I think it's like something you get from... your family (interview N1; 11)

LT's answers reflect how LT looks for connections and intimacy between herself and others. However, they also indicate LT understand culture as something that defines a person, her family and how others perceive them. This fits LT's age, who can be defined as pre-adolescent. Pre-adolescents children only start developing abstract thinking and will prefer

concrete ideas that are closer to their lives and to reality. Additionally, they are still very much defining their life in relation to their family ties.

Although LT was born in England, her cultural identity is more complex. She is aware of her identity as different but unclear on how to define it. At first, she prefers a more compartmentalised identity that demonstrates confusion and distance between her and 'them', as could be identified by her interaction with the researcher:

IS: So your culture is English or British, right?

LT: No (Shakes her head to represent no). My family is from a different place.

IS: No. So what is it?

LT: Well, my mum's side is from Poland, where she's in right now... On my dad's side. His mom is Irish and. His dad is Indian, that's why my brother has orange hair. And I am jealous...

(Interview 1; 18- 25)

LT recognises that, within the interaction, the researcher is interested in hearing about her 'different' identity or culture, which might be why she does not accept her Britishness. However, she does not connect her other cultures to herself- they stay 'foreign'. That is not only because LT is too young to consider cultures, as she is aware of the multiculturalism around her. When she talked of her friends and peers, she showed great awareness of their heritages. In her diverse London school, heritage and diversity are openly discussed:

LT: They say. in class. Because the teacher says to say where you're from. (Interview 1; line 223)

The teacher created a space for openness and tolerance by opening the discussion about heritage and multiculturalism. However, it might also highlight for LT that she is unique even within diversity due to her being 'mixed' or multicultural. Her initial attempt to resolve this conflict is by comparing herself to others and identifying with others she believes may share her experience:

IS: Hmm. So your friends, where are they from?

LT: [On her friends] Um, UK. But like their family is from different places as well.

(Interview 1; lines 224 -225)

IS: Yeah. Do you think other people understand what it's like being mixed? Who understands?

LT: I think... Most of my friends like I only know. Two. Very well. Like one of them is kind of Turkish. Hmm... And one of them is Brazilian hmm. So yeah, so they understand.
(Interview 2; lines 235- 237)

IS: Well, your dad is mixed, definitely. Umm do you think he understands how you feel?
LT: He does.
(Interview 2; 329-330)

LT's understanding and knowledge of her heritage and cultures are mediated by her parents and the experiences and information they provide. Her familiarity with her cultures is structured of concrete and tangible representations and pieces of information like language, festivals, foods and places that help her build her identity. Language, in particular, is used as a connection and link with heritage or culture, as could be evident for her. Language is used either as a connection, means of belonging, or a symbol of otherness or foreignness.

As she tells her stories, a hierarchy of cultures is evident: she is more familiar with and connected to her Polish culture, while she is least connected to her Indian culture. Through concrete experiences, her mother facilitates this connection for her.

LT: The most things from a different place, I mostly learn about are of Irish Indian or Polish... I usually just learn Polish. like my mum usually she speaks to me.
(Interview 1; 138- 139)

IS: Do you understand Polish?
LT: Sometimes I do, even though I am not meant to. I mean I do know some Polish words, but my mom is like getting different Polish books for me and I quite like the Polish treats but not all of them. So my mom said she will get some Polish treats.
(Interview 1; 171- 175)

In these stories, LT indicates that being Polish is a learning experience for her. She is not 'meant to' understand Polish, as this is not 'her' language; at the same time, her understanding of Polish (and her appreciation of the food or treats) creates a sense of connection with the culture. In other interactions, LT was able to discuss some unique Polish festivals such as 'pancake day'. This creates a confusing in-between experience of belonging/foreigners that has not been consolidated into a clear identity. Beyond providing

opportunities to develop her Polish identity by exposing her to the Polish language and cultural practices, her mother also conveys a message that LT internalised: being Polish is an integral part of LT's identity, so becoming Polish is desirable. Visits to Poland and contact with other family members intensify that message.

The above is in contrast with her knowledge and engagement with her father's mixed-heritage and cultures. It might be that because her father was born in the UK and is more culturally British, than either Irish or Indian. Again, LT's relationship and representation of these cultures is through concrete representations, such as accent, language, phenotype and festivals, but this time the depth of knowledge is more limited. The hierarchy between the cultures is observable through LT's choice of descriptions and stories:

Replying to a question of what is unique about being Irish, LT's says:

LT: I can say Ireland in an Irish voice. My brother got his hair from that. (interview 1; 95)

LT indicates her perceived relationship with being Irish: she can apply some Irish accents. Thus, she interjects herself into the Irish identity signalling it is not entirely foreign. Furthermore, that was the second time LT mentioned her brother's hair and connected it to her father being partly Irish. In the earlier interaction, she mentioned her 'jealousy' over it, again signalling she wishes to 'belong' or be a part of that identity. She also mentioned during the interviews that she celebrated St Patrick's Day and watched a movie called 'Luck' with her father. Luck is not set in Ireland but features leprechauns, thus indicating LT's awareness of Irish folklore.

That stands in juxtaposition to her story of being Indian:

IS: And what's unique about being Indian?

LT: Well my dad gets a lot from that because he can do really good Indian voice.

IS: he can do an Indian voice?

LT: He can do lots of different voices... I mean he doesn't really have a voice. He can do it. He just has a normal English voice.

(Interview 1; 76- 84)

IS: Yeah, and how are Indian people?

LT: Well, they speak mostly with their tongues. I can't do it, but like I always try to make his

voice....

(Interview 1; 86- 87)

LT's story is of a language distinct from the languages she is used to, foreign to her and her father ("he just has a normal English voice"). In saying she likes to be able to make that accent, LT tells the researcher she would like to include that culture into her identity as well; but that currently, it only belongs to her father. Furthermore, LT does not know any festivals or other practices linked with her father's other culture.

LT: We usually always celebrate Saint Patrick's Day.

IS: You celebrate Saint Patrick's day. Do you celebrate any Indian things?

LT: No, don't know much Indian things

(Interview 1; 106- 108)

LT was invited by the researcher, through their interaction, to engage with a more complex understanding of her culture. In response to being asked to choose a card that demonstrated how it feels to be mixed, LT expresses her confusion and lack of clarity as follows:

LT: Because sometimes my days are sunny when I think about it, but sometimes it's a bit wet because like. I I try and be like that, but like I kind of feel sorry for my. Other countries like things because like. I feel like if I need to learn or learn the languages or the accents.

(Interview 2; 81- 83)

LT: The rain is kind of questions.

IS: So you're asking yourself, do I need to know more about that? Will I have to know? Do you even want to know?

LT Nods

(Interview 2; 86- 89)

While LT is asked about being mixed, she describes her engagement in thinking about being mixed; a reflection the researcher invited. The metaphors she chooses seem to be contradictory: sun and rain, but in reality, they are not. Thinking about being mixed raised questions, but not negative emotions or thoughts. LT begins to engage in the resolution of her hierarchy of cultures and to connect her cultural identity.

Mixed- culturally but also mixed- racially

Being mixed ethnically and racially contributes to LT's awareness of her multicultural background. In spite of the fact that she does not use these terms, LT tells numerous stories about her diverse heritage, which relate to external features or phenotypes. On the one hand, these external characteristics influence her sense of belonging, and on the other hand, they contribute to its creation.

As mentioned above, LT discusses her brother's red-headedness as linked to their Irish heritage. However, on further questioning, LT mentioned that her Irish grandmother has "Black hair" (interview 1; line 97). She also discussed being jealous of his hair. This indicates LT is aware of the broad and social representation of what being Irish might look like, regardless of her immediate examples in her family. In that, she internalises having characteristics or aspects that go beyond a specific family structure or characteristics. Similarly, LT is aware that her father's darker skin is linked to his Indian origin.

LT uses phenotype to explore her belonging and to place herself in her family. She describes herself as placed between her father and her brother and mother:

LT: Well, he [father] from the family that I live with,. Not like the darkest, but he has like the second darkest skin because he even has darker than me. Yeah, and my mom and brother are quite the same because they have really light skin.

(interview 1; 289-291)

LT: Like I kind of have dark skin but my dad has darker... (Interview 1; 293)

In this interaction, LT presents her representation of 'being mixed'. She views herself as 'in-between' her father (who is darker) and her brother and mother (who are light-skinned). Her skin is neither dark nor light. In reality, LT is not 'dark' and would probably not be considered a person of diverse heritage, which could intensify her concurrent experience within herself and her sense of belonging to a specific identity. Hence, she 'groups' herself with her father, who is also 'mixed'.

LT adopts a unique way to deal with her family's ethnic phenotype and her mixedness: she includes her dog as part of her family.

LT: [discussing her family skin colours] but my dog his fur is dark like the darkest cause he has black fur kind of like he has it on his muzzle. (interview 1; 293- 294)

IS: Ohh wow what kind of dog is it?

LT: It's like. It's a mixed breed, this breed like it's mixed with different types of dogs...

IS: Ohh. Wow. He is a mix isn't he.

LT: So I'm kind of doggish as well.

IS: Why are you doggish?

LT: Because I am also mixed...

(Interview 1; 295- 306)

LT's dog is at once 'the darkest' and a mixed breed, allowing her to relate to him and create a sense of belonging in her family. LT considers the dog the youngest in the family- which means he is her youngest brother, a brother with whom she can identify.

LT's jealousy of her red-haired brother and her consciousness of her skin colour could be related to the broader discourse around racial discrimination and observed phenotype. It might well be the case. However, it is not improbable that along this discourse, there are considerations that are unique to being racially mixed: the experience of not 'fitting' into any category and being and looking different to her family members. In addition, when considering LT's relationships and attunement to her different cultural background, it is clear that currently, LT is more connected or knowledgeable of her 'whiter' cultures (mainly her Polish), impacting her relatedness with her 'darker' ethnic culture. Lastly, LT's stories of her family dynamics describe complex relationships between her parents and their families of origin, which in turn, may influence their engagement with their respective cultures.

LT uses her dog as a tool to interpret relationships and belonging. Indeed the dog takes the place of a little brother- her father protects it from her and her brother who do not know how to behave with it, and he is attached to her mother.

Building self through relationships and interactions:

LT explores herself and identity through her relationships with others, and she uses these relationships to understand her views and values. For example, LT demonstrates her value of loyalty to strong relationships by discussing her father's relationship with his childhood cat, as well as her appreciation of her dog:

LT: [talks about her father's cat] And he really misses it.

IS: Does he? Would he want to have another cat, do you think?

LT shakes her head, facial expression 'no'.

IS: Why?

LT: Because like. I have a dog and like my mum said, when he dies then we could get this breed and I'm like but then we abandoned him.

(Interview 1; 63- 68)

As someone fascinated by people and relationships, LT has a keen eye for understanding complex and underlying dynamics between individuals. As she discusses her parents' relationships with their respective families, as well as when she discusses her own interactions with them, LT demonstrates her understanding of these dynamics:

IS: Ohh. So that's because visiting your family there is so nice and everyone are great and fun, and do you feel like they're your family?

LT: (2 sc pause) Sometimes, yeah. It's like they live somewhere else and like they talk differently. And sometimes they have arguments when I'm there. Kind of wanna go away... So I don't get involved.

(Interview 2; 103- 108)

LT loves her Polish family and feels like she belongs, but acknowledges that there are dynamics she is not a part of, so she will not risk her ability to belong ("So I don't get involved"). Another example that demonstrates her attunement to human complexities could be found in an imagined story she created with the researcher. In discussing the villain of the story, LT says:

LT: So when she gets there and fights, he actually tells her. That he made this story up about this. And it doesn't do anything. And. You know, like can read people's minds and he. He knows that she is greedy to get it and she doesn't want to share it with anyone else, so he tells her. If you want it then you have to share it with your family and other people.

IS: So we learned that the villain is not a bad person?.

LT: Yesh... He's just,

(Interview 2; 290- 295)

LT's openness to other people's perspectives and her willingness to examine herself, her feelings, and her thoughts allow her to be open to other cultures and people. Rather than experiencing cultural differences, she has experienced similarities. This is exemplified by her friendship with a new Portuguese classmate who does not speak much English. LT made use

of her love and interest in pets and dogs to explain her similarity with her Polish and extended family, as well as to create a bridge with her father's family.

IS: So tell me about people in Poland. Are they're very different than what you are used to?

LT: What do you mean?

IS: Like, do they behave exactly like people here?

LT: (1 sc pause) Yeah, they just speak in a different language because like last time when we went to Poland, like we went to my mum's sister's house and like, she has a dog and a cat and we have a dog, so like. And it was the first time I ever stroked a cat.

(interview 1; 160-166)

Coda

Although the word 'coda' suggest a resolution, LT's cultural and Self identity is still being formed. LT embraced the space to think about herself and 'play' with her identities, feelings and thoughts. She was positive throughout the interviews, engaging, playful and imaginative. She was able to play with metaphors and imagery to explain herself.

In the beginning, LT demonstrated confusions and compartmentalisation of her cultural identity. This separated experience later changes to a more challenged one towards 'being mixed', as could be found in an interaction about 'being Indian' or 'being Irish':

LT: Because like. I feel like I'm carrying a weight. That. Like it's has so many questions in each bucket. But also I feel like this because I'm happy and not really bothered about it.

(Interview 2; 123- 124)

In this interaction, LT describes exploring herself with the researcher as challenging and confusing; however, she also embraces the experience of embracing her mixed background. Facing the realisation that she is more confident about being Polish, and is more connected with these parts, LT reflections lead her to feel sorry for her 'other places' and drive her to deepen her reflections and exploration of them. She becomes engaged in forming her bicultural identity. She is a dynamic and active participant in creating a narrative, identity and self. Her engagement in exploration of a bicultural identity and the interactions with the researcher regarding other cultural norms and behaviours lead LT to consider 'others'. She defies the discourse of 'otherness' presented by the researcher- that some people in other cultures behave 'differently' and demonstrate openness, tolerance and non-essentialism. In

this, she resolves two aspects of her experience: she creates an atmosphere of acceptance and belonging for herself and others and expands her options for forming an identity according to her interests. LT refuses to limit her identity, self and interest to the environment (including with the researcher) and she examines herself and embraces her own concepts, interests and preferences as a part of her, as in the following example:

LT: Like even I'm playing on here because. Even though this is nothing like my family. I really like Japanese or Chinese food. Hmm. and things like that...

(Interview 2; 91- 92)

LT present a 'movement' of identities and of self constructs. She is at once British, involved in her own 'subjective' cultures, but at the same time, is exploring her belonging and interest in other options. This is almost a 'subjectivity', a free movement between options and immersing in them in the moment. She embraces her new identity, possibly because it connects her with who she is and with her family:

IS: What's good about being mixed?

LT: Like because the mix things. Give me my personality and my skin colour. Yeah, I like my voice and other things.

(Interview 2; 213- 215)

LT's journey to build a self and identity is summarized in an imaginative story she created using the story dice:

LT: So this is a. story About a girl. That has. Mixed... things

IS: Cultures, heritage, parents?

LT: Culture. And she was cool with that. She's cool with that. And. Like she only sort of it, like different potions. That people just poured on. But then she was like. Wait! Could I think about it more? So she tried to. And. Went to some of those places. Then when she got back. She felt like a Frog. Because she didn't know which one she wanted to visit or learn more about... So. One night. Some, like a little fairy, came probably in her dreams. And then? She was like come down the ladder into favourite world, so she went there. And then... She. Noticed that she didn't need a favourite, cause all of them are her favourites, so she was happy with that. And. She was like. I... I'm like loving because I made those different parts. So. I'm very happy with that.

(Interview 2; 434- 441)

4.3 Black Dot's Story: Language as cultural knowledge; age and development impact on identity formation

Pseudonym: Black Dot	Cultural background: English father, Spanish mother
East London	Year 3

[complications: hierarchy of cultures, Language skills and EAL, too young for identity formation/ engagement

[Interactions: playfulness and staying within the imaginative realm, disengagement with discussions]

[Resolution/coda: ?

Black Dot's names was abbreviated to BD during this chapter.

Black Dot is a Year 3 boy whose mum is Spanish and whose father is British (or English). Black Dot is bilingual and fluent in English and Spanish. While Black Dot could discuss his cultural background, his interest in and engagement with it were limited in accordance with his age and development. Black Dot was engaged in the interaction, but it was clear that some of the concepts discussed were too complex for his age and language development; he based most of his answers on concrete experiences related to his age.

Black Dot did not have any primary concept of culture or heritage. His understanding of the concept of culture was based on considering his parents' cultural background.

Black Dot was happy to engage with thinking about his cultural background. He held some knowledge of the symbols and traditions of each culture.

IS: OK, can you draw me some English things here? Can you think of stuff that is English?

BD: Maybe Big Ben.

IS: Big Ben, yeah. So what do you celebrate that is English? Do you celebrate anything?

BD: I celebrate Christmas, Easter and and also. And also. And Halloween.

BD: OK. And do you celebrate anything that is Spanish?

BD: Not really. No. Well, sometime. Well, I don't know.

BD: What's Spanish? Do you know any Spanish holidays or festivals?

BD: Yes, we have a pie festival.

(Interview 1; 120- 127)

IS: Is there anything unique that you do on Christmas?

BD: They call it Los Reyes Magos!

IS: Los Tress Magos?

(Interview 1; 138- 140)

It was somewhat easier for BD to come up with his knowledge of English culture. However, with some scaffolding, BD could identify further unique Spanish symbols. This interaction indicates that BD feels connected to his Spanish heritage. By using the word 'we' when describing a pie festival, BD indicated a relationship with it and the Spanish culture, indicating identification with it. BD's positive identification with being English and Spanish was evident when he was discussing Spanish people and English people:

IS: Do English people and Spanish people behave completely the same?

BD: No better. Better. The best people is Spanish and English. They are the best.

(Interview 1; 286- 287)

Due to the researcher's familiarity with some aspects of Spanish traditions, she was able to encourage BD to consider further. Without prior knowledge, one can only speculate as to how easy it would have been. This emphasises the fact that BD's Spanish identity has not developed and has been shaped by his positive experiences and knowledge of his family and his visits to the country. Consequently, he is less familiar with Spanish culture, or he is less able to recall information about it. That does not change his sense of connection with Spanish culture.

Another aspect that supports BD's connection with his cultures, particularly his Spanish culture, is language. BD is very proud of his bilingualism and was excited to demonstrate his skills to the researcher. He uses Spanish to establish a connection with his Spanish heritage.

IS: [exploring if any of his friends are bilingual] So do you know what I'm hearing? You're quite unique. I don't know a lot of young children that speak more than one language. That is so cool. Did you always know how to speak Spanish?

BD: ummm.. I couldn't one day. That was the day I was born!

(Interview 1; 237- 239)

IS: What is unique about Black dot?

BD: He speaks 2 languages.

(Interview 2; 60 -61)

And if I don't want to tell anyone what I'm talking about.... Spanish! or English or Spanish or English or Spanish or English. Or Spanish.

(Interview 2; 143- 144)

BD recognised the impact of speaking Spanish on his ability to feel belonging and connection with his family in Spain, by comparison with his father:

IS: Does your dad likes to go to Spain?

BD: I don't know.

IS: You don't know? OK, maybe...

BD: I don't think so. Because. I'm better than him in Spanish.

(Interview 1; 370- 373)

Identity and self-concept in middle childhood

BD was unaware of other children's cultural backgrounds or heritage.

IS: All of your class are your friends?

BD: Yes.

IS: Oh, that's nice. And where are they from?

BD: I don't know.

IS: You don't know? Well, you don't really think about it, do you? Right. They're just your friends. Do all your friends speak two languages?

BD: No. I don't know. I don't know.

(Interview 1; 226- 232)

*IS: So your friends, R***, where is he from, do you know?*

*BD: R****? No. He goes to really far places. Really far places.*

*IS: Really far places, yeah. So you don't know where his from. And does he speak another language? And does L**** speaks another language?*

*BD: Yes. Quite a lot. He goes to really far places like R****. So they both speak... well they don't really speak different languages. Well L*** does.*

IS: But do you know which language?

BD: No.

(Interview 2; 196- 204)

There are several conceivable explanations for BD's lack of awareness of his friends' and classmates' cultural heritage. It is possible that these issues were not discussed in BD's class, so there was no opportunity to explore them. Furthermore, it is possible that the discourse surrounding cultural awareness or multiculturalism in his home or school does not perceive it as an important aspect of the child's identity: a discourse that is 'culturally blind'. Finally, and most plausible according to the researcher, BD is not in the developmental stage of exploring one's identity, whether culturally or otherwise, and is more concerned with developing interpersonal skills and relationships.

Fitting with his age, BD based most of his knowledge, connection and sense of belonging to his cultures on concrete and materialistic experiences, relationships, and interactions.

Discussing Spanish people and how it is to be Spanish, BD mentioned:

IS: OK, OK. What do you know about being Spanish?

BD: It's really fun.

IS: What's fun about being Spanish?

BD: You. You get some, there's like lots of beaches and it's really big.

(Interview 1; 43- 46)

BD went on to discuss his experiences with his family, visiting parks etc. The experiences BD shared were not culture specific or different to visiting interesting places.

IS: OK, so... So can you explain how do they behave differently?

BD: because they do lots of fun things for us, like Los Parracas, which I just said, and lots of beaches. And they do interesting rides. OK, like yeah. And that. Beaches, they have these.

They have these cars which can go in water which and have the slide which was paddling petals which you can do and then you have so you go down the slide and then you go into the water and then you can come back up and down.

(Interview 1; 89- 93)

The researcher's question was tricky for BD to understand. He demonstrated positive feelings toward Spain, but was unable to understand (developmentally) what the researcher meant by people's behaviour or explain it; in this sense, the experience was not specific to the Spanish culture. However, it is possible that when he starts forming his identity, these interactions will be woven into his self-concept. This fit with one of the primary developmental tasks of middle childhood: interacting and creating meaningful relationships

and friendships with his peer group. That was evident in how BD experienced what was good about his multicultural background:

IS: Is there anything that is difficult or annoying in being from two places or being...

BD: No! everything's best in being like that.

IS: What's best about it? What's fun about that?

BD: You're gonna have... to get you get more friends. Like what happened if you have the whole entire England as your friend and you have no one else to friend so you can have another country.

(Interview 2; 137- 140)

IS: So.? What's better to be Spanish or to be English?

BD: Both.

IS: What's good about being English?

BD: I have to get lots of friends and.

IS: You can. You can have lots of friends.

BD: And you can play with them.

IS: What's good about being Spanish?

BD: You get lots of friends and you get to play with them.

IS: What???. That's the same! So what you're saying is the fact that you are Spanish, and English means you can have more choice of friends.

BD: Yeah.

(Interview 2; 216- 226)

BD treats his multiculturalism as a means or opportunity to interact. He understands his cultural identity and background through his developmental stage, and vice versa: multiculturalism is seen as an advantageous and adventurous means of creating friendships and enhancing his self-concept.

His approach might also be influenced by the narrative and example he experiences at home between his Spanish and English parents, who seem to have similar parenting and interaction styles, according to his experiences.

English as Additional Language (EAL)

Another aspect which may influence BD's ability to discuss his identity or experiences was language development. As a bilingual child, BD learns to think and use grammar in two languages, which he sometimes finds challenging:

IS: Yes, you said everything is good about it and everything is fun about that. Is it not confusing though sometimes?

BD: No.

IS: No?

BD: Well, it's a bit hard to remember stuff so because like if you speak a little English then you forget the Spanish or if you speak little Spanish these days.

(Interview 2; 147- 152)

BD states that he has difficulty switching between the languages when he thinks; he may find it difficult to shift his thoughts between the two languages. When discussing concepts, traditions, and experiences that are known and experienced in another language, that struggle may be even more pronounced. This is because many concepts, traditions, and experiences have different nuances and connotations in different languages. It can be challenging to switch between languages and capture those nuances accurately. Also, it is easier to recall information in the language in which it was created.

IS: Is there anything unique that you do on Christmas?

BD: they call it Los Reyes Magos!

IS: Los tres magos?

BD: Their three!

IS: 3 kings Yeah? Or magicians. Is it?

BD: Los tres/reyes (unclear) Magos.

(Interview 1; 138- 143)

Furthermore, the above interaction highlights the difficulty of communication between BD and the researcher, who is not a natural English speaker. At times, this resulted in communication breakdowns because she did not immediately understand BD's communication patterns and he was unable to immediately rephrase or explain:

BD: Los reyes/ tres magos! They also called me.

IS: Umm, what did they call you?

BD: Los tres/ reyes magos.

IS: Ohh really. They called on you? Then you met them?

BD: Yeah.

IS: How exciting!

BD: But only in their home.

IS: So you went to Bilbao to visit them or did you go to visit them here in England?

BD: What?

IS: Did you go to visit them in England or...

BD: We didn't visit them, we was in a park. And then my mom got this message and she said it was Los Reyes Magos so I wanted to look. So I looked and it was, but only on the phone.

(Interview 1; 147- 158)

IS: Can you describe me your... Your mother's mum?

BD: My mother's mum.

IS: You're granny.

BD: Ohh granny.

IS: Or actually maybe I should say abuela...

BD: Abuela! (unclear).

(Interview 2; 263- 268)

Communication breakdowns such as that or difficulty in understanding the researcher's questions were frequent and demonstrated that BD is still developing his language skills. An interesting interaction that indicated that was BD's response to the word 'abuela' introduced by the non-Spanish speaking researcher:

BD: Remember umm, remember. Do you remember the? What was it called? Encanto, they also said Abuela.

IS: Yes, that's true.

BD: They also speak to different language.

IS: Which language do they speak?

BD: I think it was Spanish. I forgot.

(Interview 2; 270- 275)

He did not find it easy to recognise Spanish outside of the usual context of speaking with his mother or family in Spain, despite being a key cultural symbol for him.

Coda/ resolution

It is difficult to discuss BD's narrative as a whole through resolution or coda. This is due to the fact that BD's experiences and narratives were not shared through challenges or conflict; neither underlying or unconscious conflicts were observed. The primary reason might be that BD has not yet started to consciously explore his identities or Self; hence he

did not observe any perceived differences between him and others or engage with inner conflicts.

However, it may be that as a child during middle childhood, BD is influenced by the lack of cultural tension at home as well as the positive narratives and discourses around his cultures.

As a Spanish and English child, BD does not experience any racial or religious tensions. In fact, his narrative of religion indicates his parents' approach to such concepts:

IS: Does your father look like that when he prays?

BD: He doesn't pray. We don't have any religions.

IS: You don't have any religions? OK.

BD: kind of thing. My mum used to like my dad's mum's used to.

IS: Your dad's mum's used to...

BD: And my mum's mum used to.

IS: But you don't really do that.

BD: My family doesn't do it.

IS: So you don't go into church or anything.

BD: No, we just live in victory. Now we live in freedom.

IS: You live in freedom.

BD: Freedom! [calling loudly, in a tune]

(Interview 2; 252- 262)

In that interaction, BD builds a narrative that unites him with his parents as their own cultural group, one that is distinct from his Spanish and English ones. It also demonstrates his parents' similar belief systems, one that defies religion.

The above interaction, combined with his positive regard and acceptance of his cultural background (as demonstrated in various interactions before) means that possibly, BD does not feel tension or conflict and is not confused or challenged by the interactions with the researcher. Although he is not yet actively engaged in considering these identities, it may be that he will have a positive multicultural identity in the future.

4.4 Mateo's Story: multiculturalism as part of forming a self and identity; mixed culturally and mixed religiously

Pseudonym: Mateo

Cultural background: English and Jewish mother; Italian Catholic father

North London

Year 6

[Complications: hierarchy of cultures, balancing different religions, belonging, negotiating self through values and social currency]

[Interactions: taking control over the narrative, fluidity, shifting between comfortable and cautious]

[Resolution/coda: Embracing multiplicity and diversity, finding pride in being mixed, openness to fluidity, and being multicultural as a strength to use in creating self]

Mateo is a Year 6 boy. His mother is English and Jewish (whose father converted to Judaism before marriage), and his father is Italian and Catholic. Mateo was born in England and has a younger brother.

Mateo is well aware of his multicultural background and is sensitive to the subtleties of his parents' cultural identities, which he embraces as his own. Furthermore, his narrative conveys a clear sense of belonging to England, with a sense of his personal identity as English and mixed. Mateo explored and evaluated different aspects of his cultural identity through interaction with the researcher. As a result, they ceased to be a 'static' and 'fixed' identity, but rather fluid and subjective constructs that could be evaluated through his interests and values and decided which he would like to embrace and which he would not. In this process, he is clarifying and developing his sense of belonging.

As Mateo approaches adolescence, he develops a sense of self and identity. His exploration of his multicultural identity is only one aspect of his process of developing his self-awareness and sense of self. In this way, he utilises his multicultural identity as another aspect of himself, which benefits him and enhances his self-representation and social acceptance. To understand himself, his values, and his developmental needs, Mateo explores the significant relationships in his life.

When the researcher invites Mateo to describe himself after he describes his parents' heritage, he responds:

M: I think of myself. I am happy to be both. I didn't mind. But. And. And I think cool to speak different languages and. For the parents to come from different places, it is quite cool.

(Interview 1; 17- 18)

Though the researcher asked Mateo to describe himself and his identity, Mateo chose to discuss his feelings regarding parenthood instead. When Mateo says 'different countries,' he implies a distance between himself and Italy; but immediately afterwards, he connects himself to the country and his family. In this way, he creates a sense of belonging and non-belonging at the same time. This sense of 'contextual belonging', or feeling belonging and at the same time being a stranger, could be seen in another later interaction:

IS: Ohh it's great. So if you have described Italy... how is it?

M: Hot,

M: I think it's quite. Nice to go visit different countries and I I'd only describe the. I just. feel cool being in Italy because I live in England and going to another family where my dad is actually from makes me feel like cool there I guess.

(Interview 1; 57- 61)

Mateo makes it clear in this interaction that although he is connected to Italy, being Italian is not yet a solid part of his identity in the same way as in the previous interaction, Mateo begins by describing a place he can visit almost as a tourist. Additionally, he refers to his father as the 'true' Italian: "where my dad is actually from". His statement implies that he is still negotiating whether being Italian is a part of his identity or if it is only his father's.

Besides implying Mateo's cultural identity, the above interactions also indicate how Mateo constructs his identity and self as a pre-adolescent and what part his cultures play in that process.

IS: OK. Great. And how is it to be both things?

M: I think I said last week. I think it's quite cool.

IS: Yeah, you did say. But I wanted to make sure that you haven't changed your mind.

M: No

IS: You said it's cool because let me see if I remember... you said it's cool because you get to learn... to talk in more languages and to know more people and to have more experiences, something like that.

M: And also to be different.

IS: And to be different. You think being different is cool?

M: Yeah

(Interview 2; 370- 380)

In using the word 'cool', Mateo is signalling his belief that being different or unique is a currency of social status that can be used to gain acceptance among 'others,' presumably other members of his peer group. Interestingly, there was some tension between Mateo's words and tone of voice. Despite using words like 'cool' to describe being different or 'mixed', Mateo's tone of voice was quiet and cautious, and he paused many times. There could be many interpretations for that. It is possible Mateo was not as confident in being different as he wished but was trying to reply to the researcher's expectations. However, it seems probable that the interaction stimulated Mateo to consider deeply his cultural awareness and belonging, and his discomfort resulted from this exploration.

Another example of Mateo's unclarity about being Italian could be seen in the way he describes the interaction with his cousins and family in Italy:

M: Well. I, I've. I don't live in that country. So. I. Try and act cool so then they think as I Look. Seemed like a like a. Like a cool person? I don't know.

IS; That's fine. What's cool in Italy?

M: Ummm. I like how everyone, like mostly everyone, likes football. Yeah, so they're very good at it too.

IS: OK, so. To be cool in Italy, you kind of talk about football and you show that you know about football. OK, what else is cool in Italy? How do you behave if you want to kind of be cool like everyone else?

M: Just not be silly. Like weird jokes and stuff like that. Not to be silly.

IS: OK, so they prefer when people are not. I mean your family or the people you are with prefer that you are more sensible?

M: No, it's just that I act like that.

(Interview 2; 195- 206)

M: Sometimes I don't feel comfortable, but I always do behave because. And just set a thing that my family in Italy think of me as so.

(Interview 2; 356- 357)

The desire for him to be liked causes him to behave in a manner that he believes will be acceptable within the interaction, a manner that may not be natural to him. Mateo appears to perform or act self-consciously in Italy. Being in a performative state indicates that Mateo does not feel at home in Italy or is unsure of the cultural codes, contrary to when he is in England. This suggests that in Italy, Mateo is keenly aware of the expectations of the people around him, and he is trying to conform to them. At the same time, in England, he is more comfortable expressing himself authentically and confidently:

IS: OK, what do you do? What silly things do you do?

M: I just try to act funny to people, sometimes.

IS: Like?

M: Like. Making jokes that are not really funny, but they make people laugh.

(Interview 2; 214- 217)

Mateo described being 'silly' as "his normal self", which he feels he can be in familiar environments; implying a sense of 'movement' between feeling connected and belonging to feeling foreignness and distance. In other words, Mateo is examining his commitment to 'being Italian' as part of his identity and his belonging with a close-distant relationship with family members. That becomes clearer as the story unfolds:

IS: [asked Mateo to expand on how he feels being England]

Um. I just, I think I'm just more relaxed to... [doesn't finish sentence].

More relaxed. So when you're in Italy you don't feel like, you're at home.

No.

But when you're in England you do feel like you're at home.

Yeah.

(Interview 2; 219- 223)

IS: ... Do you know what behavior is good behavior in Italy, because your dad is Italian, so you kind of seen him or because you've been there so many times that you learned from them.

M: Because I've been there lots of times, and I learnt it from them. And it's also that I feel comfortable when my dad is there with me in Italy and he stays with me.

(Interview 2; 365- 369)

Though Mateo is connected to his family in Italy and visits frequently, he still feels tension while there, which he does not experience at home. It is his father who not only provides him with support and comfort, but also connects him to the Italian culture and identity, and links him to his family.

Multicultural identity, balancing religious tension and belonging

Mateo's understanding of the term 'culture' evolves around religions and beliefs, possibly because having multiple religions is the most prominent and 'conflictual' aspect of his multicultural identity.

M: Uh, it's. Culture like a different, like, kind of. Alright. Like different religions and different. Beliefs and stuff like that. And they believe in different things...

(Interview 1; 8-9)

M: Ohhhh so my dad is Italian and My mum is English. My mom's Jewish and my dad's Catholic.

(Interview 1; 14)

Mateo is well aware of the nuances intrinsic to the multiple facets of his heritage. His awareness of these subtleties and his sensitivity to them suggest that he understands not only the importance they have in his identity but a sensitivity to a sense of belonging. By accurately describing the different aspects of his identity, Mateo can establish unique connections with his parents and the different outer communities: he is Jewish like his mother and Catholic like his dad. Mateo's descriptions also suggest a narrative he is exposed to at home: religious identity is a key narrative in Mateo's family life.

However, Mateo's sense of cultural belonging is not simple or static. As a 'mixed' child, Mateo's description of himself is more complex.

M: I go to a place called the Havurah, and it's like a Jewish place, like for a small community. It's not like. She's not like. I forgot what it's called... A like a really proper [unclear] one, because her dad was also... Also, her dad was I think. Think it feels. Christian...

(Interview 1; 37- 40)

M: And yeah, and also. And I don't really go to church because we're not, because I'm not fully Catholic. I'm half-half. So I don't go to church.

(Interview 1; 50-52)

Mateo identifies himself as 'partly' or 'half', showing his awareness of external, social discourses about belonging to communities and religions. Although he identifies as Catholic and Jewish, he is aware of 'others' perceptions of what it is to be Jewish or Catholic. Mateo accepts the conflictual external point of view of 'half'- but balances it by identifying with both his parents and especially his mother, who is 'mixed' religiously as well. Although he does not identify himself as a Christian, he shows a connection, or relationship, to Christianity (Church of England) through his grandfather.

Interestingly, his small story also implies Mateo's awareness and sensitivities of being a part of two religious minority groups in the UK. This is particularly highlighted in the interaction between Mateo and the researcher regarding his father's religion:

IS: OK, What does your dad do that is Italian?

M: Ummm... so... Italian?

IS: Or or Christian. Let's go with Christian first.

M: Catholic.

IS: Oh. Oh, it's Catholic.

(Interview 1; 45- 49)

As a non-British and Jewish person, the researcher was not attuned to the differences and discourses between Catholicism and the Church of England ('Christians'); however, Mateo was, and by correcting her, he took ownership of his identity.

This is also observed regarding his Jewish identity:

M: You can't... I guess there's. I guess you um... I guess it's. Like it's a different. Because some places outside don't have. Aren't Jewish, so maybe you can't celebrate Judaism in another place but you can celebrate it there.

(Interview 2; 233- 235)

But, Mateo does not view belonging to minority groups or communities as a disadvantage. He is proud of his bicultural identity and considers it to be a strength, even as a social 'currency', as described above. It may be because Mateo attends a diverse school whose ethos encourages diversity and cultural awareness or because he comes from a family with a strong sense of cultural pride.

It is through cultural awareness and engagement in practices, festivals, and communities that bicultural identity and ethnic-racial integrity are created. As Mateo's narratives

indicate, Mateo's family participates in various cultural practices, not in a religious manner, but in a cultural manner that strengthens a sense of community.

M: OK so my mum is Jewish, So I'll do the Star of David...

IS: And, how does she show that she's Jewish?

M: She. She tells me that. She like, she we go to different events. Hmm. And for example, I go to a place called the Havurah, and it's like a Jewish place, like for a small community. It's not like. She's not like. I forgot what it's called... A like a really proper [unclear] one...

(Interview 1; 35- 39)

M: And I am pretty sure the Catholic sign is also the cross, I can't remember. (Interview 1; 44)

M: [discusses his father] So he we do Christmas. And I enjoy Christmas because I get lots of presents. Yeah. And yeah, and also. And I don't really go to church...

(Interview 1, 50- 51)

Mateo indicated that his mother attaches considerable importance to this aspect of her cultural identity and that of her children. She actively participates and engages in her Jewish identity and teaches it to her children. The effect of this is to raise cultural awareness and, possibly, create a sense of biculturalism in Mateo. It also creates a sense of belonging. On the other hand, he also indicates his father's cultural influence by celebrating Christmas, but his acquaintance with the Catholic symbols is unclear. That signals a hierarchy of cultures that exists for Mateo, as he himself acknowledges in his second interview:

M: I'm hungry. It means. Umm... like as in I don't think I have celebrated Catholic...

Catholicism as much maybe I I think I want to do a bit more...

(Interview 2; 436- 437)

His interactions with the researcher clearly show that Mateo is negotiating his religious and cultural identity. There is a constant shift between identities for him. He at once feels belonging and comfort with some aspects and yet is aware of the tension embodied in his 'mixed' identity. That results in a more contextual identity, of being 'both' and 'half' according to the context. It also results in a non-essentialist experience, open to new modes of identification, selfhood and belonging.

The researcher is aware of the importance of religion in some stories, however the space did not allow for further exploration of these influence.

Forming multicultural identity and belonging through values and interests

As discussed above, Mateo shows confidence and appreciation towards his mixed cultural heritage but is still evaluating and negotiating his multicultural identity. Mateo does that by using different mechanisms and processes. He evaluates his cultural heritage by comparing cultural codes, beliefs and behaviours to his own values and interests; by linking his cultural heritage with his loved ones and by considering cultural norms in light of his identity and self-constructions as a pre-adolescent boy. As mentioned before, his cultural identity is used in his developmental 'task' of creating a separate and independent identity.

Mateo is an avid athlete and is highly interested in sports. He plays Netball for the school's team and football. He enjoys watching football matches with his father or playing with him. Mateo finds it easier to socialise and interact with people who share those interests with him:

IS: OK, is it hard or easy to make friends?

M: I think it depends on who each other people like. Hmm. Like. I made a few friends outside school that don't ever see them... and I just made friends with them while I was there, that place.

IS: Really easily?

M: Yeah, because of the common things we like.

IS: Which is probably sports?

M: Yeah.

IS: Yeah, OK and in school, was it harder?

M: Um. maybe I think it's a bit harder.

IS: OK, because?

M: Um. Well, I think everyone likes different things.

(Interview 2; 177- 188)

Mateo interacts with his culture as he interacts with people. When deciding whether to incorporate culture into his identity and self (create a relationship with it), he evaluates it based on values and interests that are meaningful to him.

IS: That's fine. What's cool in Italy?

M: Ummm. I like how everyone, like mostly everyone, likes football. Yeah, so they're very good at it too.

(Interview 2; 197- 199)

IS: Do you think Italians and English people are different in other things maybe?

M: I think. They're good at different things. OK, I think Italy are a bit better at football. But England, they in England are better at rugby.

(Interview 1; 102- 105)

M: I don't see very much skateboarding in Italy. I might be wrong, but. Because in England I've seen a lot of skateboarding. And it's always I see loads of children. Doing.

(Interview 2; 326- 327)

Mateo also connects cultural norms to people he appreciates and to constructs he would like to include into his 'self'. When discussing perceived differences in behaviours between Italian and English people, he talked about confidence:

M: They almost, they're a little bit the same.

IS: A little bit the same... OK...

M: I think mostly the same. In Italy... I think that you. Umm. I think you'd...

IS: So... hard question, take your time.

M: England. Well, for what I've seen. And also, especially my grandma, she is quite a strong, confident when speaking. And. Yeah. She's quite. Yeah, she's like not really afraid to say anything.

IS: That's your grandma here in England.

M: No... In Italy...

(Interview 1; 85- 93)

Being confident and standing up for yourself was also repeated in a later conversation (not in the transcripts because of a recording failure) that described the difference between his parents, with his father being more outspoken when wronged. Mateo does not use those differences to differentiate between cultures; he refuses to make generalisations because he "haven't seen everyone" (interview 1; 95). Rather, he notices and identifies behaviours, values and norms that are meaningful to him. Being able to share ideas confidently and being sporty as competencies Mateo recognises in himself and appreciates:

OK. Once there was a boy called Mateo. Who liked to play football? And. And. Always put his hand up in class. (Interview 2; 69- 70)

OK. And you're and you feel like you're good in sports?

Yeah, that's what everyone says to me.

(interview 2; 86- 87)

Do you feel like you're confident in class? You feel like you can... Do you feel like you can say your mind easily?

No as as in like. When I've got ideas.

(Interview 2; 90- 92)

Coda/ resolution- identifying with his role model as part of identity formation

Mateo is a pre-adolescent young person in the early stages of forming his identity and self. As discussed above, he does so by considering his competencies.

As part of that process, Mateo is searching for role models and moving away (or separating) from previous concepts connected to his younger childhood. For Mateo, this might mean a move away from being protected by his mother, who symbolises nurture, into identifying with his father, who symbolises manhood.

As a young male, Mateo first person of reference is his father. When asked to pick a figure he cares about (from small world figurines) Mateo chose his father:

IS: OK. So pick a person you're kind to. From here. Who's that?

M: Ummm my dad.

IS: You care about your dad. Why are you kind and caring towards him?

M: Umm. Because. He raised me and. He makes us live under a roof. He pays for all the taxes.

Yeah.

(Interview 2; 159- 163)

Mateo identifies his father as a provider and educator who is supportive and comforting by being strong and confident, as discussed in the paragraphs above. Mateo's father symbolises protection and power. In his relationship with his younger brother, Mateo attempts to create a similar experience:

IS: And what do you like to do with your brother?

M: Fight.

(Interview 2; 273-274)

M: yeah. And just just still protect him. But I just like playing with him. (Interview 2; 286)

M: And I also want to be the oldest, oldest, like if there was another child. So then they could look up to me and and I'd be. Cool to them.

IS: OK. Do you also like the thought of being 10 years older than them? You wanna be like the older person that people look up to?

M: Yeah, like my brother looks up to me.

(Interview 2; 301- 305)

Mateo was able to explore his cultural and religious identities through his interactions with the researcher. He highlighted many times during the interactions with her the value he sees in being 'mixed', and connected it well with social status. However, he may also realise that he knows more about being Jewish and English than Catholic and Italian.

M: So I did the bird because I think because it is like the dove.

IS: Ohh so Catholic there's a there's a dove.

M: I'm pretty sure, I don't really remember then. Perhaps. (Interview 2; 338- 340)

Possibly as a result of his identification with his father and as a form of rebellion against his existing identity, Mateo wishes to develop a stronger sense of Italian-Catholic identity.

Mateo self and identity, as explored during the interactions with the researcher could be seen in his story about himself:

[show dice] So the ice cream describes that I'm being happy for both things that I am. [show dice] I'm hungry. It means. Umm... like as in I don't think I have celebrated Catholic... Catholicism as much maybe I I think I want to do a bit more and then. Umm. [show dice] I like telling people about my different religion. Ummm... [show dice] My dad. Who's Catholic [show dice] I like having a holiday in Italy.. I like travelling to Italy. I like the sun in Italy. Um. Like camping In England. I like the food in England. And. The food also in Italy. And. Like sports. Yeah. Umm. I don't really know. I'm trying to think. Maybe I like ummm... The stories of the different religions. Maybe that's enough... Gods of the different Religions. Yeah. I don't really know about the others. (Interview 2; 435- 446)

4.5 Layla's story- multiculturalism as provoking tension; not yet forming identity

Pseudonym: Layla

Cultural backgrounds: Italian father, Brazilian mother (mother is mixed- Brazilian and Japanese)

North London

Year 5

Complication/ conflict: discomfort with 'being different', disengagement with the cultural background.

Interactions: awareness of culture; evaluating cultures through interests (relationships);

Coda: defiance and openness, non essentialism

Layla was born to an Italian father and a Brazilian mother in the UK. Her mother is racially mixed (half Japanese), although that information did not come up in Layla's interviews. Layla generally seemed uncomfortable during the interviews, particularly when asked to discuss abstract or challenging concepts or engage in personal reflection. Layla is aware of her parents' heritage and cultures and feels connected to them. Still, her relationship with them and these identities is unclear; nor is her involvement in developing her own cultural identity. It appears as Layla is not actively engaged in considering her multicultural identity. It is possible that Layla is seeking balance in her life and avoids exploring ideas, feelings, or concepts that may threaten or disrupt it, including her cultural identity. Layla uses her observations of interactions and interpersonal relationships, values and interests to evaluate cultures and form her identity and self.

Layla is aware of her parents' heritage and places of origin, but she does not connect these directly with the concept of culture.

IS: So what are your cultures? Your parents' cultures? Where do your parents come from?

L: My dad comes from Italy and my mom comes from Brazil.

(Interview 1; 16- 18)

Layla is fully trilingual and fluent in Portuguese, Italian, and English; so are her parents, who know each other's languages. She refers to her knowledge of the three languages in quite a

matter of fact way. When the researcher asked what languages she knows except English, she referred to learning Spanish at school until directly asked (Interview 1; 27- 32). The fact that all family members speak all languages could create a sense of communication and harmony between them. For Layla, language is the most explicit connection with her parents' cultures.

Layla indicated some knowledge of Italian and Brazilian traditions but also indicated they are not a big part of her traditions. Her answers suggest that Layla is not fully immersed in these traditions and cultures. Additionally, Layla seemed to be less confident when she reflected on her Italian identity:

IS: So what? What do Italian people celebrate?

L: Well they celebrate Carnival... And... not so sure that they celebrate Halloween.

*L: Ummm... (14 sc) They... They celebrate... Kind of like a day where... So... It's like a day where, but it's like... Basically, is a day in the name of something kind of? They celebrate it. Kind of like my dad's name's day. So his name say A*****. And so there's something called A***** day.*

IS: Ah, right! And do you do stuff like that with your family here? Do you do like name day or Carnival? Does your father have Italian friends that you do carnival with?

L: We usually do it with my mum's friends and then we dress up in costumes.

(Interview 1; 142- 146)

However, when she discussed Brazilian culture, Layla became more fluent and responded more quickly and confidently.

IS: [discussing Brazil] OK. So do you know anything about what do they celebrate? Traditions?

L: Yes the celebrate Carnival more than Italians.

IS: OK. They have big kind Carnival. I know about it.

L: Then they... They have... They celebrate... Well, you know there's Mother's and Father's Day. But then they have Children's day.

L: It's pretty popular, OK. So they celebrate them like they did their big party and things like that.

(Interview 1; 227- 234)

The lack of immersion in her parents' heritage cultures means that currently for Layla, being Italian and being Brazilian represent the places her parents come from; places that are

beloved because of the personal connection with her family but are not an integral part of her own identity.

The difference between Layla's responses when she discusses Brazil and Italy or 'being Brazilian' and 'Being Italian' is probably not about cultural identity or belonging but her relationships with her family members, feeling accepted and interactions with others. These will be discussed more in length later.

Another explanation for Layla's perceived difference between culture and place can be seen in the way Layla defines culture:

IS: So what I'm interested to hear about is what it's like to be a person who has families in more than one culture. Do you know what culture means?

L: Like how you kind of... Do something different?

(Interview 1; 4-7)

Her response suggests Layla's initial interpretation of culture is about behaviour, traditions and being different. This interpretation is focused more on the external and observable actions that differ between groups of people, probably actions that stand out. That definition highlights awareness of people's actions; of being different; and possibly, being perceived as different by others. This interpretation does not focus on belief systems, values or unobserved traditions.

For Layla, culture is about the act of doing something differently rather than a place of origin. Layla's perception of culture could be observed in the interactions with the researcher:

IS: OK. When you're in Italy, are you feeling really comfortable? Like you know what to do, you know how to behave, you know what people expect you to do?

L: No.

IS: No? You don't feel like that. Are people in Italy act a bit differently sometimes?

L: Different to the people here, yes.

IS: Can you explain?

L: Well, some people can be nicer in different parts, but other parts they can be like. Not that nice like they won't always say hi to you. Like sometimes, when you pass you can like say hi, but they they just like walk past you.

(Interview 1; 108- 116)

L: (17 sc pause) So except for really my family no one's like... That kind of... Happy around there much. well, they can be happy. Like when they may be like visiting people when they're out with friends, but they don't really smile that much. Here not many do, but some of them do.

(Interview 1; 121- 123)

Layla perceives people in Italy as acting differently than she is used to; they have norms and codes she is unfamiliar with or does not understand. Her perception of their culture is that it is “different” from her and the people around her. The same can be observed when she discusses Brazil:

IS: OK. And the people in general, like you told me about Italians, that they can be... not very welcoming sometimes. Or not very smiley, at least. How are the Brazilians?

L: Yeah, they're very, very smiley and they're very like. Always say hello there, always like. Having a good time, so it kind of...

IS: So the question I asked you before about when you're in Brazil. You're not at home, but you know what is expected of you? Do you know how to behave? Do you understand how people do things?

L: Kind of.

(Interview 1; 210- 217)

By discussing the differences between the external behaviours of people in Brazil and Italy with people ‘here’, Layla distances herself from the two cultures. Similarly, her answers indicate that she does not feel she entirely belongs to either culture and does not fully understand the norms and codes of the behaviours she observes. However, it seems as though Layla feels less comfortable in Italy compared to Brazil and England. When the researcher asked her to pick cards representing Italy, Layla focused on places she saw. However, when they discussed Brazil, Layla chose a card that represented an experience of feelings:

L: Just, I guess, because there's always something new about to happen.

IS: There's always something new about to happen in Brazil.

L: Yeah. Just like something exciting, like always going on.

(Interview 2; 412-414)

Layla's response seems to relate to her sense of comfort, belonging and acceptance and how she feels perceived rather than her cultural identity. This will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

Complication- Belonging, self and interpersonal relationships

Layla's observations of other places revolve around interpersonal relationships. The differences she notices are how people behave towards others, including in interactions with her. She signals to the researcher that appropriate or kind behaviour are values that are meaningful to her.

Layla seems very sensitive to how she is perceived, impacting her sense of belonging. She is sensitive to others' expectations of her, and it is possible that not knowing the appropriate behaviours will threaten her sense of self. For example, Layla is engaged with the concept of 'manners' and 'strictness', which have come up multiple times during the interactions with the researcher. Her sense of manners represent Layla's expectations of appropriate behaviour but also goes hand in hand with her feeling accepted and belonging and her ability to behave naturally as a result. For example, the researcher invited Layla to share her views on her Italian family.

IS: Wow, that's nice. OK and... How is your family like?

L: Well, my grandma is really strict with manners.

L: Like for example, if I put my elbow on my table, she is like 'take it off right now'.

(Interview 1; 86- 89)

IS: And other family? Do you have uncles or cousins?

L: Yeah, I have. He's pretty strict about also not being that loud. But otherwise he's really nice.

L: And my auntie. She's nice, but she's not actually that strict.

(Interview 1; 101- 103)

L: Well my cousins are like... really well-mannerd, but they really like, care about their manners. But here not a lot of them, like not a lot of the children care about manners.

(Interview 1; 168- 169)

The conversation before the above interaction was about visiting Italy. Despite the positive tone of it, when Layla was invited to describe her family there, her immediate response to the researcher's open question was to discuss her family's 'strictness'. Layla is not

accustomed to strict parenting, which is evident in how she describes her parents, for example:

IS: Are your parents strict or not strict?

L: Strict to eating sweets, otherwise not really that much.

(Interview 1; 69- 70)

That gap, or difference in behaviours, means that Layla must change how she once behaved in Italy. She probably feels discomfort or 'not herself' when she is there. That could lead to a lesser sense of belonging and acceptance, maybe even feeling criticised. That interpretation is emphasised when considering her description of her Brazilian family:

L: They are a little bit less strict about manners. And each day when I come to eat breakfast with my grandparents... usually they make for me. Then there is like a different variety of fruits and things...

(Interview 1; 188- 190)

L: My cousin, which used to play with me, is only now with her phone. She's 13. She's just so... (Interview 1; 195- 197)

In her most direct and primary description of her maternal grandparents, she refers to a less strict nature and a warmer interpersonal relationship. In addition, her description of her cousin suggests previous (even if changing) interpersonal interaction and playfulness that is lacking from her description of her Italian cousins. When invited to consider further her experience in Brazil, Layla's narrative emphasised her feeling accepted even further:

L: Well. Ummm there. It's. Easy to like cause you like... Like if you make like really big mistake they easily forgive you, like quickly.

(Interview 2; 219- 220)

Layla is also observant of the family dynamics between her parents and their families:

IS: OK. So I have a question. It might be weird. When your dad goes to Italy and when your mom goes to Brazil, do they behave a bit differently than usual?

L: Mum feels more happy. So does my dad. But, him... And his mum.... Like usually... They... Disagree.

(interview 1; 235- 238)

Layla was careful during the interviews not to directly say she feels more connected or at ease in her Brazilian family. When she discussed some of these differences, her voice

became quiet and almost inaudible; and she mentioned many times that she likes visiting her two extended families. Yet the interactions with her suggested that she was sensitive to being appraised and asked to adhere to strict behaviours, making her feel more at ease in Brazil. It seemed that Layla was occupied with pleasing others and behaving appropriately and kindly to others. On the one hand, she tried to answer 'correctly' to what she felt the researcher expected of her, but on the other, felt discomfort with what may be offending people she cared about. This was evident in the tone of her voice becoming quiet, the pauses in her speech, and the lack of comfort in her voice. For example when she talked about her parents sometimes being 'annoying' (interview 1; 53- 59); or when the researcher asked her to consider her cultural identity.

Layla values relationships for their security and support as much as for their playfulness. When she discussed her friendships, she told the researcher that she and her friends have different interests and like to play differently. When asked what makes them friends, she relied:

“Um. Well. There were like whenever, like I need like like help... I think that they're always there, like they always help me. (Interview 2; 138- 139)

Her sensitivity to people's behaviour also extends into understanding, or attempting to understand others' perspectives and behaviours:

IS: Do you know anyone like that? That is quite frustrated with their life or sometimes kind of anxious or makes them being mean.

L: My best friend well she, so not every time she's actually really nice, but some like a few weeks ago she was like being mean because I think something was happening with her and her sister, but she took it on her friends.

(Interview 2; 364- 368)

This is a well-developed appreciation of interactions and feelings, which a parent probably mediated; and it helps preserve Layla's connection and relationships with her friends.

Although it seems that Layla is not currently engaged in forming her cultural identity (on the contrary, she seems to shy away from it), the researcher wondered whether her evaluation of people's interpersonal behaviours and her relationships wouldn't impact that identity construction in the future.

Complication- Self and culture- the discomfort of being an 'other': awareness and avoidance of cultural differences and complex topics- avoiding self-reflections

Layla appeared to be uncomfortable during many interactions that involved self-reflections, particularly those involving her cultural background. It was clear she was not yet engaging in forming her cultural identity; and in fact, that engaging with it was in some ways threatening for her.

Layla does not experience cultural tension at home. Her parents are bilingual and fluent in each other's languages and they celebrate similar festivals and observe similar traditions (i.e. carnival). Additionally, there isn't a religious tension in her house, as Layla is adamant she does not have a religion, probably following her family's narrative.

IS: Uh, OK. Do you pray?

L: No. I don't have any religion. (Interview 2; 239- 240)

IS: But I think you did say you you celebrate Christmas.

L: Yeah, I just celebrate Christmas. I don't go to church at all. I don't have a religion I just celebrated. Like, celebrating.

(Interview 2; 247- 249)

Considering Layla's apparent lack of internal tension between her cultures, the researcher wondered if that led her to try to 'escape' being in touch with these parts of her life, which she may find unbalancing. Her self-perseverance was evident across various interactions. For example, when the researcher discussed school with Layla:

IS: How's school?

L: Good

IS: OK, I wonder if you have anything that is not good in your life.

L: That I have to do extra homework?

IS: OK, having to do extra homework? Yeah, that would be.

L: I guess it's not that bad though, because I guess it helps you.

(Interview 2; 181- 186)

A similar experience occurred when she and the researcher discussed her cultural background. The places where Layla's parents are from are familiar to her, and she feels a connection to them; however, discussing them with her has created a sense of discomfort for her. She became quiet and would not elaborate. She did not contribute her ideas,

thoughts or beliefs spontaneously unless directly asked by the researcher, and after disclosing some of these, she often became reserved and cautious.

S: OK, and about being Italian, not about Italy?

L: Ummm. Well. I don't know...

(Interview 2; 403- 404)

IS: So I asked you about kind of being Italian and being Brazilian... Do you feel you don't know a lot about? being Italian or being Brazilian, do you think... you are familiar with that?

L: I don't...

(Interview 2; 451- 454)

Layla appears to have been torn between her awareness of having a different background and her desire not to be different, a conflict which she was unable to resolve during her interaction with the researcher. It led her to move from acceptance of her background to refusing or rejecting engagement with it, as demonstrated in the following interaction:

IS: So did you ever think about the fact that your parents come from different places or never?

L: Not really, no.

IS: Why did you never think about it?

L: I have but... well...

IS: It's not a bad or a good... What did you think about?

L: I thought about like. How they act when they're in their different countries, kinda.

IS: Did you?

L: And that's (inaudible, unclear).

IS: OK. And have you ever thought about the fact that you are two different things, that you have other cultures than English?

L: No.

(Interview 1; 294- 304)

This interaction demonstrates Layla's discomfort and rejection in engaging with a possible multicultural identity and possibly her feeling part of 'here'. It also demonstrates Layla's wish to please others and 'behave well. In saying she thought about how "her parents act when they're in their different countries" she answered what she thought the researcher wanted, more than her authentic feelings.

Despite replying that she never thought about having a multicultural background, it was evident during the interactions with her that Layla was aware of her and other people's diverse backgrounds, including her friends:

L: Umm. I'm the only person in my class, well with people come from like two different countries. (Interview 1; 308 -309)

L: Yeah, like. But both parents don't come from different, they both come from the same. (Interview 1; 320)

L: [on her friends] Yeah. Umm. One of them... their... Parents are from here, the other one have parents are from Poland and the other ones parents are from Pakistan. (Interview 2; 160 -161)

In these vignettes, Layla compares herself to other children but cannot identify with them. As a result, she perceives herself as unique or perhaps different from others. That is particularly interesting knowing Layla's mother is 'mixed' (half Japanese); information Layla herself did not share. It is possible that experiencing herself as different caused her discomfort, and she attempted to balance by avoiding exploring her cultural identity.

That discomfort was most apparent in her drawing of her friends 'all doing something'. Layla drew herself 'getting ready for a party', next to her British friend who was studying. The last friend was drawn on the opposite side of the table, wearing a hijab and praying. With that drawing, Layla distanced herself from the cultural behaviour representing difference (praying); as well as a cultural identity that may seem different (Muslim). By choosing to draw only that friend as doing a cultural act, she shows her strong awareness of culture; of behaviours as being the centre of cultural difference; and the possible tension it could bring, a tension she wishes to avoid.

Coda/ resolution- Trying to regain balance by defying cultural identity

Layla's narrative does not reach a typical conclusion. On a developmental level, she is at an age where she is less concerned with finding an independent identity and more concerned with becoming competent. Additionally, Layla finds exploring her personal or cultural identity disconcerting; the researcher is unsure why. The narratives of her parents or family may not be engaging in such explorations.

That avoidance, is also apparent towards the last interview after being asked directly about being 'from different places':

IS: OK. So can you pick a card that says what it's like? To have parents from different places.

L: Because. And if so, my friends are from different places and the when. We go to different places. I always really see like new faces and new people which like. So find exciting to see from different places.

(Interview 460- 464)

As a means of resolving these confusing and conflicting feelings, she adopts a pluralistic, non-essentialist and open approach to cultures, defying the cultural discourse (represented by the researcher).

IS: So you're not really familiar with it. Is it something that interests you?

L: Yeah, I like learning about how the different people react in different countries and how and what happened there.

IS: You're interested in everyone's cultures or do you...

L: The same way.

(Interview 2; 454- 458)

IS: OK. Can you pick a card that represents how you feel about my weird questions regarding your cultures? [both smile]

L: Umm. I feel fine because I went. Like. I don't really mind sharing it with other people. And also when I grow I would say like... Like to learn about other people's cultures. So maybe if I share mine, then I can learn about other people's as well.

(Interview 2; 442- 446)

In the last story she told about herself [unrecorded due to a technical problem], Layla said that being from different places meant she could learn about different cultures, also of other people, and that she is unique and she likes it.

5 Discussion

In the discussion, the researcher will discuss the main findings of the analysis by comparing the children's narratives and the central literature on Self and cultural identity previously reviewed. The chapter will outline the analysis and findings in relation to the research questions:

1. The research focused on what were the experiences and stories of multicultural children as the primary question.

The researcher wanted to understand how multicultural children experienced having a multicultural background, their experiences of growing up in a multicultural family, their identity and how they experience interaction with the systems around them (family, school, community, extended family).

In addition to the primary question, three secondary questions were developed:

2. how they experienced themselves within the different cultures in which they moved;
3. whether they established different interactions and relationships within these cultures; and
4. What were the narratives the children used to form their Selves and identities?

The researcher was interested in the children's identity, or Self, when interacting with people from their heritage and primary cultures. Her goal was to understand how the children felt and acted in everyday interactions, as well as how their identity and self-perception were affected by them.

During the interviews and particularly during the analysis, it became apparent that the children did not share a 'life story' or a coherent set of episodes that attempted to tell a coherent story. Often, they shared small stories that conveyed conflicting affiliations and feelings toward their cultural heritage. Their viewpoints changed depending on the researcher's questions and prompts during interactions. The children used the interactions unintentionally to convey and form their subjective Self and cultural identity.

To address that, the researcher focused on 'small stories' - such as everyday conversations, interactions, and experiences (in this case, the children and the researcher) - and how they helped the children create a narrative that contributed to their Self and identity. The stories also highlighted how the young people experienced and interacted within environments that represented their cultural environment. The researcher attempted to identify any complications (or conflicts) in the narratives, what interactions took place and their nature, including tone of voice and responsiveness, and the resolution, or coda.

Despite not intending to analyse the narratives further using thematic analysis, the researcher identified some common themes or comparisons. Additionally, the researcher identified different patterns the children used for self and identity formation through the interaction.

5.1 Common threads

5.1.1 Cultural hierarchy

The manner in which they discussed these cultures and the stories or narratives they told of them demonstrated a different affiliation between the places or cultures, many times influenced by their parents' involvement and a conscious attempt to teach cultural traditions and enlist cultural knowledge and identification or the relationships with their extended family members.

A clearer cultural hierarchy was evident, for example, for Looney Tooney, whose heritage is Polish (mother) and British (UK-born) Irish- Indian (father) and for Mateo who is English-Jewish (mother) and Italian Catholic (father). Both found it easier to think about some aspects of their cultural heritage than others: Looney Tooney showed the greatest awareness and knowledge of her Polish culture, then some aspects of her Irish culture and no knowledge of her Indian culture. At the same time, Mateo was more engaged with his Jewish culture than his Catholic. He was able, however, to discuss some aspects of Italian culture, those which fitted his interests and values. In both instances, the parents were actively teaching and passing cultural knowledge to their children by various means to promote their cultural identity and affiliation, as was evident in the interactions and also shared with the researcher in conversations before and after the sessions. Mateo's mum was encouraging her children to learn and engage in Jewish festivals by immersing them in

Jewish community activities and celebrating with their festivals. Looney Tooney's mother was promoting bilingualism by talking to her children in Polish, bringing home books in Polish and creating material experiences through "Polish sweets". Similarly, Looney Tooney's family celebrate St Patrick's Day and is exposed to such information she learned to label as 'Irish'. The family (including the extended family) did not practice any 'Indian' traditions. A third girl, Layla, who also showed a slight preference for one of her cultures, was also influenced by her mother to celebrate with her some Brazilian traditions with friends (Carnival). Unlike the former two, Layla's parents did not indicate any other strong attempts to develop cultural awareness in Layla, and Layla's cultural knowledge was somewhat equal.

In some interactions, the researcher identified a slight orientation towards one culture as a response to an emotional or relational connection. Positive relationships and emotional experiences created for some of the children an affiliation with a particular culture more than the other, sometimes not consciously or explicitly. For example, Layla was quicker to think of Brazilian traditions and was describing being Brazilian more dynamically and emotionally ("something exciting about to happen") than being Italian (describing static scenes). Her descriptions mirror her descriptions of the people in both countries and the relationships with her extended families, which are warmer and less conflictual in Brazil. More than indicating cultural knowledge, this indicates an emotional response that could become important when forming cultural or bicultural identity.

All four children had different experiences of being immersed in their cultures. As discussed, Mateo is unique in participating in a cultural-religious community. Layla celebrates Carnival with her mother's friends, unlike the others who are not involved in any cultural community (religious or not). The lack of engagement in cultural or communal practices is mediated by visits to the parents' countries of origin. During these visits, they could engage in their heritage culture and observe and experience their customs, norms, and traditions. Again, the children differ in the frequency and experiences they have. Black Dot shared a story about getting a text from 'Los Reyes Magos' while in Spain or participating in pie festivals, and Mateo shared engaging with the football culture in Italy. Some children visit these places more frequently than others; which impacted the level of identification and connection to the named culture. Looney Tooney has visited Poland a few times, however,

her father was born in the UK so any connection with Ireland or India likely does not exist or is only imagined.

5.1.2 Negotiating intrapersonal cultural tension or Conflict

Of the four children, two were more engaged in self-exploration, Mateo and Looney Tooney. From the very beginning of their interviews, both individuals acknowledged their cultural heritage and discussed their experience as culturally diverse; Mateo's stories were more refined and clearly reflected his identity before the interviews. On the other hand, Looney Tooney identified as diverse early but began to construct and form her reflections as a result of her interactions with the researcher. Beyond other explanations of age and development, both children's narratives were identified by a possible conflict or tension between their cultures.

Mateo was Jewish and Catholic, and it was apparent that religion and his religious status occupied his thoughts. Mateo discussed not going to 'real' synagogue or church because he is not fully Jewish or Catholic, only 'half-half'. Nevertheless, despite being aware of this tension, Mateo's narratives were generally appreciative towards both his religions. Furthermore, Mateo shifted between 'being both' to 'being half-half', demonstrating he was still involved in shaping his multicultural identity and negotiating his intrapersonal tension.

Looney Tooney, who is white and South-Asian (Indian) shared narratives of biracial tension. Although not explicitly mentioned as a tense experience, Looney Tooney shared that she was jealous of her brother's orange (Irish) hair and was preoccupied with comparing her skin colour with her family members. That biracial tension was evident in how she defined culture as something that 'you get from your family.' Another intrapersonal tension for Looney Tooney was her cultural hierarchy. Although not acknowledged at first, Looney Tooney realised she was less knowledgeable about her non-Christian-European cultures. She used the space provided by the researcher and the interactions she had with her to reflect on this tension and her identity.

The other two children did not express or indicate a similar intrapersonal tension between their parents' heritage cultures explicitly. Both children's parents had relatively similar heritage, culture or race/ ethnicity, with Layla's parents being fluent in each other's

languages. Both children expressed not having a religion. Both children's parents expressed living in the UK for many years.

However, of the four, Layla presented the clearest non-explicit tension between her heritage cultures and the majority culture. She found discussing her heritage cultures difficult and explaining how she felt about being multicultural. Interestingly, her mother shared some information about being mixed in the home visit, (being of Japanese and Brazilian ethnicity). However, Layla did not mention it in the interviews' sessions. It was evident she was aware of diverse cultures and people around her but presented great discomfort discussing it or her own heritage (referring to herself).

Mateo and Looney Tooney may have already been aware of their conflicting identities, making them more open to reflecting on their own cultural identity or Self. Despite Mateo's engagement with his religious identity, he did not share any contrasting values or belief systems. The narrative around his Judaism and Catholicism is possibly more cultural than of faith. He developed interest in all the cultural elements influencing his identity; expressing a wish to learn more. Looney Tooney used the space to compare herself to her family members, find her belonging and develop pride and appreciation in her cultures (and ethnicity) who made her skin colour and who she was.

In contradiction, Layla's experience of possible cultural and racial tension made her uncomfortable. Her lack of external characteristics and other cultural differences in traditions and belief systems meant that she could disengage with self-exploration easily or currently reject a multicultural identity altogether.

Some psychologies believe that developing greater self-awareness and self-acceptance through exploration can contribute to developing a more coherent and integrated identity (Yampolsky et al., 2013); while some others discuss that engaging in such interactions and explorations create multiple selves and identities (a subjectivity) the person switches between in different situations (K. J. Gergen, 2004).

People who experience intrapersonal cultural tension tend to have a more complex and nuanced understanding of their cultural identities and may be better able to navigate cross-cultural interactions (Lafromboise et al., 1993). All children, including Layla and Black Dot,

expressed an interest in 'other places,' learning about other cultures and interacting with people of other cultures. For Layla, in particular, adopting this openness and tolerance worldview was a way to resolve her tension.

5.1.3 Forming an Identity: evaluating cultures and Heritages

During the interactions with the researcher, the children shared narratives of their relationship with their heritage cultures. Through their everyday stories, it became clear the children did not assume an immediate relationship with their heritage culture and did not mechanically accept them into their identity or Self. In fact, they critically evaluated them according to their values and beliefs and as related to their relationships.

Additionally, they all understood cultures through their own personal conflict or struggle, as was reflected well in their initial definitions of what culture was: Mateo, for whom religious belonging played a major part in his identity, initially discussed culture as "different religions and different beliefs". Looney Tooney who is mixed racially initial definition as "something you get from your family". Layla's initial response was about doing something differently, and she was the only child who gave a great deal of observations about different cultural norms and practices.

The children also used their values and beliefs to evaluate these cultures. Mateo's observations and stories about Italy and Italian culture or about being English reflected what is important to Mateo's self-concept: being socially accepted, being sporty, and being able to share ideas or thoughts confidentially. Mateo was happy to incorporate Italian culture into his self-identity because it fitted how he wanted to perceive himself. Layla was interested in relationships and interactions; her self-concept was more fragile and she was engaged in how people perceived her and her behaviour. When she evaluated her heritage cultures, she observed interpersonal behaviours and relationships and how her families interacted with each other and her. Looney Tooney was seeking belonging and finding a place within her family and with her friends. She was the most outspoken about loneliness and the difficulty to belong. Like Layla, she was observant of human behaviour but also ethnicity and race; for her, it was the similarities and acceptance she used to evaluate her cultures. Black Dot was the youngest participant. He was the least engaged in self-exploration or in forming an identity. According to his age, his interest was directed at friendships and interactions with his family and in the positive experiences he had while

visiting Spain. His interest in his culture was formed from these positive experiences and the bonds between him and his family more than active evaluation.

5.1.4 Non-essentialism, tolerance and openness to other cultures

Interestingly, when exploring the children's perceptions of different values, practices, behaviours and cultural norms, the researcher found they mostly held a non-essentialist, pluralistic and multicultural approach. That is to say, through their narratives, the children expressed their freedom to accept or reject their cultural heritage, identify or defy it, or adopt other cultures altogether.

5.2 The Experiences and Stories of Multicultural Children

The children's stories were broad and indicated how they view themselves and their Self in everyday life, in relation to school, peers and friendship groups and their families. Their cultural identity was only a part of these stories. Despite their ages, the researcher was able to identify for most of the children if not a formed identity, an attitude towards one; a disposition. This identity became a part of their identity fabric when it served a purpose and according to their age and development.

The four children who participated in the study were aware of their heritage and could discuss it in varying depths and lengths. However, their experiences, focus and attitude differed between them and within the interactions. They offered everyday stories that indicated how they experienced being who they were in different contexts and with different people.

All children displayed a flexible sense of Self or identity, moving between identification with their families and cultures and distancing themselves from them in interactions and stories, sometimes within the same interview. As an example, the children shifted between expressing a strong emotional attachment to their parents' place of origin to referring to it as an interesting place to visit, like many other locations. They shifted making it explicitly a part of who they are, to considering it from a distance. Gergen's Subjectivity and Multiple Self theory (K. Gergen & Gergen, 1988; K. J. Gergen, 2004) proposes that the Self is not a fixed and stable entity but rather a fluid and dynamic construct that is negotiated and

constructed as it interacts with others. Personal identity development is influenced, according to this theory, by social contexts and relationships.

The children also shared everyday experiences which indicated what were their values, interests, and their general Self. These often corresponded with what they observed or valued about their cultural heritage.

Lastly, the children were most engaged when discussing friendships, relationships and family dynamics. Their understanding of these helped them shape their Self and identity, cultural and otherwise.

5.2.1 Growing up multicultural in a multicultural society

The four participants lived in culturally diverse London local authorities and attended multicultural and diverse schools. Despite environment and education not being the focal point of this research, it was clear from the children's narratives that growing up in such an environment had influenced their development of Self or identity and positive regard towards being 'mixed' or multicultural.

The children had the opportunity to experience diversity in their immediate surroundings and despite most of their friends being 'monocultural' (of the same heritage, either British or migrant), some of them could relate to the experiences of being different but similar to someone else (for example, Looney Tooney and Layla). This fits well with what is known of the benefits of growing up in a diverse multicultural community or environment. These areas are well-researched and can impact creating cross-cultural friendships and peer relations (Bagci et al., 2014; Le et al., 2009), influence the forming of cultural or bicultural identity (Forsman & Hummelstedt-Djedou, 2014; Y. Hong et al., 2016; Joerchel, 2006; Powers, 2001; Thomas, 2018; Woods, 2017; Yampolsky et al., 2013), wellbeing and mental health (Carlo & Padilla-Walker, 2020; Chang & Le, 2010; Habib, 2012; Oh & Kim, 2021; Yampolsky et al., 2013a) and academic performance for ethnic youth (Chang & Le, 2010). Additionally, multicultural experiences decreased the likelihood of cultural hierarchy among bicultural individuals, who were more likely to embrace both of their cultural identities (Y. Hong et al., 2016).

The narratives and comments of the participants indicated they were exposed to a broader discourse, one that enabled them to develop a positive regard for diversity, including theirs, and to accept it. For example, Mateo was able to regard his multiculturalism as a social

currency. For some children, it was clear that the school actively engaged in pluralistic and multicultural education: Looney Tooney, for example, learned about her friends' backgrounds in class. Engaging in multicultural and inclusive education and raising awareness of the different heritages enabled the children to explore and develop their own self-concept and identity, making meaning of it and identifying with it (Forsman & Hummelstedt-Djedou, 2014) because it allows the process of co-construction; including evaluation, accepting and defying different aspects of identity (Krumer-Nevo & Malka, 2012). Additionally, the narratives demonstrated a non-essentialist perspective of ethnicity, in line with the findings of a study with primary school children in London (Woods, 2017). Non-essentialistic concepts of ethnicity refer to the idea that ethnicity is not an inherent characteristic of individuals or groups but rather a social construct influenced by culture, history, language, and experience. A non-essentialist view of ethnicity recognises that people can have multiple and overlapping ethnic identities that are fluid and dynamic. By contrast, essentialist conceptions of ethnicity view ethnic identity as a fixed and biologically determined characteristic. The experiences the children had with multiculturalism and diversity in their community were one of the key factors to develop such a perspective according to Woods (2017). Experiencing diversity enables children to realise that ethnicity is not a fixed or biological characteristic but rather a social construct that is influenced by a variety of factors.

5.2.2 Navigating inner Conflicts and Evaluating Cultures

The everyday stories and narratives of the children highlighted the process of Self and identity formation and the intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts and complications that were involved in it. The process of forming and negotiating identities in general, as well as negotiating multiple cultural identities in particular, could be anxiety-provoking (Y. Hong et al., 2016).

Some children shared narratives that indicated a cultural hierarchy or the prioritisation or devaluation of one's cultural identity over another between their three cultures of reference: British (UK born) and their heritage cultures. There are many reasons for cultural hierarchy in multicultural or bicultural individuals, including having a dissimilarity between one's cultures (Joerchel, 2006; Rivas-Drake et al., 2013; Schwartz et al., 2016) either in traditions, practices or belief systems; or strong acculturation into the dominant culture

(Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005). In addition, adapting or forming a multicultural or bicultural identity or competency depends on many factors, among them exposure to both heritage and majority cultures (Lafromboise et al., 1993; Phinney, 1990; Rivas-Drake et al., 2013); Social networks that provide support, such as family members, peers, and mentors, can help individuals navigate challenges related to living in two cultures (Berry et al., 2006; Demezier, 2021; Lam et al., 2020) and positive psychological self-concept and regard (Rivas-Drake et al., 2014; Safa et al., 2019). The children who shared a cultural hierarchy differed in the investment and effort their parents placed into cultivating a cultural identity and knowledge.

Another prominent conflict the children's narratives highlighted was intrapersonal tension due to religions (and the discourse around them), race, or experiences of dissimilarity. In some cases, growing up with two or more different cultural backgrounds can create a sense of conflict or tension that the person needs to navigate. The tension is more emphasised when the person needs to negotiate conflictual or contradicting belief systems or values. To resolve this tension, multicultural people may be induced to engage in exploration and reflection in which they actively seek to understand and integrate both aspects of their identity (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Lafromboise et al., 1993). A high bicultural tension or conflict is also associated with positive outcomes such as cultural metacognition (a strong skill in cultural perspective-taking) and cognitive flexibility (Y. Hong et al., 2016).

Out of the three children that experienced tension and conflict because of their cultural identity, two were indeed engaging in self-exploration and beginning to reach a resolution.

According to Pescosolido & Rubin's (2000) multiple identities theory, individuals in a multicultural situation may develop multiple identities that could be complementary or contradictory depending on the context. These identities could be compartmentalised so they do not conflict with each other, integrated through reconciling and merging identities, or prioritised one over the other. Having a multicultural family could be considered a multicultural situation in itself (Nishina & Witkow, 2019), therefore, the children constantly formed and managed multiple identities, choosing different strategies depending on the identity and aspect of it as well as the situation. Similar to Woods' (2017) finding, the children had accepted their cultural identity as one part of their personal Self or identity, contributing to the non-essentialist perspective they held.

Most importantly, the narratives revealed that identity construction was not a linear and monolithic process and that their self-representation was not always cohesive and fixed; but rather fluid, flexible and relational. The children engaged, sometimes unconsciously, in the evaluation of all their identities and negotiated which aspect of them to embrace or not according to their belief systems, values, relationships and interests, sometimes challenging and defying external or imposed identities. As defined by Gallagher (2016), individuals have to negotiate obligatory identities socially imposed by society and others such as ethnicity, race, and social status and the voluntary identities they chose such as interests, preferences and values. However, in line with findings from similar research (Moinian, 2009), the participants did not readily and mechanically embraced their 'obligatory' identities but rather evaluated them many times by using their voluntary identities, showing agency and self-validation. Thus, Mateo examined his Italian heritage using his love of sport, Looney Tooney defined her cultural heritage by embracing her interest in cultures that are not part of her heritage culture (Chinese, Japanese), and Layla challenged the expectation that she would identify as Italian or Brazilian and expressed interest in other cultures without preferring her parents'. This agency could be the product of living in a multicultural environment like London or a non-essentialist point of view that comes with it. However, the researcher believes that having a multicultural heritage enabled a movement for the participants that allowed them to negotiate their multiple identities and created a sense of fluidity and flexibility, similar to the idea of subjectivity.

5.2.3 Forming an Identity: Age and development perspectives

The children varied greatly in their stories and responses to the questions the researcher presented and their interactions with her. Beyond all other explanations of personal differences such as intra and interpersonal tension, discourse and external influences and the children's Self, it was also clear that the children varied in age and development. Their age and developmental stage influenced the children's engagement in Self and Identity formation, their cultural knowledge and how they observed behaviours and cultures. It was through observing their everyday stories, playfulness, emotional reactions and the language they used that the researcher could explore these concepts; and not through direct questioning.

5.2.3.1 Culture, Identity Construction: Age and Development perspectives

This research focused on the experiences and understanding of culture in middle childhood or pre-adolescence. During the interviews, it became clear the children did not engage directly in identity construction or give significant thought to their cultural identity. Their experiences were primarily focused on interactions with their friends, parents, and extended family members. Similar to the developmental theories discussed in the introduction, the children's capacity and willingness to reflect on cultural identity as well as their ability to recall, consider, and articulate any cultural observations they made, probably differed according to their age and development at the time of the study. The children were all in middle childhood (ages 7- 12). However, two of them were slightly older (Year 6, ages 10-11) and could be considered at the beginning of adolescence (10- 24), one was in year 5 (9-10), and one was in Year 3 (aged 7). Following the different social identity formation theories considered in the introduction, the younger children, particularly Black Dot, identified with others in their social group and assumed a similar identity; one that guides their everyday behaviour. That is not a solely cultural or social identity, but as Marcia (2012) suggested, a synthesis of skills, values and beliefs. Fitting with Ericksonian perspectives (Batra, 2013; Sokol, 2009), the children found it easier to consider their peer relations and interactions, learning skills or overall industriousness. However, the older children (Mateo and Looney Tooney) became more engaged in considering culture and their relationship with it once the ideas were introduced, and their reflectivity led them to interest in further exploration and even defiance of their parents' cultural guidance.

However, even though the children were not actively, consciously or explicitly engaged in cultural identity formation, they were aware of it and held attitudes towards it, as was clear through their everyday narratives. As Reese et al. (2010) argue, children's identity formation begins in parental narratives and stories in early education and peaks in forming a coherent life story in adolescence, making it a more continuous process than previously suggested. The exception was Black Dot, whose narratives of identity and self-reflection were the most limited, particularly when the researcher attempted to discuss with him the cultural aspects of his everyday life.

The children additionally differed in their ability to consider abstract concepts related to culture. All of them could discuss material and concrete experiences and observations such as scenery, food, enjoyable experiences, interactions with others or external features, fitting with the findings of other research (Moinian, 2009; Rogers et al., 2012). Compared with the literature on bicultural and multicultural adolescents and young adults (Gotlieb et al., 2022; Marks et al., 2011; Phinney, 1990; Rivas-Drake et al., 2013) the children were less able to discuss values, belief systems and observed cultural differences explicitly. This was most pronounced in the youngest participant (Black Dot), who struggled moving from concrete and more simplified cognitive constructs of culture. The question remains if the reason is a lack of cognitive sophistication (Gotlieb et al., 2022; Rogers et al., 2012) or a lack of expression that could be bypassed by using indirect methods of exploration (Alvarez, 2018; Marks et al., 2011; Verkuyten & Pouliasi, 2002).

5.2.3.2 Bilingualism and cultural identity formation

The children differed in how fluent and familiar they were with their heritage language. It was clear that the parents viewed the heritage language as an important symbol and a vehicle to establish a connection with the heritage cultures, similar to previous research (Ellis & Sims, 2022; J. Kim & Lee, 2011; Lam et al., 2020). The children themselves discussed the importance of being able to communicate with their extended families and the sense of greater belonging it provided when visiting the heritage country. It was evident through their narratives that speaking another language gave some of them a sense of pride and being unique. Additionally, the ability to develop a shared understanding with other people strengthens cultural belonging and emotional connection (Dagenais, 2003; Y. Kim, 2023; Lam et al., 2020). This is particularly important when an individual is seeking to establish a sense of belonging to a community he, or she is not in daily or continuous contact with (Dagenais, 2003).

Language is also a socialising mechanism to create a subtle sense of identity and cultural integration (Berry et al., 2006; S. X. Chen et al., 2008; Francis et al., 2009) and strengthen cultural pride. It does so by holding nuanced knowledge or information, sometimes specific to a culture. Speaking in a specific language can provoke values connected to that culture (Alvarez, 2018; Luna et al., 2008; Verkuyten & Pouliasi, 2002) as well as emotional responses. Children who are multilingual may sometimes find it difficult to switch between languages in order to describe words or memories they have learned or retained in a

particular language (Barac et al., 2014; Bialystok, 2009; Lesaux et al., 2007). Possibly, some of the children experienced difficulties in sharing their specific cultural knowledge with the researcher since the interviews were conducted in English. In particular, Black Dot, a young participant fluent in Spanish, and Layla, who was fluent in Italian and Portuguese, the languages in which she communicated with her parents.

5.2.4 The interactions and relationships of multicultural children

5.2.4.1 *Peer relations and friendships*

Living in diverse boroughs and attending diverse schools, the children interacted with peers from diverse heritage, cultures and religions. All the children had some awareness of their friends' cultural heritage; even though some of them could not pinpoint what that cultural heritage was precisely, the children could position themselves in comparison as more or less unique. That did not change the communication or interaction with their friends. The children based their friendships on mutual interests, attachment and appreciation and did not attempt to interact with friends who 'understand' them. So, awareness of peer cultural background served mostly for self-exploration and positioning (Marcia, 2012; Rogers et al., 2012; Tajfel & Turner, 2004). A good example is Layla who insisted that the interactions with her friends and their families were the same as with everyone else, yet displayed a clear awareness in her narratives and drawing of other cultural traditions, heritage and behaviours. Additionally, they viewed their multiculturalism as a tool for creating more friendships and as a cultural currency or capital. Their positive self-appreciation was extended to others; the children discussed being interested in playing and interacting with people from different cultures and places. Their narratives are compatible with the findings of quantitative research on peer relationships of bicultural children (Brown et al., 2013; Rutland et al., 2012) and on cross-cultural friendships in London (Bagci et al., 2014).

As previously discussed, this might result from their multicultural school and upbringing, which contributed to developing non-essentialist viewpoints (Woods, 2017) Possibly, multicultural or 'mixed' children who held a non-essentialist and shifting identity themselves found it easier to accept non-essentialism in others. Furthermore, their interest in others and the fact they shift between cultures, even unconsciously, helped them navigate relationships successfully (Nishina & Witkow, 2019).

5.2.4.2 Family Dynamics, peer relations and Forming a Sense of Belonging and Identity

The children's narratives about their relationships and interactions with others demonstrated their Self-concepts and how they viewed themselves, including their sense of cultural belonging. The three older children, in particular, were able to examine and share the family dynamics between their parents and their extended family; and between their family and themselves. These narratives shared different levels and experiences of belonging. Hence, while all the children expressed a sense of connection with their heritage cultures, their narratives revealed a shift in identity in different relationships, interactions and contexts, fitting with flexible constructionist and relational identity theories (K. J. Gergen, 2004, 2015; Mitchell, 1993; Wertsch, 1985).

In Mateo's stories, he had a positive regard for 'being Italian' and a close relationship with his family and cousins. It was clear, however, that although he knows how to behave in the Italian culture, he was still 'not himself', contributing to the idea that his desire to adopt his father and family's heritage was related to his relationships with them, but that he may not have fully assimilated this identity into his own. A further example is Layla, whose narratives suggested more positive relationships with her Brazilian family, as well as a stronger connection and belonging to her Brazilian heritage. This was implied by her warm tones and more elaborate descriptions of the culture. Both examples demonstrate how family dynamics and relationships influence a child's sense of belonging to a culture and identity.

5.2.5 Summary

In general, the narratives of experiences of multicultural children were varied but overall positive. They were proud of their diverse heritage and shared a connection to their parents' cultures. At the same time, their stories showed that belonging was contextual and their experiences of moving within or between their cultures were not always 'smooth', and the children sometimes felt tense or conscious when they were with their parents' heritage culture. The children also differed in their cultural knowledge and engagement, possibly related to their parent's guidance and involvement.

Furthermore, the children's family dynamics and interactions with peers were impacting their Self and cultural identity but were also impacted by them. The narratives around peer relations demonstrated the benefits multicultural children had in growing up in a

multicultural environment for their confidence and positive self-perception, as well as a means to create a more flexible and less rigid multicultural identity. On the other hand, the narratives also revealed an open and tolerant perspective for diversity, suggesting a non-essentialistic point of view.

The children demonstrated how their stories and narratives created their Self and cultural identity. No one narrative was identical to another; however, there were some common themes. In general, most of the children's narratives implied an inner tension or conflict between their multiple identities, they compared themselves or showed awareness of the diversity of people around them and used it to form their own identities and used their own interests and belief systems to actively evaluate their cultures instead of mechanically accepting them. Cultural identities were only one part of their Self, who discussed many other experiences and components such as the industry in school, friendships, family dynamics and more.

5.3 Critiques and Reflections

5.3.1 Methodology and Analysis

5.3.1.1 The interview process as Part of identity formation

The interviews, through the interactions within them, served to highlight and impact the identity formation of the children. All four children are in their middle childhood or pre-adolescence stage, meaning they do not yet actively engage in self-reflection and building their self-concepts or identities. Accordingly, they have not yet actively formed their cultural identity. Moreover, they have not fully formed their relationship with their cultural heritage (or parental heritage). The interviews created for the children a laminal, 'in-between' space, not here nor there, where they could experience themselves as 'British' but also as part of their heritage culture, or not at all. This space could be seen as a transitional space in which the children can imagine and play with their futures and identities (Hollway, 2011; Winnicott, 1971). In playfully imagining their relationship with their culture, the children could imagine their future as e.g. British, Italian, both or neither; evaluate these futures; and imagine the preferred one. The children could play with the emotional experience of such images.

The researcher used the emotional experience within the interaction to interpret the children's attitudes towards their imaginative or non-imaginative identity. (Hollway, 2011).

Thus, she could use her reflections on the mutual feelings of discomfort in Layla's interviews and tension in the interactions with her to make an interpretation of Layla's view of having a multicultural identity as conflictual; or Mateo's tension when discussing feeling 'cool' about being multicultural.

5.3.1.1.1 The location of the interview and the interview process

Whenever possible, interviews were conducted at home and at school, as discussed in the methodology chapter. In two cases, only home interviews were conducted with the children. While apprehensive at first, the researcher doesn't believe that interviewing children at home differs significantly from interviewing them at school regarding the content or experiences they shared about school and home cultures. Although the same play-based materials and topics were introduced, there were clear differences in their engagement with the interview process, especially among the children who were interviewed in school and at home.

It was apparent that the children were more apprehensive and more composed at school even though they had prepared for the interview. The setting was more structured, and the interviews took place next to a desk. In general, the children were less likely to stray from the discussed topic. In particular, the structured setting made it easier for BD to concentrate. At home, the researcher experienced a shift in power as she became a guest, and the children invited her into their world. As expected, the children were more playful and relaxed at home, including those interviewed for the first time. As a result, despite the children expressing similar ideas and exploring similar themes, their interaction, tone of voice, and way of expressing their narratives differed. Unlike in school environments, the children didn't seem to be as focused on the topic discussed and instead were more interested in talking about their everyday lives (for example, showing me their games or dresses). In addition, it was evident that the children found comfort and confidence in their parents, as was observed before and after the interviews, as well as during them in some cases. One of the interviewees, BD, requested assistance from his mother in answering some questions.

5.3.1.2 Analysis of the narratives

It became apparent during the literature review that there is a lack of studies and literature concerning children and youth with multicultural backgrounds. Furthermore, it is evident that most of the studies were quantitative in nature and dealt with issues related to the effects of identity on the child's psychological state and the relationship between the child and the environment. Despite this, little is known about the experiences of these children. This includes how they make sense of their experiences, shape their identities, and relate to the environment.

While interviewing and analysing data, it became evident that the information obtained from the field sometimes differed from the researcher's preconceived notions. It was richer than expected and led to different directions of thought at times. Therefore, while the research design was narrative, the process of analysis was largely inductive. Furthermore, the children's narratives demonstrated their unique approach to identity and Self formation; a process that can be understood and explained from different theoretical perspectives. The children's experiences and the process of identity formation were more complex than initially considered. Hence, the researcher acknowledges that Grounded Theory would also have been an appropriate approach as one that posits that theory emerges from data rather than being imposed upon it.

5.3.1.3 Using Small Stories Analysis

The use of small stories (Bamberg, 2006; Forsman & Hummelstedt-Djedou, 2014; Georgakopoulou, 2006; Riessman, 2008) as a basis to interview, analyse and interpretation of the children's identities and experiences was valuable to the meaning-making process. The children were too young to explicitly discuss their cultures and experiences related to them, but their everyday comments and small stories conveyed their thoughts and attitudes, as well as indicating how they were shaping their identities, cultural or otherwise. They also revealed external discourses and narratives that might have been internalised and retold via the children's narratives: diversity as positivity, non-religion as freedom, awareness of being a part of a religious minority, approaches towards external features (phenotype, hair colour) etc. Additionally, the unstructured interview process enabled the researcher to place more

emphasis on the context, interaction and co-construction between her and the children and allow scaffolding (Squire et al., 2019).

5.3.1.4 Analysing Imagery and using play-based Interviewing

The researcher used the play-based material, including small world items, Dixit (imagination) cards and the drawings the children produced not only as tools for engagement with the children but as a means of expression of ideas, values and narratives (Alvarez, 2018; Kearns, 2014; Koller & San Juan, 2015). There were times when the researcher used play-based materials and imaginary storytelling to interpret the emotional state of the child, the way in which he or she approached a certain construct, or the way in which they viewed an identity construct. Additionally, examining the drawings and the children's actions and responses regarding the play materials helped the researcher understand how they formed their Self-construct and how it is shaped. For example, Layla's drawing of her and her friends helped the researcher recognise the child's ambivalence about her cultural identity and her understanding of culture as 'different' and distinct practices, beliefs and behaviours. Layla compartmentalised herself and her friends, creating a barrier between herself and her 'English' friend who was learning and getting ready for a party from her culturally diverse friend who was praying. Considering this drawing with the rest of the narratives and other imagery, tone of voice and more, the researcher felt that was an indication of Layla's inner tension and discomfort with being different. Another example was Looney Tooney who chose to represent her experience of cultural hierarchy as a card of an old woman balancing a carrying pole while her shadow is of a young tall woman, explaining she is "carrying a weight" because she had "so many questions in each bucket" but at the same time "happy and not really bothered about it" (Interview 2).

Using this approach also enabled the children to represent their ideas and share them using tangible items. For example, Layla created the beach, a positive experience from Italy, and Carnival flags to represent her cultural knowledge and positive concrete experiences, which she found difficult to do with words, and Mateo could discuss his friendships by using small-world Duplo people.

Additionally, the items helped all the children play with their experiences and use their imaginations to recreate or rephrase their thoughts and ideas playfully and creatively; and

engage in storytelling. The children were most engaged with the story dice and were generally able to use them to represent their lives and discuss their interests.

The exception was Black Dot, the youngest participant, who was too stimulated by the toys and found it difficult to redirect his attention from their 'playful' original function to follow the researcher's instructions.

Lastly, introducing the play materials defused some of the children's apprehension, particularly in the school-setting interview. Looney Tooney for example, shared her confusion and worry when she first met the researcher and sat with her, which was also visible in the videoed' facial expressions and tone of voice. However, when the researcher introduced the play materials, her reactions changed and she became more enthusiastic, playful and engaged. This suggests that play, which is the natural and instinctive act of childhood, has the potential to dissolve and change a possibly threatening or stressful setting.

5.3.1.5 Analysing emotional data: Tone of Voice and facial expressions

The researcher's approach to the analysis of the small stories placed emphasis beyond the written transcription and on contextual and textual meanings. This meant that the researcher took into account the personal and social contexts in which the stories were created, as well as their underlying meanings, in order to gain a better understanding of the stories and their implications. Using the videos of the interviews, the researcher was able to observe body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice as well as relationships that were created between the interviewer and interviewee. These provided a rich source of data in addition to the transcripts and supplemented their content and language. There were some cases where the tone of voice and facial expressions failed to match the words spoken, resulting in a confused or contradictory story; in other cases, they emphasised what was said; highlighting the small story as an interesting event worth noting in more detail.

In addition, by incorporating this data into the analysis, the researcher could triangulate imagery and play-based information. Interpreting the images would not be rigorous or profound without incorporating expressive information such as pauses, confidence, and other emotional data. In picking an image, for example, the child's hesitations, assurances,

and reflectiveness demonstrated both his or her emotional response to the question as well as the thoughts and feelings it evoked.

Lastly, including this data supported the researcher in examining the interaction, relationship and co-construction within the interviews; and in reflexivity afterwards. The researcher placed a strong emphasis in her analysis and reflexivity on the relational aspects within the interactions and on the space that was created or failed to form.

5.3.2 Challenges and Limitations

Exploring cultural concepts and identities with younger children was a challenge. They indeed were less observant of cultural differences or belief systems and were less confident in examining their cultures. Additionally, the children did not share a coherent and cohesive life narrative. However, by using a small stories analysis and considering everyday stories and language, inner conflicts the children shared and examining in what ways they are trying to resolve them, it became evident the children did hold what could be the roots of cultural identity: experiences, beliefs and constructs about their multiculturalism.

Additionally, some interesting mechanisms of cultural identity formation were revealed, such as the importance of relationships, language, evaluation and parental engagement. Despite the above, it is possible that the complexity of concepts discussed would be more appropriate to the older age range of ages 10 and above (Year 5- Year 6).

It is possible that the children who participated in this research were less culturally aware and knowledgeable than children who are more 'immersed' in a cultural community. Future researchers who wish to explore multicultural or bicultural children may want to work with children who are also part of a community, for example, attending heritage schooling or community events.

A further issue that the researcher encountered was dealing with accidentally collected information outside of the interviews, such as parents' comments. Some of this data corresponded with the children's narratives; others contradicted them. In both cases, it would have impacted or enhanced the interpretation of the narratives and the analysis. However, any information gathered outside of the interview sessions (apart from factual description of parental background) was not integrated into the final analysis of the narratives, as it was not obtained directly from the children.

Starting the research, the researcher's plan was to represent the diversity of the population in the local authority where she was placed. During the recruitment and data collection, there was a concern that the participant group was not more diverse. On reflection, however, it became apparent that this was not an important factor in understanding the experiences of multicultural children. In terms of Self and identity, each of the children presented a highly individualised account of their unique experience. The findings reflect the process of Self and identity formation when living with more than one culture.

Lastly, the researcher faced some technical issues in the information-gathering process and small parts of the data was lost. In those cases (Mateo's first interview and Layla's second interview), the researcher took notes of key information, themes or remarks mentioned by the children in her words and noted it appropriately on the transcripts. This information was used only if it emphasised stories or comments already mentioned.

5.3.2.1 Reflections on Reflexivity and the Position of the Researcher

While conducting the research, the researcher was hyper-aware of her own professional and personal constructs relating to culture and the possible influences on the participants and their parents.

The researcher is non-British, and English is her additional language. These characteristics, she believes, had an influence on the interaction with the participants and on the co-construction of the stories (Bamberg, 2006; Billington & Todd, 2012; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Hiles et al., 2017; Kearns, 2014; Rogers et al., 2012; Squire et al., 2014), as well as the Self or identity the children might have constructed (Fairfield, 2001; K. Gergen & Gergen, 1988).

Matching an interviewer's ethnicity or race and language to the interviewee, when possible, is recommended practice in quantitative (Y. Y. Hong et al., 2000; Rogers et al., 2012; Verkuyten & Pouliasi, 2002) and in qualitative research (J. Kim & Lee, 2011; Moinian, 2009). Some researchers believe it creates more ethical research (Dein, 2006). A match between an interviewer and an interviewee could create a shared understanding and trust between them.

Whenever working with children who are culturally mixed, a perfect match between interviewer and interviewee is not feasible. It is possible, however, that the researcher's own diverse background played a role in the construction of identity. As a result, the diverse researcher may have been able to simultaneously highlight the children's Britishness by her 'otherness' and at the same time highlight their diversity. The researcher was well aware of

her ethnic diversity and used it during the interviews to facilitate the children's understanding of cultural norms and codes. That may have changed the interactions between her and the children and the identity the children presented. The research's epistemological assumptions, however, hold that regardless of the reality of cultural experiences, any identity presented to the researcher is contextual, relational, and co-constructed; children would have responded to the researcher's identity regardless of how it was presented. In this respect, it is impossible for the researcher and participant to reach complete objectivity.

The researcher's language diversity also impacted the research and the interactions with the children. As discussed before, language is also a cultural symbol, which the researcher and the participants did not fully share. On some occasions and particularly with Black Dot who was seven, the combination of the researcher's language, the abstract concepts being discussed and the children's ages created an additional gap and communication difficulty. The use of drawings and toys helped bridge the language gap that sometimes existed, especially with the younger participant. That language gap, however, served as a point of identification between the researcher and the participants, as she could reflexively consider their experience when they visit their 'heritage' country and their insider-outsider perspective. Having a researcher who has an accent might also create a sense of identification with her (Putjata, 2017).

Furthermore, the researcher was aware that her own diversity might have influenced her approach to the data and its analysis. She is aware of her own position, values and belief systems regarding diversity, inclusion, and acculturation; as well as her evaluation of her culture in comparison to the majority culture she experiences. Again, the researcher's epistemological position sits well with this contextual, subjective perception. In order to increase the objectivity of her analysis (as far as possible), the researcher kept notes of her reflections, consulted about her analysis with her academic supervisor and considered her interpretations in light of all the data gathered.

Lastly, the researcher can honestly reflect on the lessons she learned from the children on their non-essentialist, 'culture-blind' perspective, which demonstrated how culture could be seen as a social construct, which led her to explore her own assumptions.

5.4 Conclusion and Next Steps

This research focused on the experiences of multicultural children aged 7-11 (Year 3, Year 5, Year 6) living in London. The research attempted to explore how being multicultural influenced their Self constructions, identities and interactions.

Most of the research on similar topics and with a similar population was done quantitatively with young adolescents or older individuals when children and young people start to engage actively in identity formation in general and cultural identity in particular, and when the cognitive skills facilitate considering abstract concepts. Research on multicultural children (children with dual or more heritage) that does not focus on ethnic minorities is rare. As previously discussed, Grounded Theory might be an appropriate approach and method for future research.

The children's narratives revealed the importance and impact of parental views and engagement in cultural guidance and teaching. Future research might want to consider both the children's and their parents' narratives to explore further what helps children and young people create a multicultural identity and competence; how parental narrative and discourses are reflected in children's narratives; and to what extent important relationships can influence cultural experiences. Furthermore, it would be interesting to explore the impact of multicultural education in primary schools focused on expanding the identities and self-esteem of children of diverse or multicultural backgrounds, particularly as research in the area of biculturalism in the UK is rare.

A fascinating aspect of the study was the openness, tolerance, and fluidity with which the children dealt with their identities and cultures. It remains to be seen whether a non-essentialist and accepting attitude of multicultural children changes in older ages when one's identity becomes more rigid and fixed or whether being bi- or multicultural can protect a more flexible identity and an accepting attitude when one is bi- or multicultural. This too can be an appropriate direction for exploration.

5.4.1 Implications to Educational Psychology Practice

Understanding the experiences of multicultural children has many implications and benefits for educational psychologists' practice. Despite being of a growing population, multicultural

children are less researched in psychological practice in general and educational psychology in particular than children of a racial or ethnic minority. This research suggests multicultural children should be considered from a developmental and mental health standpoint, both in practice and research.

As previously discussed, this population faces unique challenges, such as multiple reference options, multiple identities and multiple options for belonging. During adolescence, when children actively form their identities, these issues may become more challenging. Educating educational psychologists about these specific challenges will assist them in supporting multicultural children and informing educational staff who work with them. Understanding that such inner tension or conflict is often inherent in the experience of these children and can also help in addressing and reframing perceptions.

As suggested by the children's narratives, growing up in a multicultural environment and interacting with diverse peers had a positive impact on their identity, confidence and sense of Self. Despite not being the focus of this study, increasing awareness of these benefits for diverse children in middle childhood and pre-adolescence, as well as possibly in adolescence, can improve the health and well-being of these children. Additionally, it will create a more inclusive environment that values diversity as a strength and a positive part of the child's Self. This is crucial because as with multiracial children, multicultural children will be positioned by others in the future; and the discourse around them impacts how they experience and build their identities.

Implications for EP practice could be drawn from some of the approaches used to conduct this research, including working in more than one setting, the value of play, and the therapeutic and safe space that was created for the children and facilitated identity and cultural exploration. Although the generalisation of qualitative research should be done carefully, this study confirms quantitative studies' findings about the benefits of providing a space for young multicultural children to explore their experiences, relationships, and identities. On the basis of this study, the researcher would like to suggest that children and young people should be given the opportunity to explore their identity and self. As discussed in section 5.3.1.1, the researcher found that two of the four participants who exhibited some inner tension benefited from the self-reflection process and showed an interest in and willingness to consider their identities and lives. They engaged in active

explorations of their identities as a result of the interviews. Although all of the children were able to 'label' and name their cultures well, they were able to delve deeper into what these meant to them than they had previously been able to. This was enabled by creating a safe space for them, guided, modelled and scaffolded by an empathetic and encouraging adult. As discussed throughout this research, cultural identity and self-formation occur naturally within pre-adolescent and adolescent stages; however, creating a secure and safe environment to examine one's identity is crucial for multicultural and other culturally diverse children and youth. Creating a safe space allows children to explore and express their identity as both a member of the majority culture and a member of the minority culture. It also allows them to gain a sense of belonging and acceptance of both cultures, which can help to reduce feelings of isolation and exclusion. It is possible for children to develop cultural competence by discussing their cultures, including values, beliefs, traditions, places, etc., in such a space. Though focused on the positive aspects of having a diverse identity, it should also acknowledge difficulties such as confusion, internal conflicts, and a lack of knowledge and belonging.

Educational Psychologists could offer or support the systems around the children in offering such a space. They could also support the education system in building space for Self and identity exploration within the curriculum, especially during adolescence. When children can evaluate, accept, defy, and contextualise their identities, they will be able to accept the multiple components of their Selves. This will help them be able to place them in context and integrate them into their Selves while remaining non-essentialist and inclusive.

Due to the exploratory nature of this research, it's difficult to find a well-established framework to guide conversations about culture and identity. The researcher felt that the Social Graces framework, for example, moves the conversation towards discussing oppression and privilege and limits the scope of identity. As observed in this research, children created their cultural identities based on their values and interests which are an important part of the Self. A framework more suited, therefore, will help the child consider their cultural heritage, knowledge, their family's cultural traditions as well as other aspects of the Self, and consider any positives and tensions. She also feels an appropriate framework will be such that will allow the children to consider movement and change in any

aspect of their identity. A similar research approach from a grounded theory perspective may in the future help identify (or create) such a framework.

The researcher would also like to emphasise the power of introducing play-based approaches and materials into the EP practice to gather children's and young people's views; as an intervention tool and to create a space for self-exploration. In this research, play-based materials were used to create this space and facilitate discussions with middle childhood (pre-adolescent) children. Play could be a useful tool that can be used by Educational Psychologists and education settings to introduce topics such as identity and culture even at earlier ages (Sin Wai et al., 2020; Yahya & Wood, 2017), as well as facilitate its exploration. However, play is more than an educational tool. Play materials can support the child in expressing thoughts, feelings and ideas he cannot express verbally or directly (Heads & Jopling, 2019; Holmes, 2019; Koller & San Juan, 2015); and as objects, the child can project their inner world (Sunderland, 2017; Winnicott, 1971). Within the play, lives the potential or transitional space where children can fantasise and imagine new possible realities, present and future. Finally, as mentioned before, the play proved to be a helpful method in easing the initial anxiety of children when faced with an unfamiliar and confusing situation - a common occurrence during their first meeting with an educational psychologist.

Based on the research, it was suggested that working with children within their home systems could have benefits. Even though there were some challenges, the children responded positively to working at home. The researcher noticed that the power dynamic shifted during interactions and the children felt proud to be in their own space. They also drew comfort and support from being close to their parents. Furthermore, working from home gave the researcher the opportunity to observe children interacting in a more relaxed and unguarded manner.

6 References

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7 Appendix

Appendix A Articles- evaluation and critique

No	Article name and Journal	Authors And year	aim/ research question	sample	methodology/ design	results/ findings and possible impact	point of view	phenomenon focus	consideration of other explanations/ critical thought	reflexivity	Fitting with this research? (descriptions used etc)
1	Acculturation strategies of multicultural family adolescents in South Korea: Marginalization, separation, assimilation, and integration; 2021 International Journal of Intercultural Relations	Changmin Yoo	Determining whether the life satisfaction of multicultural family adolescents differs by acculturation strategy, as well as which factors determine acculturation strategies. Research Question 1: How acculturation strategies affect multicultural adolescents' life satisfaction. What factors (individual predictors: gender, acculturation stress, national identity, self-esteem, resilience; parental predictors: supervision, neglect, parental acculturation stress, parent self-esteem; and social support predictors: family support, friend support, teacher support, and neighbour support) affect multicultural adolescents' acculturation strategies?	National data (randomised) of multicultural/ interethnic/ mixed families: 1,625 multicultural families with children enrolled in the fourth grade of elementary school in South Korea.	Quantitative	Korean multicultural family adolescents can also apply the bi-dimensional (integration) acculturation strategies. Acculturation strategy correlated with life satisfaction, when intergenerational (biculturality) was related to the most life satisfaction. Acculturation strategies are also predicted by resilience, national identity, parental neglect, parental acculturative stress, friend support, family support, and teacher support.	Survey filled from the point of view of the children.	High-multicultural children with race controlled (Asian). Looked into how acculturation (or assuming two cultures) connects to life satisfaction.	More critical and broader psychological thought could have been applied to explain some of the differences seen-moderate. (gender differences)	acknowledgement of funding, discussion around Korea's current approach that explains some of the difficulties and also results.	There are no clear definitions except for acculturation strategies (the main focus) but from the measurement, it is clear some thought has been given to culture, heritage and nationality specifically rather than phenotype or 'origin'

2	British Sikhs in complementary schooling: the role of heritage language proficiency and 'culture learning' in ethnic identity and bicultural adaptation; 2020 Language and Education	Lam, V. L., Chaudry, F. R., Pinder, M., & Sura, T	Understanding what were the primary motivations of British Sikh pupils of Panjabi and their parents and teachers for learning heritage languages, and their experiences of completing secondary schooling in terms of cultural participation, identity maintenance, and perceived challenges.	74 children aged 6-15, all except 8 were UK born; and their parents. Of these 14 parents took part in further sessions. Clear description of generation status, including the birthplace	mixed-methods-questionnaires that were statistically analysed followed by thematic analysis.	The children views learning their heritage language as cultural capital, a communication method with their families and as a benefit. Both children and parents experienced the school as opportunity to engage with the heritage culture and become bicultural.	high-children and carers perspectives of heritage language schools	Moderate-main focus is heritage language and complementary schools, but there is occupation with culture and how HL is used as pathway for cultural engagement.	High- there are no consideration or ideas that the researchers haven't explored or acknowledged regarding the findings. However, using questionnaires subjected the research into issues of literacy and writing proficiency- were all the children able to discuss and report their perspectives well enough, as in direct speech?	low- There is no reflexivity although it seems that the researchers might have a connection to the community (speak the language)	Clear definitions were used that made it clear the focus is on an ethnic minority with culture specific to it (and that this is the focus).
3	Children's psychological adjustment in dual- and single-ethnic families: Coregulation, socialization values, and emotion regulation in a 7-year follow-up study	Lundén, M., Punamäki, R. L., & Silvén, M	It examines the differences between dual-ethnic and single-ethnic families in terms of psychological adjustment and its correlates among Finnish-Russian and Finnish families. The researchers hypothesised parents from different cultures will have different parenting styles.	48 Finnish-Russian and Finnish families	Qualitative longitudinal (7 years). Observations on parent-child interactions at the age of six months followed by parental reports on mental health when the children were 4 and 7.	Mixed children had more emotional problems at age 4 than monocultural children, but this difference disappeared by age 7. Hierarchical and authoritarian values correlated with culture but did not affect children's adjustment. Mixed and monocultural families had similar levels of balanced early coregulation.	Only parents'.	High- study looked at how culture might impact the child-rearing and development of dual ethnic families- the main focus is cultural practices and values.	moderate/ low. They could have been more critical and thoughtful when they explained the lack of support and acknowledge issues in the hypotheses methodology and design. Moderate- Observation on the first time and only parent's reports in the second and third limits the research; also there was no consideration of the influence of a mixed family- so the hypotheses did not completely match the methodology (paternal mediation, for example,	There was acknowledgment but no reflexivity	Despite some limitations, this research is very relevant to my research in sampling and theoretical considerations. Theory and definitions were considered and explained well.

									child rearing gaps and conflicts or lack of, etc)		
4	<p>Biculturalism among Older Children Cultural Frame Switching, Attributions, Self-Identification, and Attitudes; 2002</p> <p>Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology</p>	<p>MAYKEL VERKUYTEN KATERINA POULIASI</p>	<p>Biculturalism is examined at the level of psychological processes: whether culture shifts the interpretation of youth (between collectivist and individualistic cultures); as well as possible gender differences</p>	<p>Youth aged 9-12 years; 51 dutch, 58 greek and 74 greek-dutch (minority), some of them 'mixed'</p>	<p>Quantitative</p>	<p>Exposure to culture activates different attributiond, identifications, and cultural attitudes among biculturals (identity and behaviour are contextual).</p> <p>Impact was considered as understanding how culture influences people's lives but does not go into further considerations</p>	<p>Children</p>	<p>bicultural cognitive frame switching</p>	<p>High- There was no thought given to emotional aspects of the phenomenon, or to the interpersonal or situational component but I thought overall they explained it very well. I wonder if there was a difference between the 'mixed' and other in the bicultural group. Gender differences.</p> <p>very clear and concise explanations of hypotheses and how they were measured.</p> <p>They matched the ethnicity of the experimenter to the 'condition'.</p>	<p>No reflexivity or ethnical considerations mentioned.</p>	<p>High appropriate choice of population compared to the definition, with a good rationale.</p>

5	Fostering Bicultural Skills among East Asian American Youth: An Initial Investigation of the East West Connection Program; 2020 Journal of Asia Pacific Counseling	Christopher W. Cheung, Jacqueline M. Swank	Assessing an intervention dedicated at promoting bicultural skill development; and exploring whether engaging in identity formation creates higher bicultural competence that facilitate wellbeing and positive family dynamics.	East Asian American 12 and 18 years old who were 1.5- or second-generation immigrants. Sample of children from 3 EA ethnic churches	Quantitative - (quasy experimental) limitations acknowledged	Positive correlation between bicultural competence and identity. Positive correlation between bicultural identity and self reported well being. The intervention did not significantly enhanced biculturalism.	Children	Bicultural competence - Creating cultural integration of two cultures to help create a synthesized self identity- the study attempted to explore a specific intervention . The study does not consider or compare the two cultures with one another or any sort of switching.	Some consideration was given but they ignored: the visibility factor in that specific ethnicity, compared to the main culture; they did not address the conflict and different values/ behaviours enough, or how the integration might occur.	No	High- sample was chosen well and it shows though was given to the definitions used. I do questions the lack of distinctions between Asian in general.
6	Protective Effect of Biculturalism for Health Amongst Minority Youth: The Case of Pacific Islander Migrant Youths in Hawai'i; 2019 British Journal of Social Work	Hye-ryeon Lee ¹ , Hye Eun Lee ^{2,*} , Kevin Cassel ³ , Megan Inada Hagiwara ³ and Lilnabeth P. Somera ⁴	This study investigates the mechanisms by which biculturalism impacts various health outcomes amongst youth migrants to Hawai'i who are from the US-Affiliated Pacific Islands jurisdictions.	284 males and females aged 12-19 years. purposive sampling	moderate- I am not sure they were exhausting bicultural identity or competence, just awareness, and same for self esteem	Biculturalism indirectly led to increased self-esteem, which in turn directly influenced attitudes about healthy eating, body satisfaction and perceived well-being.	Children	health behaviours and attitudes as mediated by bicultural identity and self esteem.	It lacks explanations of the impact of the close knit community ages are older, and there was no rationale in choosing participants other than their heritage (not clear how long have they been living in the US, for example). The research does not explain how they defined the biculturality (is it only based on immigration status)? Still, it shows positive impact of feeling belonging.	None	Good observations as to the differences within the 'bigger' group of Pacific Islanders. Some definitions are chosen and used well. This study does not explain competence, the formation of the self and development in light of culture, but only focuses on bicultural identity

7	<p>“What’s Your Name?”: Names, Naming Practices, and Contextualized Selves of Young Korean American Children; 2011</p> <p><i>Journal of Research in Childhood Education</i></p>	Jinhee Kim, Kyunghwa Lee	Examining how young Korean American children’s developing sense of self is contextualized through naming practices.	<p>3-4 year old Korean-American and their guardians, in a complementary preschool.</p> <p>Purposeful and criterion sampling</p> <p>Rated Moderate- I wish there were better descriptions of mixed heritage</p>	<p>Qualitative- videos of the children during preschool, interviews with the guardians and interviews with some of the educational team.</p> <p>Research was done over 9 months with follow up interviews</p>	<p>Results yielded a richness of information.</p> <p>The children used their Korean and English names contextually to represent the culture they interact with; and flexibly.</p> <p>Naming as reflecting guardians’ perspectives towards cultural identity.</p> <p>Children as negotiating</p>	Children’s, care givers and teachers at a complementary school	culture as it is implemented in naming practices.	There should have been clearer explanation of mixed heritage and mixed cultural background, which can shed a lot of light on the psychological development and also on the confusion of some the children. Also, questions regarding the family and SES factors were not discussed and they could shed light on different considerations (divorce?)	Low- the researchers did not offer their position or their reflexivity.	The researchers outlined the rationale behind their sample and hypothesis; their definitions and theory behind culture is appropriate for the current study.
8	<p>A Qualitative Study of Multicultural Identities: Three Cases of London’s Inner-City Children; 2006</p> <p>Forum: Qualitative Social Research</p>	Amrei C. Joerchel	Exploring how do multicultural primary children growing up in London and attending a multicultural junior school make sense of who they are and position themselves in relation to their cultures (through the Dialogical Self perspective)	<p>This was the most appropriate sample re multicultural and age.</p> <p>Sample was of three children (girls) from a multicultural junior school in central London.</p>	<p>Qualitative, case studies.</p> <p>Methodology- structured interviews with the children including vignettes, teachers, and parents.</p> <p>The deep look helps explore the questions of identity formation in</p>	<p>Children presented flexible and contextual identities (knew when to act as English and when to act differently).</p> <p>The girls’ flexible and dynamic identities enabled them to feel belonging to different cultures.</p> <p>The teachers and parents’</p>	Children, parents, teachers	multicultural identity	The environment was multicultural but the impact of interacting with it was not explored. Also, there are questions about whether SES and class was addressed as this seems to be a small class (independent school?). There is no counter-explanation that takes European, racial or religious component into consideration. The researcher left little room to question what makes them distinct (is nationality enough?)	moderate- There is some reflexivity- the researcher acknowledged she worked at the school before, but no discussion of her position compared with the research and the	The researcher outlined her theoretical considerations, however there was not a lot of consideration into what would be the influence of culture.

				Sample of convenience- the researcher was a teacher at the school.	childhood. In depth	shared discourses that facilitated multicultural identity and acceptance of diversity.			Some criticality is lacking.	reason for it.	
9	Blurring of colour lines? Ethnoracially mixed youth in Spain navigating identity; 2021 Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies	Dan Rodríguez-García a , Miguel Solana b , Anna Ortiz b and Beatriz Ballestín	Analyzing the narratives of multiracial and multiethnic descendants from diverse ethnoracial backgrounds in Catalonia, including issues of identity, sense of belonging, and discrimination. Research questions have included how individuals of mixed descent identify themselves ethnically, and how do others identify them ethnically. What is the impact of the discrepancy on the individual's sense of belonging if there is a discrepancy? Comparing mixed individuals with descendants of two immigrant parents of the same origin, do	Ages 14-29, 124 Spanish born youth from diverse ancestry. 92 part Spanish part foreign born, 19- presents born in different countries. 13- both parents born in the same foreign country- control group	high-qualitative and semi-structured interviews, taken between 2014- 2018	Experiences varied by ancestry, phenotype, religion, language, gender, class, and location. Individuals whose experiences were mostly positive and used their identity as social capital. were mostly characterised by similarity to the majority group or belonging to a desirable (western) heritage. On the other hand, mixed individuals whose	the YP	multiracially , with greater focus on racial and religion considerations, and less on the cultural component.	Consideration is given to the age range. In this case race got the most focal point. More room could be given to the agency or negotiation of identity by the Young People.	There was no reflexivity although this is qualitative study. However, they provided some context into the history, politics, and society in Spain and Catalonia.	The researchers defined the constructs they used well, especially the sample of participants.

			mixed individuals experience more social inclusion, less racial discrimination, and less social othering?			ethnoracial heritage included a negatively marginalised group experienced more degree of stigmatisation, racism, and discrimination, including adverse identity mismatch.					
10	'I'm just me!' Children talking beyond ethnic and religious identities, 2009, Childhood	Farzaneh Moinian	The study aims to explore how children born and raised in Sweden with immigrant parents alter their identities, explore how children with Iranian-born parents resist, accept, negotiate, or rearrange contextual cultural norms that organise their identities, and examine how children construct their identities through their speech and self-presentations.	Five children between the ages of 12 and 16, all of whom were born in Sweden to Iranian parents that immigrated in the 1980's. Recruitment was done through Snowballing.	Qualitative-Anthropological research. Semi-structured interviews. The study was rigorous and long- 2 interviews within 1.5 years; attending cultural events.	The Children appreciated global youth culture and had fluid preferences and lifestyles. They challenged the idea of being only "Iranian" or "Swedish.", creating their own hybrid identities, rejecting fixed categories and identities. Their identities were influenced by their family's socioeconomic status, gender, and ethnicity, and were blended by all cultures they experienced.	The study explored the young people's perspectives.	hybrid, shifting and multiple identity	Sometimes the interpretations did not consider psychological perspectives to statements and actions of the young people; probably because the researcher field was anthropology.	The researcher was reflexive about sharing a history (immigration); language (Farsi) and identity with the participants and their parents.	The researcher defined all the concepts and laid out the theoretical considerations well.

						<p>They held critical discourses.</p> <p>The impact of the results was by promoting the voice of the child as well as demonstrating the agency and power young people can have in constructing identity.</p>					
11	Competence matters! Understanding biculturalism in ethnically diverse adolescents.	Benbow Adam Rutland	Explore the mediated role of bicultural competence on adaptation and cultural knowledge.	227 bicultural femals ages 11-17, who lived ib the UK btween 9- 17 years. Sample in line with acculturati on literture	Qualitativelongitudinal study.	Bicultural competence predicted social-psychological adaptation and intergroup attitudes. It also mediated the effects of ethnic identity and perceived similarity on acculturation preferences.	YP	Bicultural competence and how it is connected to peer acceptance, adaptation, relationships	The usage of female only participants was not explained well. The ages and 'generation' fits but I would appreciate some demographic details. Also I assume we are exploring 'minorities' and not mixed-culture/ biethnic.	Not addressed	The article follows the common literature on biculturality.

12	<p>Being Bicultural: A Mixed-Methods Study of Adolescents' Implicitly and Explicitly Measured Multiethnic Identities; 2011</p> <p>Developmental Psychology</p>	<p>Amy K. Marks, Flannery Patton and Cynthia Garcí'a Coll</p>	<p>This study aims to advance researchers' understanding of ethnic identity development through physiological monitoring to capture heart rate associations with (a) characteristics of responses about ethnic identities given during the interviews and (b) implicit-measured inhibited responses to ethnic identity labels. and (c) to inform developmental, ethnic identity theory for bicultural adolescents by using the MIPT.</p>	<p>Most of our bicultural sample was 1.5- or second-generation immigrant youth who identified themselves as bicultural. The younger cohort ranged in age from 14 to 17 years, the older cohort 18-21, and some participants were bilingual. Recruitment was done randomly.</p>	<p>A mixed-methods study: assessment the sensitivity of an implicit measure of ethnic identification among bicultural adolescents, the MIPT; (b) assessed the effects of a self-priming condition on of implicit ethnic identities, as indicated by relative response times to ethnic-racial identity labels;</p>	<p>Results indicate that bicultural adolescents endorsed a variety of ethnic and racial labels reflecting their multifaceted identities. Younger bicultural adolescents showed hesitation in deciding whether the label white was "like me" or "not like me." Heart rate monitoring and qualitative analyses of interviews provide some insight into this pattern of results</p>	<p>children's</p>	<p>bicultural identity formation in adolescence . However the focus was on ethnicity/ race and identity rather than culture.</p>	<p>Good attempt to explain both the results corresponding with their hypotheses and those that do not support them; I liked the acknowledgement of the fact that Hispanic might not describe this group well enough I particularly liked the comparison between insecure children and cultural stress and would like their explanations.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Clear and accurate as indicated by the sample chosen.</p>
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13	Acculturation Attitudes and Social Adjustment in British South Asian Children: A Longitudinal Study	Rupert Brown1 , Gülseli Baysu2 , Lindsey Cameron3 , Dennis Nigbur4 , Adam Rutland3 , Charles Watters5 , Rosa Hossain3 , Dominique LeTouze1 , and Anick Landau	High	High- very well defined and the ages fit	High- longitudinal, fits with the purpose on looking into changes in adaptation and integration.	High- Detailed and discussed well.	children and teachers	Acculturation	High- the researchers gave abundance well thought of explanations. I will add that it is unclear which aspects of negative emotional symptoms they used, and maybe negotiating between two cultures and thinking is challenging and brings some uncertainty and lack of control. Also good to consider the first generation and how that may impact the results, as the children are young.	high	high
14	Parenting, Family Processes, Relationships, and Parental Support in Multiracial and Multiethnic Families: An Exploratory Study of Youth Perceptions	ELMA I. LORENZO-BLANCO CRISTINA B. BARES JORGE DELVA	study compared parenting and family-related experiences between MR/ME and monoracial and monoethnic youth who participated in a national survey. Questions were clearly written	A very large scale/ national survey from 1997	Qualitative: explored many aspects of parenting, and the longitudinal method works well to show progress. Problem-data is quite dated.	There were some differences between biracial/ biethnic individuals and monoracial counterparts regarding family relationships and dynamics; as well as the type of parenting from mothers and fathers.	Children's	more focused on race and ethnicity and so on secondary cultural difficulties (I think) but still acknowledge culture.	Because this is quantitative research and a very large sample, the possibility of deeper exploration into the cultural aspects (or primary differences) was not explored. So we remain with the question of whether there was a difference in parenting or disagreement/ lack of cohesion and whether it was noticed by the children. The study raises some very interesting points. I would appreciate measurement of parents practices as linked to their ethnicity or discrepancy between practices of parents.		moderate.

15	Why Developmental Researchers Should Care About Biracial, Multiracial, and Multiethnic Youth	Adrienne Nishina and Melissa R. Witkow	To explore the developmental factors (challenges and benefits) of racially and ethnically mixed children. (an opinion article/ review)	not relevant	not relevant				There was some acknowledgement of ethnicity and culture but it was mostly focused on race, so it misses some important developmental considerations.		clear
16	Multicultural identity integration and well-being: A qualitative exploration of variations in narrative Coherence and multicultural identification; 2013 Frontiers in psychology	Maya A. Yampolsky1*, Catherine E. Amiot1 and Roxane de la Sablonnière2	The study examined the process of configuring identities within the Self, based on a cognitive-developmental model of social identity integration. The underlying hypothesis was that integrated identities produce a coherent narrative that will result in greater well-being	22 Participants who were 18-26 years old. 15 of the participants were of mixed heritages; all of them were diverse Canadians Recruitment was done through acquaintance and snowballing.	Mixed methods? The data was gathered qualitatively in structures interviews but then was rated and analysed statistically.	The results show that individuals who have an integrated identity (bicultural) and ones who preferred one culture over the other had greater narrative coherence (predicts wellbeing?) than individuals who had compartmentalised identities (no integration) Impact of the results for practice (that some form of identity configuration is better) was discussed	The young adults	Acculturation, cultural identities, narrative coherence and well-being	The researchers dealt well with the unexpected finding of better coherence for participants with categorisation (preference of one identity). The assumption that narrative coherence in a life story implies well-being was explained but I am not entirely convinced; a measure of self-report of well-being would be supported their claims- the researchers acknowledged the limitation. Additionally, all the participants were of higher education which sometimes indicates some resilience and higher SES, issues that were not dealt with or acknowledged. Some criticality would be good	No, despite recruitment done through networks of personal acquaintances.	The researchers did not define 2nd generation well: some of the participants were not born in Canada (1.5 generation) and one came in her teens.

Appendix B – Recruitment flyer



University of
East London

MULTICULTURAL CHILDREN NEEDED

PARTICIPANTS

- CHILDREN WHO BELONG TO TWO OR MORE CULTURES
- BORN IN THE UK OR LIVED IN IT FROM A YOUNG AGE
- BETWEEN THE AGES OF 7-11
- ATTENDS SCHOOL

FOR A RESEARCH IN CHILD AND EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

YOUR CHILD IS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN A STUDY ON MULTICULTURAL CHILDREN'S SELF PERCEPTIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE CULTURAL COMMUNITIES THEY IDENTIFY WITH

WHAT WILL IT INVOLVE?

Two play based sessions, about an hour each
(Ideally) one at school and one at home
A short feedback meeting, online



ABOUT ME

I am a trainee educational psychologist training in a London local authority, as part of University of East London's course.

WHAT IS THE BENEFIT?

Multicultural young people will be able to share their stories and experiences of being from diverse backgrounds and identifying with more than one culture. It can help practitioners and educators understand their experiences and promote a more culturally sensitive practice.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN YOUR CHILD TAKING PART OR WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT ME BY EMAIL.

IRIS SAYAG
U2047733@UEL.AC.UK



Appendix C – School information and consent form



SCHOOL INFORMATION SHEET

Who am I?

I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist working in Tower Hamlets and part of the University of East London. I would like to carry out a study about multicultural children’s self perceptions and relationships within the different cultural communities they identify with and I would like to invite your child to take part.

I would like to recruit children who meet the following criteria:

- Children who identify or belong to two or more cultures (one could be British) and belong to such communities, were born in the UK or grew up in it from an early age.
- Children who are aged between 7-11 and attending school.

What will it involve?

Your child will be invited to take part in two play-based sessions, one at school and one at home, exploring their self perceptions (how they experience and perceive themselves) and the relationships they have within the different communities they belong to.

	signature	date
I confirm I understand the nature of the research, and consent for one of the play-based sessions to be carried out in the school.		

Appendix D – Guardian Information Sheet



PARENT/ GUARDIAN INFORMATION SHEET

Multi-me: multicultural children’s experiences and perceptions of selves and relationships

Contact person: Iris Sayag

Email: u2047733@uel.ac.uk

Your child is being invited to participate in a research study. Before you decide whether to take part or not, please carefully read through the following information which outlines what their participation would involve. Feel free to talk with others about the study (e.g., friends, family, etc.) before making your decision. If anything is unclear or you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above email.

Who am I?

My name is Iris Sayag. I am a postgraduate student in the School of Psychology at the University of East London (UEL) and am studying for a doctorate in child and educational psychology. As part of my studies, I am conducting the research that you are being invited to participate in.

What is the purpose of the research?

I am conducting research into how children who belong to two or more culturally diverse heritage communities may experience or perceive themselves and their relationships within those communities. The study is designed to explore the stories children tell themselves about themselves, their relationships and their multiple heritage cultures. This study aims to broaden the understanding of children who have a rich and varied cultural background in a multi-ethnic city, and to offer psychologists and educators an insight into how such a background impacts a child's self-perceptions and the different types of relationships they create. It may help educators and psychologists change the way they work and practice with diversity.

Why have I been invited to take part?

To address the study aims, I am inviting children between the ages of 7-11 of multicultural background in the UK to take part in my research. If you are parents of a child born or lives in the UK for five years and up and has a multicultural heritage (parents could be of the same or different heritage), your child is eligible to take part in the study. It is entirely up to you whether you take part or not, participation is voluntary.

What will I be asked to do if I agree to take part?

If you agree to take part, your child will be asked to attend two 1:1 sessions with the researcher, one at home and one at school. The session will take 60-90 minutes, depending on the age of the child. The sessions will be play-based and will be designed to explore the different self-perceptions children and the relationships they hold in their respecting cultures. The meetings will be recorded in video with university equipment and will be stored securely according to GDPR guidelines until analysis is completed.

Can I change my mind?

Yes, you can change your mind at any time and withdraw without explanation or consequence by notifying the researcher via email. If you withdraw, your data will not be used as part of the research.

You can also request to withdraw your data from being used even after you have taken part in the study, provided that this request is made within 3 weeks of the data being collected (after which point the data analysis will begin, and withdrawal will not be possible).

How will the information I provide be kept secure and confidential?

- Participants will not be identified by the data collected, on any material resulting from the data collected, or in any write-up of the research. The children names will be anonymised, and any identifying information will be omitted.
- The raw data will be secured at the above account, for the length of 1 year after the research is done.

What will happen to the results of the research?

The research will be written up as a thesis and submitted for assessment. Should you wish to, you will have the option to receive a summary of the research findings once the study has been completed from the contact details below.

Who can I contact if I have any questions/concerns?

If you would like further information about my research or have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Iris Sayag, via u2047733@uel.ac.uk

If you have any questions or concerns about how the research has been conducted, please contact my research supervisor Dr Mary Robinson School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ,
Email: m.robinson@uel.ac.uk

or

Chair of School Research Ethics Committee: Dr Trishna Patel, School of Psychology,
University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ.
(Email: t.patel@uel.ac.uk)

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet

Appendix E – Guardian consent form



CONSENT of a parent/guardian to PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Multi-me: multicultural children’s experiences and perceptions of selves and relationships

Contact person: Iris Sayag

Email: u2047733@uel.ac.uk

	Please initial
I confirm that I have read the participant information sheet dated XX/XX/XXXX for the above study and that I have been given a copy to keep.	
I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.	
I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time, without explanation or disadvantage.	
I understand that if I withdraw during the study, my data will not be used.	
I understand that I have 3 weeks from the date of the play based sessions and interview to withdraw my data from the study.	
I understand that the interview will be recorded using UEL video recording equipment.	
I understand that my personal information and data, including audio/video recordings from the research will be securely stored and remain confidential. Only the research team will have access to this information, to which I give my permission.	
It has been explained to me what will happen to the data once the research has been completed.	
I understand that short, anonymised quotes from my child’s interview and sessions may be used in material such as conference presentations, reports, articles in academic journals resulting from the study and that these will not personally identify me.	
I would like to receive a summary of the research findings once the study has been completed and am willing to provide contact details for this to be sent to.	
I agree to take part in the above study.	

Participant’s Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

.....

Participant's Signature

.....

Researcher's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

.....

Researcher's Signature

.....

Date

.....

Appendix F – participant information sheet



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Multi-me: multicultural children’s experiences and perceptions of selves and relationships

Contact person: Iris Sayag Email: u2047733@uel.ac.uk

Who am I?

My name is Iris Sayag. I am a trainee Educational Psychologist in University of East London, which means I am learning how to work with young people like yourself and support them at school.

What do I want to know?

I am interested in the experiences of young people who, like you, might have more than one culture, and the stories you can tell me about yourself and other people. That will help adults understand you and others like you better.

Before you decide whether you want to take part in my research, please read this letter with your parents or carers. If you want to know anything else, you can ask any questions you want before you decide.

What happens if I want to join?



We will meet three times. We will play different games and do some drawings, and I may ask you some questions or talk with you about your home, school, family and friends. We may also talk about your culture. Then, I will create a story of everything you told me and meet with you so you can see your narrative, tell me what you think, and if you want me to make any changes.

Can I change my mind?



Yes, you can change your mind at any time, and you don’t need to explain why.

You can also stop at any time during our sessions, if you feel it makes you sad or uncomfortable. You don't need to talk about things or answer questions that make you uncomfortable.

You can also ask me not to use your story, if you tell me before three weeks have passed since we last met.



How will the information I provide be kept secure and confidential?

I will not talk about anything you told me to anyone else, as long as it won't put you at risk. However, if you will tell me something that might worry me about your safety or happiness, I will have to tell adults that care about you.

Any questions?

Appendix G – Children Consent Form





CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Multi-me: multicultural children’s experiences and perceptions of selves and relationships

Contact person: Iris Sayag

Email: u2047733@uel.ac.uk

	 YES	 NO
I have read the information sheet with my parent or carer and/ or it was explained to me.		
I have had a chance to ask questions and they have been answered.		
I know that taking part in this study is my choice, and I can ask to stop at any point in the sessions without offering an explanation or reason.		
I know that the things I will say will only be shared with people who are close to me.		
I agree to take part in the study.		

Participant’s Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

.....

Participant’s Signature

.....

Researcher’s Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

.....

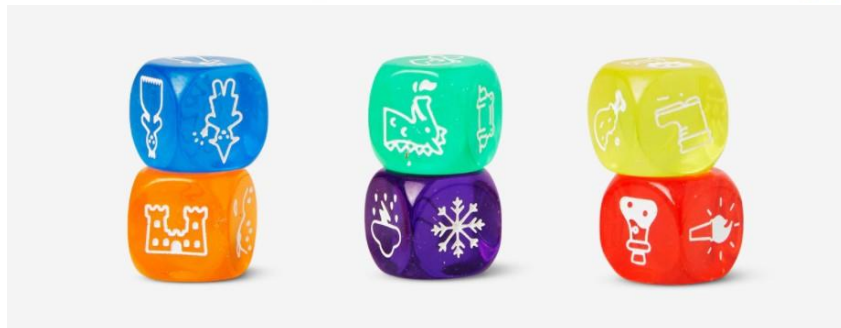
Researcher’s Signature

.....

Date

.....

Appendix H – Items and materials used in this research



Appendix Q – Coding and analysis extracts

LT analysys

Text	Narrative tone, emotions (pauses, facial expressions etc.	Actions	Metaphor/ idea	Whose Voice? (influences), criticality
Record, OK, so. wave hi. well, what we're going to do today is we're going to discuss a bit about cultures, your culture.				
What is culture?	Smiles, engages, playful			
Well, we'll discuss it now. What do you think when you're thinking about a culture? What do you think it is?				
It's kind of rymes with culture				
it does				
and, but I think it's like. Something to do with yourself?	Positive		Connection/ relationship between culture and family	Internal
Yes. It's something to do with do... you know the word heritage, then? (LT: yeah...) It's an even harder word.				
OK, I think it's like something you get from... your family?				Internal
Hmm, true. So culture is. A way that certain people think, talk, traditions they have. If they have faith, it could be faith that they have and is. Unite or belong to some group of people. For example, if you're going to a different country and you see how people talk there or behave there,				

what's good in that country or what's not good in that country, that's a culture, OK, so... Your... where were you born? You were born in...				
(LT) UK, UK so your culture is English or British, right?				
No (Shakes her head to represent no)	positive		Connection/ relationship between culture and family British- foreignes Agency	Internal voice: I offered an option but she refused. What discourse/ voice is it that tells her she is not British? Is it internalised from her mother/ parents? Society?
No. So what do you what is it?				
My family is from a different place.				
OK, well, let's hear about those. Where are they from?				
Well, my mum's side is from Poland, where she's in right now. Yes, probably. On my dad's side. His mom is Irish and. His dad is Indian, that's why my brother has orange hair. And I am jealous...	Positive, smiley, thinking	Smiles, looks up with eyes (thinking)	Connection/ relationship between culture and family Heritage and external properties (phenotype)	
Uh-huh. You're jealous! Would you prefer to have orange hair?				
(nods)		nods		
OK. It sounds to me like you already know a lot about what's heritage because you've just described different heritage, right?				
(LT nods)				

So what we're going to try to talk about today is whether these heritages or cultures of your parents may look differently in how they do things. Does that make sense? Kind of.	(LT- facial expression not sure, thinking)	squints her eyes		External- say yes but not fully
So we'll start, we'll start to starting asking you to draw a picture of... Your dad? Can you do that?				
I have drew a lot of pictures of him. Is there any Black? Black. Yeah. Yeah, because of that. His hair is black.	Confident, assured		Importance of accuracy; external properties (phenotype)	Internal
can you tell me about your dad? How is he like? Umm... (thinks..) Well, he likes to sleep a lot.	Playful	Drawing		
Yeah, he likes sleeps until. 4. Like he could sleep all day. It's like 1030 ish that he wakes up. But me and my brother usually wake him up before that because of our noise or... My dog barking...	Playful, thinking.	Concentrating on drawing	?	
Does your dad's family live here?				
Yeah. He's like, not here- here, but like, we have to go on a train to see them.	Mattar-of-factly		Nearness/ closeness- farness British- foreignness	
OK, they live in the UK?				
Yeah				
Was he born here in the UK? Do you know?				
Probably yes, And he used to have a cat. And so did his brother. And he really misses it.	Positive		Family structures, attachment, family dynamics.	

Would he want to have another cat, do you think?	Determined, thoughtful, sad? Sorry?	LT shakes her head, facial expression 'no', opening eyes		
Because like. I have a dog and like my mum said, when he dies then we could get this breed and I'm like but then we abandoned him.	Thoughtful, playful	Drawing, smiling Exclamation when she says: then we abandoned him!	Attachment, loyalty, family structures	
So. Tell me something else about your dad. Do you know his family from both sides?				
Um. I know, a bit stories about him, but not that much.				
So, do you know who is Indian in in your in your dad's family?				
His dad,				
his dad and his mom Irish. do you know both your grandparents?				
Yeah, yeah?, yeah. We usually go to see them or they come over for Christmas.			Attachment, relationship, closeness	
And what's, unique about being Indian?				

Initial analysis Child 1 LT.docx – reflections and comments

Page 2: Commented [IS1] Iris SAYAG 09/03/2023 16:22:00 Small story: actors are parents and a brother. Her brother is positioned closer to her father and his grandmother. LT is absent from this story.

Page 3: Commented [IS2] Iris SAYAG 09/03/2023 16:39:00 Actors: father, brother, LT, Dog. LT talks about a recent or an ongoing story. She positioned herself and her brother at the same time, in an interaction with their father.

Page 3: Commented [IS3] Iris SAYAG 10/02/2023 14:22:00 importance on the cat and not the brother.

Page 3: Commented [IS4] Iris SAYAG 10/02/2023 11:46:00 It might not be connected to the main questions, but there is almost a juxtaposition between attachment and family structures between dad and mum- dad as not willing to replace pet; mum not attached. It is of course LT's own perceptions as projected into her dad's.

Page 4: Commented [IS5] Iris SAYAG 10/02/2023 14:01:00 LT introduced herself into the narrative of cultures- she also tries to do that voice. Is it only as humour or is she trying to be connected with her father and his family?

Page 4: Commented [IS6] Iris SAYAG 10/02/2023 14:45:00 Again- the brother is referred to as an indication of family structure, attachment and relationships.

Page 5: Commented [IS7] Iris SAYAG 10/02/2023 14:48:00 An interjection of herself into the narrative by the ability of language and accents.

Page 5: Commented [IS8] Iris SAYAG 10/02/2023 14:49:00 Phenotype, external properties.

Page 5: Commented [IS9] Iris SAYAG 10/02/2023 14:50:00 The brother as being 'Irish' beyond the family

Page 6: Commented [IS10] Iris SAYAG 11/03/2023 13:08:00 What is she saying in this story?

Page 6: Commented [IS11] Iris SAYAG 11/03/2023 13:07:00 Ask Mary- how she would treat this story. Why is she choosing to tell me that story? What does it serves?

Page 7: Commented [IS12] Iris SAYAG 10/02/2023 16:32:00 I am unsure if LT understood the question

Page 7: Commented [IS13] Iris SAYAG 11/03/2023 13:43:00 So LT's mother is not 'immersed' or a part of a bigger Polish community.

Page 7: Commented [IS14] Iris SAYAG 10/02/2023 16:36:00 LT did not understand the question

Page 8: Commented [IS17] Iris SAYAG 11/03/2023 14:26:00 In common with child 4- the focus on scenery, on concrete things. This is more important to development theory- to the age factor? Or also to identity? I'm not sure.

Page 9: Commented [IS18] Iris SAYAG 10/02/2023 17:42:00 This is really interesting. She starts by saying us and then moves to talk about the dog.

Page 9: Commented [IS19] Iris SAYAG 09/03/2023 17:22:00 LT tells again a story where he and her brother are positioned as 'cheeky' or misbehaving. It is them against their father. Again' the dog plays an important part.

Page 9: Commented [IS20] Iris SAYAG 10/02/2023 17:55:00 Mum is more invested in language and culture than dad?

Page 10: Commented [IS21] Iris SAYAG 11/03/2023 11:30:00 I just realised that she treats her father to be 'different' because they are mixed race, despite him being born in the UK.

Page 10: Commented [IS22] Iris SAYAG 11/02/2023 10:36:00 This is significant- she ties her to other people, finding similarities between her friends and her culturally.

Page 11: Commented [IS23] Iris SAYAG 11/02/2023 10:55:00 I wonder if the fact that LT finds a person whose communication in English is limited (not an English speaker) as the kindest and her favourite person now doesn't point to her own social challenges rather than cultural similarity or connection

Page 10: Commented [IS24] Iris SAYAG 11/02/2023 10:37:00 It almost feels as if she needs her friends to have the same status- they are from UK, but their families come from someplace else. However- she is half British.

Page 12: Commented [IS27] Iris SAYAG 11/02/2023 11:53:00 Family dynamics- parents find themselves together when they resemble each other.

Page 12: Commented [IS28] Iris SAYAG 11/02/2023 12:15:00 I love that sentence. LT gives much significance to her father. It is connected with the next phrases.

Page 13: Commented [IS29] Iris SAYAG 11/03/2023 11:58:00 This story follows the accepted gender roles and the usual discourse around fathers and mothers. But it also indicates attunement to the children and the father's skill in caring and identifying his children's need for 'balance' in unusual situations.

Page 13: Commented [IS30] Iris SAYAG 11/02/2023 12:43:00 I asked about being mixed and that is the first thing she thought about. Clearly, phenotype and appearance are significant, probably because of the comparison with other family members. (think of a citation I had that talked about that). LT's skin is not dark, and I would consider her fair, but in her family she considers herself to be darker. In family dynamics, she is 'teaming' the family members. She is teamed with her father, and her brother with her mother. (interesting, as before she shared she is jealous of her brother 'red' head) LT includes her dog in the family and he can take the place of the 'darkest'.

Page 14: Commented [IS31] Iris SAYAG 11/02/2023 12:38:00 I find it very interesting how LT considers her dog as part of her family. Dogs/ cats seem to be a connecting lining for her: connecting her with her father's family; with her aunts' family, and within her family

Page 14: Commented [IS32] Iris SAYAG 11/02/2023 12:51:00 She is doggy because they are both mixed- again shows the relationship between her and her dog. Does having her dog as mixed help her make meaning of her mixedness?

Page 14: Commented [IS33] Iris SAYAG 11/03/2023 13:01:00 Indicating that being mixed for her, is about how she looks like.

Page 15: Commented [IS34] Iris SAYAG 11/02/2023 13:26:00 Almost a symmetry with LT's dad: she talks about difficult relationships with his family, a brother they don't have a connection with. I wonder how LT explains that to herself.

Page 16: Commented [IS35] Iris SAYAG 11/02/2023 14:02:00 LT doesn't differentiate between places she has a heritage connection with and those she hasn't. This is, I think because she does not hold a connection to that cultural identity. That fits with her family's attachment or

connection with their heritage or culture. With Poland, he has a mixed connection. She feels 'at home' and as if it's completely the same', but at the same time, she does not differentiate between that and other places she'd been.

Page 16: Commented [IS36] Iris SAYAG 11/02/2023 14:09:00 It's very meaningful for LT that she got her dog and that she is the reason behind it.

Page 16: Commented [IS37] Iris SAYAG 11/02/2023 14:15:00 LT knows these festivals are connected with her culture but does not have any deeper knowledge. Does it need? Or can a person be connected with something just by having a shared festivity?

Page 19: Commented [IS38] Iris SAYAG 11/02/2023 15:42:00 Again a sense of the importance of her dog. It comes as the

Page 21: Commented [IS39] Iris SAYAG 12/02/2023 11:36:00 This feels like the moment LT started to construct her identity. Did it happen as a result of my involvement?

Page 22: Commented [IS40] Iris SAYAG 12/02/2023 12:56:00 This is a dynamic and active participation in creating a narrative, identity and self. LT refuses to limit her identity, self and interest to the environment (including the researcher) and she examines herself and embraces her own concepts, interests and perforations as a part of her. This is 'subjectivity'.

Page 22: Commented [IS41] Iris SAYAG 12/02/2023 11:43:00 LT presents a 'movement' of identities, of self constructs. She is at once British, involved in her own 'subjective' cultures, but at the same time, is exploring

her belonging and interest in other options. This is almost a 'subjectivity', a free movement between options and immersing in them at the moment.

Page 22: Commented [IS42] Iris SAYAG 12/02/2023 12:48:00 LT is dynamic and involved in the construction of her identity. She is active: She 'lets out' things she already knows, she is projecting herself outside, but at the same time receiving her environment, receiving knowledge.

Page 22: Commented [IS43] Iris SAYAG 12/03/2023 9:44:00 LT compares her Polish family behaviour as different from her own in language and their relationships. She recognises a conflict in how they are nice to her but sometimes argues with her mother.

Page 22: Commented [IS44] Iris SAYAG 12/02/2023 13:30:00 Consider citations that support this

Page 23: Commented [IS45] Iris SAYAG 12/02/2023 13:44:00 [Simplicity of interactions](#) Again this non-essentialist, almost simplicity of interactions. Is it to do with the similarity between cultures? Is it the age? Almost this feeling of generalisation of people as people no matter where.

Page 25: Commented [IS46] Iris SAYAG 12/02/2023 14:48:00 In interpersonal theories- she understands herself as part of an interaction, a relationship. She understand her actions as part of a relationship. If I am bad- no one will like me.

Page 25: Commented [IS47] Iris SAYAG 12/02/2023 15:19:00 LT creates a connection between herself and her friends

Page 25: Commented [IS48] Iris SAYAG 12/02/2023 15:23:00 Is the sameness and uniqueness involves around social struggle? Trying to find a place?

Page 25: Commented [IS49] Iris SAYAG 12/02/2023 15:21:00 LT manages to find positives in her friendships.

Page 26: Commented [IS50] Iris SAYAG 13/02/2023 8:55:00 Positive experiences

Page 27: Commented [IS51] Iris SAYAG 13/02/2023 9:30:00 Being mixed as not being British- it's not about the mix is about being from another place, having a different background and heritage. Is it about age or about being like someone else, belonging?

Page 30: Commented [IS52] Iris SAYAG 13/02/2023 9:45:00 LT feels understood and appreciated by her family.

Page 30: Commented [IS53] Iris SAYAG 13/02/2023 9:46:00 Attachment- she has a mental representation of her family as supportive without thinking about it. She internalised their support

Page 32: Commented [IS54] Iris SAYAG 13/02/2023 9:52:00 I feel here, LT is talking about herself and her social struggles and self-construct. She talks about the complexities and how a person could be different things at once and how a situation could be both things at once.

Page 32: Commented [IS55] Iris SAYAG 13/02/2023 9:55:00 If she didn't have the struggle, she wasn't who she is right now. She wouldn't be as complex, she wouldn't be insightful. She wouldn't be who she is- that is across the board, also with her cultural background.

Page 34: Commented [IS56] Iris SAYAG 13/02/2023 10:57:00 Lt is really using the storytelling toll to tell me about things that happened in her life.

BD Analysis

Text	Narrative tone, emotions (pauses, facial expressions etc.	Actions	Metaphor/idea	Whose Voice? (influences), criticality
<p>That's J****. That's me.</p> <p>That's mom. That's ****</p> <p>So ****, and **** is from Spain and there's much more.</p>	Playful	Drawing, smiling,	<p>Family dynamics (people included and not included)</p> <p>Hierarchy of cultures</p>	<p>Internal and external:</p> <p>BD chose who to start drawing, but was 'Spanish' highlighted by the questioning?</p>
<p>OK, OK. What do you know about the in Spanish?</p>	Happy, excited, playful	<p>Broadly smiling,</p> <p>Talking slightly in a funny 'voice'</p>		
<p>It's really fun.</p>	Positive happy		<p>Family dynamics</p> <p>Regard to identity or culture</p>	
<p>What's fun about being Spanish?</p>				
<p>You. You get some, there's like lots of beaches and it's really big.</p>	Thinking, Excited	Smiling	<p>Literal thinking / symbolic or abstract thinking</p> <p>Relationship between Place and identity/ culutre</p>	

-Ohh, so you're. Seven. No seven. OK Seven,				
No, 7. No, 7.	Playful, amused Humoristic	Imitating my words with exaggerated movements		
So how are Spanish people Like?				
They're really kind			Cultural traits? Experince of culture? Place?	Internal
kind,				
fun,				
fun. What's fun about being Spanish?				
Because there there's something called Barracas. which in you get to play lots of like. You know when, rides? People go and ride. Yeah, they could. Bumper cars. Yeah. And yeah, it's like that. It's like that. And the people that are kind.	Thinking, reflective	Almost serious facial expression. Considering his answer	Literal thinking / symbolic or abstract thinking (lack of) differentiation between a culture, a place and an experience Connection between family and culture? Age and development Differentiation between places?	
You said your family, your mom's family is kind. Do				

they... . Well, do they behave exactly like English people?				
Their behave a bit... A lot more better!	Happy Positive Excitement 'cheeky'	Very wide smile Looks at me in a 'cheeky' sort of way	Literal thinking / symbolic or abstract thinking (lack of) differentiation between a culture, a place and an experience Connection between family and culture Age and development	
Well, what's a lot more better in how Spanish people behave?	Accepted by researcher	Both laugh		
(5 sc pause) And. From. From Spain all the way back to Spain. So around the world.	Thinking Playful Amused	Smiling		External- it was clear BD did not fully understand the question but he wanted to answer.

Page 4: Commented [IS1] Iris SAYAG 16/02/2023 15:48:00 There might be an element of language and age here

Page 4: Commented [IS2] Iris SAYAG 16/02/2023 15:44:00 Like the other children and fitting of his age, BD is very literal in his answer: he describes being Spanish as 'Spain'; and being Spanish is fun because Spain is fun.

Page 4: Commented [IS3] Iris SAYAG 16/02/2023 15:46:00 That leads me to another question about the connection between a 'place' and identity: can you be fond of a culture, identity or self if you are not fond of the physical elements of it? Of the material elements.

Page 5: Commented [IS4] Iris SAYAG 16/02/2023 16:05:00 BD seemed excited that I talked with him in Spanish and also happy to explain to me what he said.

Page 5: Commented [IS5] Iris SAYAG 16/02/2023 15:58:00 There is some communication breakdown between the researcher and the BD. It might be a language difficulty and EAL on both sides.

Page 5: Commented [IS6] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 11:06:00 BD needed to think a bit, it was clear he needed to switch to his second language, and it wasn't immediate. I feel EAL is quite pronounced in his case as both languages are still developing- he talks with grammar mistakes and thinks sometimes when he needs to answer.

Page 6: Commented [IS7] Iris SAYAG 16/02/2023 16:07:00 I wonder why I didn't linger on this: what makes Spanish people kind? How are they kind? I imagine the reason is more related to his family

Page 6: Commented [IS8] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 11:16:00 BD tries to answer the question and though on how to explain his experience to his ability. This was a very literal answer that was a more material experience. I wonder if it was merely based on 'fun' stuff that he did- could be the same anywhere. Not about culture.

Page 7: Commented [IS9] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 11:13:00 This answer is connected to his family and to the excitement of the amusement and places he has been, it is not about culture.

Page 8: Commented [IS10] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 11:31:00 BD finds it hard to understand my question. He connects the actual 'touristic' experience with his positive emotional feelings but he cannot (developmentally speaking) understand what I mean by people's behaviour or explain it. Maybe my language is unclear.

Page 10: Commented [IS11] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 11:53:00 This is interesting because he is oriented towards his Spanish cultural identity and family very much. I am not sure what the family dynamics is, or is because we activated the language?

Page 10: Commented [IS12] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 11:49:00 BD is able to identify and connect something that is English, and connects it well with question. I wonder, if the question was phrased differently (drawing something that is like 'being English') would he be able to do it? I am not sure.

Page 10: Commented [IS13] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 11:57:00 This question makes it clearer that BD's Spanish *identity* is not developed, and that it is currently based on his positive literal and material experiences and knowledge of his family and visits. He 'knows' less, or can recall less easily information about being Spanish.

Page 11: Commented [IS14] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 12:12:00 At this point it is slightly unclear what is the 'name' of the concept/ feature. But it is clear that BD has some cultural knowledge that he connects to Christmas and being Spanish.

Page 11: Commented [IS15R14] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 12:14:00 There is also language knowledge/ bilingualism

Page 12: Commented [IS16] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 12:14:00 It starting to show that BD bases a lot of his cultural identity on his bilingualism. It seems important in his formation.

Page 12: Commented [IS17] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 12:16:00 Does BD fully 'understand' the concept in Spanish, or did he memorise it? The phrase as the researcher knows it is: Los reyes magos that translate as the 'three wise men' but the phrase as phrased here translate as three wizards. BD is not able to translate or explain.

Page 12: Commented [IS18] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 12:23:00 Maybe if the researcher would wait longer, BD would rephrase or add, because it seems as he was about to and changed his mind.

Page 14: Commented [IS19] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 12:42:00 This approach or task was too complex for BD's current development stage.

Page 15: Commented [IS20] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 12:49:00 I feel like BD didn't really understand the phrase and showed it by being humouristic about it.

Page 16: Commented [IS21] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 12:56:00 I think BD is at the same time distracted (he seems to be easily distracted by the dice/ games) and also avoiding the question he doesn't fully understand/ want to discuss.

Page 16: Commented [IS22] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 12:58:00 Also, this story 'makes sense', it is realistic and literal (not abstract). Although it's driven by the dice, there are some 'topics' or 'ideas' in the story. I can tell he connects work with being cold, sad, with hard and challenge. He connects coffee with his mum. Football with pass time/ fun.

Page 16: Commented [IS23] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 13:17:00 BD shows his attachment here: he moves to discuss his dad although not being asked. He doesn't really describe his dad realistically.

Page 16: Commented [IS24] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 13:14:00 Children development: BD used a different dice pack, that was more fantasy oriented. It led his story to imagination and here is harder to connect the story to realistic story concepts. This story was imaginative story telling but was still grounded in the literal dice, it was not abstract thinking or original storytelling/ metaphors.

Page 18: Commented [IS25] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 13:38:00 At this point BD was preoccupied with the story dice, organising and ordering them, and potentially trying to recognise the images.

Page 19: Commented [IS26] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 13:49:00 BD can't think of what could be his superpowers, or in non-story words what he does well/ or that this again is too abstract? When we invent superpowers, we are actually discussing what might be important to BD, what does he wish he could do.

Page 20: Commented [IS27] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 14:26:00 It seems at that point BD was very interested and occupied in the story telling with the dice. He was in a very imaginative world with the dice.

Page 22: Commented [IS28] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 15:01:00 BD connects it to something he knows and is immediate to him, which is about relationships. This is quite appropriate to his age- children aged 7 are more occupied in creating friendships and occupied with relationships. He is not yet occupied in forming identity. In a way, expanding and creating relationships is more relevant to his self concept and representation.

Page 23: Commented [IS29] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 15:23:00 Although BD doesn't answer the question fully, and doesn't seem to understand it (language?), he does show some identity here. In stating that both English and Spanish people are 'the best' he also shows a preference to his heritage and his awareness that he belongs to them. .

Page 24: Commented [IS30] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 15:34:00 I think BD recognises his 'task' very well but I am not sure how to analyse this one. Also I am not sure anyone took the time to fully explain him the meaning of the chart, why it is used and what does he need to accomplish!!!

Page 25: Commented [IS31] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 15:37:00 I question if he really meant he doesn't like school or was he jesting.

Page 26: Commented [IS32] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 16:34:00 BD shows some cultural knowledge here- although he may not be able to answer or explain it. An innate knowledge of what is considered English. But he does not seem able to answer or relate to a question about 'being' something/

Page 27: Commented [IS33] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 16:43:00 Family with clear gender roles.

Page 29: Commented [IS34] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 16:51:00 BD might recognise the fact that he 'belongs' to Spain more than his father.

Page 29: Commented [IS35] Iris SAYAG 18/02/2023 16:49:00 At this point the researcher realised BD is tired and finds it hard to concentrate. She ended the interview and he went to his class.

Page 29: Commented [IS36] Iris SAYAG 21/02/2023 20:30:00 Some context: the meeting was scheduled to 4:00 pm but the family went for errands and in fact we only started at about 5:15- 5:30 so BD was slightly tired, distracted and scattered by the time we worked together.

Page 33: Commented [IS37] Iris SAYAG 21/02/2023 20:47:00 BD understands the task and understands he is BD, but he liked to 'distance himself- although on occasion needed the story to be grounded more in 'reality'

Page 33: Commented [IS38] Iris SAYAG 21/02/2023 20:49:00 This is a part of his self-concept under that specific context and in that situation. He was, during the first part of the interview, cheeky- and was aware of the researcher putting boundaries around that.

Page 33: Commented [IS39] Iris SAYAG 21/02/2023 20:57:00 BD is co-constructing with the researcher. He initially accepts her interpretation or suggestion, but then defies it and negotiates it.

Page 33: Commented [IS40] Iris SAYAG 21/02/2023 21:00:00 BD shows his unacceptance of the researcher's suggested interpretation by an age-appropriate defiance (making funny voices) and by assuming back control over the narrative.

Page 33: Commented [IS41] Iris SAYAG 21/02/2023 21:02:00 Are these ear defenders? Does BD wear them as part of his school day?

Page 35: Commented [IS42] Iris SAYAG 21/02/2023 21:35:00 There was a shift in BD's tone here, showing he is talking about something that is meaningful to him. This was probably uncomfortable because he moved away from it quite quickly

Page 35: Commented [IS43] Iris SAYAG 21/02/2023 21:37:00 The researcher attempted to extend the discussion by being playful and using the small world people.

Page 35: Commented [IS44] Iris SAYAG 21/02/2023 21:38:00 Either the type of response (of the researcher) did not suit BD or that he wanted to escape from the discussion, but he went back quickly to his preferred interaction style of 'jesting'

Page 37: Commented [IS45] Iris SAYAG 21/02/2023 21:45:00 BD moves to this type of interactions quickly. It feels as a part of his self-concept- being quite humorous and 'silly'. Especially when there are challenging demands

Page 37: Commented [IS46] Iris SAYAG 21/02/2023 21:46:00 It's possible the word 'they' confused him and is not appropriate for his age. Also,, he may not be in a position to be able to consider abstract contexts as related to him.

Page 37: Commented [IS47] Iris SAYAG 21/02/2023 21:48:00 BD answers 'realistically' about things he likes.

Page 38: Commented [IS48] Iris SAYAG 21/02/2023 21:57:00 BD shows awareness to the maximisation of friendships. He is interested in friendships and shows that he is aware that he has an advantage of moving between cultures- having ability to communicate or interact with more than one culture.

Page 38: Commented [IS49] Iris SAYAG 21/02/2023 21:54:00 I think that although BD is too young to form identity, having parents from other places and being 'mixed' and his frequent visits in Spain open up for him the interest in other cultures, other people. More openness. This is how, with his current language skills, he can show interest and openness in other cultures

Page 39: Commented [IS50] Iris SAYAG 21/02/2023 22:02:00 BD is clearly still developing his language skills (age and EAL appropriate). This is the most immediate impact being mixed has for him

Page 39: Commented [IS51] Iris SAYAG 21/02/2023 22:02:00 Another escape to clown town

Page 41: Commented [IS52] Iris SAYAG 21/02/2023 22:08:00 This is the first time BD discussed the names of his friends: he was not as open the first time

Page 41: Commented [IS53] Iris SAYAG 21/02/2023 22:09:00 Although BD said he finds it hard to make friends, he has a good self concept and view himself as a 'cool guy'.

Page 42: Commented [IS54] Iris SAYAG 21/02/2023 22:11:00 BD is not sure where his friends are from, or what languages they speak. But he creates or constructs a relationship with them,

Page 44: Commented [IS55] Iris SAYAG 21/02/2023 22:18:00 The card he picked has a boy with three balloons. It is a 'funny card' with a boy that looks quite cheeky.

Page 45: Commented [IS56] Iris SAYAG 21/02/2023 22:20:00 The card looks very much like medieval priests/knights. A bit dark- but has a cultural reference and is probably based on some unconscious representation of English heritage. I do find it interesting that he picked a much darker card for being English than being Spanish (quite playful card).

Page 45: Commented [IS57] Iris SAYAG 23/02/2023 20:54:00 BD clearly repeats a message that is not his own. Probably a message from his parents.

It's interesting because it leads or points to both cultural identity and family dynamics

Page 45: Commented [IS58] Iris SAYAG 23/02/2023 20:58:00 BD starts to form a new identity- an identity that is unique to him and his family and is different and separated from his supposed 'heritage'- an identity that takes into account some but not all parts

Page 46: Commented [IS59] Iris SAYAG 23/02/2023 21:12:00 Interesting that although he speaks English, BD did not immediately associate the movie with himself. That implies that he the Spanish heritage is separated and distant from him; or that he recognises he a cultural gap or difference between his Spanish heritage and the film.

Page 46: Commented [IS60] Iris SAYAG 23/02/2023 21:14:00 I wonder why it wasn't immediate for him.

Page 49: Commented [IS62] Iris SAYAG 23/02/2023 21:37:00 It was important to both BD and his mother that I will get to see BD's dad. It implies on the family dynamics and the importance he plays into the family life.

Mateo

Text	Tone	Actions/ expressions	Ideas/ metaphors	Voice?
I'm iris. I study in university. What I'm studying called school psychology. I'm learning how to work with children and young people. And this project is to talk to children and discuss how is it to live with two cultures. So have you ever heard the term culture?		Shy? Cautious? Flat?		
Yeah.				
Yes. OK what is what do you think culture means?				
Different. emmmmm	Unsure	Smiles, (eh....)		
It's not a test, and we'll be very free here.				
Uh, it's. Culture like a different, like, kind of. Alright. Like different religions and different. Beliefs and stuff like that. And they believe in different things...	Reflective/ considering	Smiles		
Yeah, you're right. So that's a part of it. Culture can also be languages and behaviours and traditions. And what I want to know is how is it if you have more than one? So we can start by maybe making a				

<p>drawing. Maybe you want to draw you and your family with your cultures. So what kind of cultures do you have?</p>				
<p>Ahhhh so my dad is Italian and My mum is English. My mom's Jewish and my dad's Catholic.</p>			<p>Cultural knowledge Family dynamics? Heritage</p>	
<p>So quite a lot going on there, right? And if you're thinking about yourself, how do you think about yourself?</p>				
<p>I think of myself, ni didn't mind. But. And. And I think it's cool to speak different languages and. For the parents to come from different places, it is quite cool.</p>	<p>Reflective/ considering Positive Shy/ a bit uncomfortable</p>	<p>Speaks quietly Some pauses between words</p>	<p>Cultural identity Formation of identity Importance of languages Uniqueness Embracing, accepting, pride</p>	<p>Voice- this voice comes from the child, and is not a co-construction with the researcher. I wonder if this was internalised from his environment: family, school?</p>
<p>So do you wanna try drawing something? Ummmmm.... So do you wanna try drawing something? If you don't, we can do something else. We have, story dices here and we have cards...</p>	<p>Unsure? Self-conscious? Confidence? Playful</p>		<p>Self-confidence? Self-concept?</p>	

Can I draw stick people?		Smiles		
You can draw them in every way you like. If you don't wanna draw your family but you wanna draw something else that is about your cultures or being from your culture then you can. Drawing stick people is great.	Playful	Smiles,	Self- concept?	
That's me, OK. That's ****.		Laughs (when finishes, in mum)	Belonging	
**** is your younger brother.		M draws very basic stick people with no faces. He is aware and it seems 'on purpose' as an easier solution.	Family dynamics	
Yes. That's my dad.			Static vs dynamic representation	
OK.				
My mum.				
Yeah, right. So can you draw something that is around their cultures? You just mentioned a bunch of stuff. You mentioned Italian, English, right? English or British?				
English,	Clear, Assured/ confident		Cultural identity Belonging Cultural awareness/ knowledge	Voice- internal
English, you said. Catholic, you said Jewish. So anything that is kind of				

representative of that...				
OK so my mum is Jewish, So I'll do the Star of David...		Drawing	Cultural awareness/ knowledge Cultural identity Belonging Static vs dynamic representation	
And, how does she show that she's Jewish?				
She. She tells me that. She like, she we go to different events. Hmm. And for example, I go to place called the havurah, and it's like a Jewish place, like for a small community. It's not like. She's not like. I forgot what it's called... A like a really proper [unclear] one, because her dad was also... Also, her dad was I think. Think it feels. Cristian...	Reflective Unsure Serious	A bit mumbling, maybe because he was unsure. Looking down Quieter	Cultural awareness/ knowledge/ competence (biculturality) Cultural identity Belonging Static vs dynamic representation	Voice- internal. M understand what the researcher asks but he answers what he knows and comfortable

Page 1: Commented [IS1] Iris SAYAG 24/02/2023 15:05:00 Some discrepancy between the language/ message and the tone of voice. (cool/ happy- said in a guarded, uncomfortable, quiet voice)

Page 2: Commented [IS2] Iris SAYAG 24/02/2023 12:23:00 Thinking back at this, this was more playful than lack of confidence. He smiled while asking this- it wasn't about being self-conscious but about being 'cheeky'.

Page 2: Commented [IS3] Iris SAYAG 24/02/2023 12:34:00 M starts with the children in the family (himself first) and continues to the adults. There is no personalisation of the figures but regarding the placement of them: he is placed the furthest from his mother and father (his mum is at the very end. This seems to be related to his place in the family as the older sibling, who may need the closeness and 'care' of his parents less, and also is on the brink of early adolescence- more independent and separated than his younger 7 yo brother. I'd question also if he starts to understand gender roles.

Page 2: Commented [IS4] Iris SAYAG 24/02/2023 12:53:00 M shows awareness to subtleties of identities. He corrects the researcher and asserts English as being the specific identity- showing knowledge but also signalling where he belongs (majority?). This will repeat itself afterwards.

Page 3: Commented [IS5] Iris SAYAG 24/02/2023 13:10:00 This is very literal and also static representation of being Jewish. Interesting, he placed the Star of David next to his mother- identifying her as the influence of being Jewish.

Page 3: Commented [IS6] Iris SAYAG 24/02/2023 13:24:00 M indicated the importance his mother places on this part of her and her children's identity. She is involved in it, and is actively teaches it to her children. This raises the cultural awareness and possibly creates biculturalism for M. It also creates a sense of belonging.

Page 3: Commented [IS7] Iris SAYAG 24/02/2023 13:29:00 And another cultural identity all together. Again, awareness to subtleties.

Page 3: Commented [IS8] Iris SAYAG 24/02/2023 13:28:00 This is an interesting one because M identifies his mother as belonging to Judaism and not belonging at the same time. What does it mean on his belonging? Is he a proper 'Jewish' person?

Page 3: Commented [IS9] Iris SAYAG 24/02/2023 13:15:00 This is interesting because when M is asked about how to describe being something, he becomes very literal and static (uses 'things') and does not talk about feelings or experiences. But here, he talks about being part of a community.

Page 3: Commented [IS10] Iris SAYAG 24/02/2023 14:06:00 Ownership of identity- M corrects the researcher

Page 3: Commented [IS11] Iris SAYAG 24/02/2023 12:53:00 M shows awareness to subtleties of identities. He corrects the researcher and asserts English as being the specific identity- showing knowledge but also signalling where he belongs (majority?). This will repeat itself afterwards.

Page 4: Commented [IS12] Iris SAYAG 24/02/2023 14:49:00 It seems M's father is less preoccupied or engages with this part of his culture- and so M is less involved in it. That lead to a hierarchy of cultures.

Page 4: Commented [IS13] Iris SAYAG 24/02/2023 14:47:00 I put that as family dynamics because I wonder about the family dynamics around faith and culture.

Page 4: Commented [IS14] Iris SAYAG 24/02/2023 15:03:00 There is a slight discrepancy between the tone (guarded) and the usage of words 'nice' and 'cool'.

Page 4: Commented [IS15] Iris SAYAG 24/02/2023 14:53:00 Interesting that he chose to say 'different countries' after he described a part of his identity- in that he shows that by being 'diverse' he is open to other possibilities, other countries.

Page 4: Commented [IS16] Iris SAYAG 24/02/2023 15:00:00 This is so small- it is said between the lines. He is at the same time say 'different countries' so almost 'aloofness' but immediately after connects himself to the place and family. So there is almost fluidity and belong- don't belong essence here. Contextual belonging.

Page 5: Commented [IS17] Iris SAYAG 25/02/2023 10:21:00 Probably think or recall specific people he knows.

Page 6: Commented [IS18] Iris SAYAG 25/02/2023 11:06:00 This indicates that he is slightly uncomfortable and struggles with this question but not because he finds it emotive or emotionally challenging. He struggles to use language to explain his thoughts and also considers a question he never did before.

Page 6: Commented [IS19] Iris SAYAG 25/02/2023 11:07:00 Language development and development in general. Look for Erickson?

Page 6: Commented [IS20] Iris SAYAG 25/02/2023 11:27:00 M is very careful in not over-generalising. This feels like a result of a multicultural environment and education experiences- this is an internalised voice of social norms.

Page 6: Commented [IS21] Iris SAYAG 25/02/2023 11:34:00 M corrects the researcher and makes sure that she understands his interpretation. He regains control over his narrative.

Page 7: Commented [IS22] Iris SAYAG 25/02/2023 11:39:00 M defines the differences between the cultures through his personal interests and values. This is interesting because it could lead to a discussion around how children form their identities and personalities/ constructs by looking at the world through their point of views.

Comparison with child 4.

Page 7: Commented [IS23] Iris SAYAG 25/02/2023 12:29:00 M indicates that he is aware that Italy is part of his heritage and that he feels he belongs to it and to his family, his identity is different. There is some contextual self here, some fluidity. He is at once at home and knows what to do, and a stranger. He knows how to behave but is not fully integrated.

Page 11: Commented [IS24] Iris SAYAG 25/02/2023 14:20:00 It's interesting that M almost needed 'permission' or push to pretend.

Page 12: Commented [IS25] Iris SAYAG 25/02/2023 14:29:00 I feel as if M came to this meeting a bit more 'guarded'. It's not that he wasn't positive or had an overall positive tone, but for some reason he was in a guarded mood.

Page 13: Commented [IS26] Iris SAYAG 25/02/2023 14:34:00 You can see from this conversation that M was tired/ uncomfortable and less playful than the previous time. It possibly induced the researcher to 'fill' the gaps or silence more than she needed to.

Page 13: Commented [IS27] Iris SAYAG 25/02/2023 14:54:00 Contracting to him drawing 'stick people' in the previous visit.

Page 14: Commented [IS28] Iris SAYAG 25/02/2023 14:49:00 Thinking about these things seem to be challenging for M. I wonder how practiced he is in these activities and is it connected with his developmental stage.

Page 14: Commented [IS29] Iris SAYAG 25/02/2023 14:52:00 They mean something to me is a beautiful phrase.

Page 14: Commented [IS30] Iris SAYAG 25/02/2023 14:55:00 Sports are a major part of M's life and help construct a big part of his self and identity

Page 15: Commented [IS31] Iris SAYAG 25/02/2023 15:52:00 M picks his dad as a person he is kind to, but his explanation into why, is not based on affection or interpersonal connection. Yet it is clear M cares about his father and attached to him. This might be connected with the development stage- he identifies with his father gender and his gender roles. It could also be connected to family dynamics

Page 15: Commented [IS32] Iris SAYAG 25/02/2023 15:55:00 There is something around security and protection that relates to the M's father. He is protective (road example); makes them live under a 'roof'; confident.

Page 16: Commented [IS33] Iris SAYAG 25/02/2023 16:18:00

There is something very 'materialistic' about M's experience of friendship. He puts a strong emphasis about interests as means to build and create friendships just as he puts an emphasis about it when he forms his identity.

Page 16: Commented [IS34] Iris SAYAG 25/02/2023 16:23:00 This reminds me on 'it's cool to know people from other places' or 'visit other places'

Layla

Text	Narrative tone, emotions (pauses, facial expressions etc.	Actions	Metaphor/ idea	Whose Voice? (influences), criticality
It's really nice. It has like. A lot like green trees. Like. My grandma has. House, I don't know if you've heard of it it's called Leccio.	Positive Happy Appreciative		Place/ location Materialism	
OK				
And she has a house in Turin as well.				
Wow, that's nice. OK and. How is your family like?				
Well, my grandma is really strict with manners.			Family dynamics Relationship Norms/ expectations?	
OK...				
Like for example, if I put my elbow on my table, she is like "take it off right now"	Playful Amused	'mimics' her grandma's voice,	Family dynamics Relationship Cultural norms/ expectations?	Whose voice?
Really. Oh wow. She's really strict with manners. What else? Is she funny, loud, quiet? Is she a confident person? Is she calm?				
Confident. But she's usually always like doing something. She always has	Positive Playful			

something in her mind to, kind of like, do.	Matter of factly			
She's quite active.	Impressed			
Not active, but like so for example if something up someone asks her to do something, then a bunch of people ask her to do something. So she's always way because she has to do everything at once.	Appreciative		Family roles Family dynamics Cultural norms? Collectivism? Place of others?	
Ohh she is always doing things. Is she doing things for other people or for herself?				
Both, but mostly others.		Becomes quiet and inaudible towards the end	Collectivism? Place of others?	
And other family? Do you have uncles, or cousins?				
Yeah, I have. He's pretty strict about also not being that loud. But otherwise he's also really nice.	Appreciative Honest	Emphasis on the 'also' is suggestive another person is really nice	Cultural norms/ differences? Family dynamics?	Voice: I wonder if there is an unconscious/ unaware family dynamics process that was internalised from her parents.
OK.				
And my auntie. She's nice, but she's not actually that strict.				
OK. What do you like about Italy?				
The food,	Smiling Positive Happy		Importance of food/ real life experiences (concrete experiences).	
The food!				
And also visiting my family.	Positive		Family dynamics	

	Loving		Relationships	
OK. When you're in Italy, are you feeling really comfortable? Like you are a part, know what to do, you know how to behave, you know what people expect you to do?				
Ahh... No.	Reflective Honest	Pondering, Playing with the playdough	Belonging	
No? You don't feel like that. Are people in Italy act a bit different sometimes?				

Page 2: Commented [IS1] Iris SAYAG 02/03/2023 16:16:00 Leila treats her three languages in am matter of fact way it's so clear and natural for her that she speaks them, that she doesn't mention them

Page 4: Commented [IS2] Iris SAYAG 03/03/2023 11:25:00 It is impossible to fully understand what L was saying. R seemed to understand her at the time but it is hard to understand in retrospect. Regardless, when L is discussing her parents being 'annoying', she does not discuss a major challenging or conflictual situation. Also, it seems to be based on a current or recent situation for her.

Page 4: Commented [IS3] Iris SAYAG 03/03/2023 11:48:00 This seem to be an interesting example. I don't really know what to make of it. Thinking about it, it seems there is roles here: where the mother is in charge of management and education.

Page 5: Commented [IS4] Iris SAYAG 03/03/2023 11:59:00 This question came because L was discussing home work and chores a lot. The relationship with her parents seemed to be foggy.

Page 6: Commented [IS5] Iris SAYAG 03/03/2023 12:35:00 Is this a cultural awareness? Or at least different expectations of what she is used to? What is the family situation? It almost feels as L's dad comes from a very specific background.

Page 6: Commented [IS6] Iris SAYAG 03/03/2023 13:28:00 L is impressed and appreciative of her grandma. She paints her as a strong character and it feels other people are in the centre. I wonder what that means for how she views herself and her parents.

Page 7: Commented [IS7] Iris SAYAG 03/03/2023 13:31:00 An obvious contrast with her parents and their parenting.

Page 7: Commented [IS8] Iris SAYAG 03/03/2023 13:26:00 It appears being 'strict' or 'manners' is an important trait or construct for L and defines her relationships but also how she views people and possibly herself.

Page 8: Commented [IS9] Iris SAYAG 03/03/2023 14:05:00 L indicated that she feels distinct from people in Italy. She shows that she doesn't feel Italian really. She doesn't belong. She indicates she feel different and has other norms and values

Page 8: Commented [IS10] Iris SAYAG 03/03/2023 14:08:00 I think L have a thought in her mind but doesn't know or a bit shy about expressing it. She is trying to clarify her thoughts.

Page 8: Commented [IS11] Iris SAYAG 03/03/2023 19:26:00

L is very careful not to generalise.

Page 8: Commented [IS12] Iris SAYAG 03/03/2023 19:33:00 L might demonstrate here her personal values and what's important to her: treating others with civility, kindness, respect. It also shows how social interactions are important to her. It also indicates that L does not feel at 'home' in Italy. More like a 'place' she visits.

Page 10: Commented [IS13] Iris SAYAG 03/03/2023 22:03:00 Maybe Leila is not engaged in the cultural aspects of being Italian. For her it's only where her father was born, or where her family lives.

Page 11: Commented [IS14] Iris SAYAG 03/03/2023 22:13:00 Very careful of generalisations

Page 11: Commented [IS15] Iris SAYAG 03/03/2023 22:15:00 What is this thing about manners?

Page 13: Commented [IS16] Iris SAYAG 03/03/2023 22:22:00 This is a warmer story. The narrative is very small but clear and the scenario is completely different

Page 13: Commented [IS17] Iris SAYAG 03/03/2023 22:23:00 Food as playing a big place in the experince of culture

Page 14: Commented [IS18] Iris SAYAG 03/03/2023 22:37:00 It feels as if she says she can be herself without worrying about 'expectations' or being wrong.

Page 15: Commented [IS19] Iris SAYAG 03/03/2023 22:43:00

Page 15: Commented [IS20] Iris SAYAG 03/03/2023 22:42:00 Still acknowledging the cultural 'personality'

Page 15: Commented [IS21] Iris SAYAG 04/03/2023 11:52:00 That is actually a similarity with Italians. That dilutes the experince 'multiculturality'

Page 15: Commented [IS22] Iris SAYAG 04/03/2023 11:14:00 Does that impact the way L views Italy or the Italian? It does for sure relates with the her relationships or the representation of her Italian family.

Page 16: Commented [IS23] Iris SAYAG 04/03/2023 11:24:00 L recognises an emotional shift in her parents. Does she recognises a shift in their body language? Does she recognise a sense of belonging she doesn't share?

Page 16: Commented [IS25] Iris SAYAG 04/03/2023 11:28:00 I am starting to wonder of L is not comfortable or used to talking about herself or engaging in reflections. Or, she dos not want to engage with challenging concepts or emotions.

Appendix R – Ethical approval letters and risk assessment



School of Psychology Ethics Committee

NOTICE OF ETHICS REVIEW DECISION LETTER

For research involving human participants

BSc/MSc/MA/Professional Doctorates in Clinical, Counselling and Educational Psychology

Reviewer: Please complete sections in **blue** | **Student:** Please complete/read sections in **orange**

Details

Reviewer:	Marita Morahan
Supervisor:	Mary Robinson
Student:	Iris Sayag
Course:	Prof Doc in Educational and Child Psychology
Title of proposed study:	MultiMe- multicultural children’s experiences and perceptions of selves and relationships.

Checklist

(Optional)

	YES	NO	N/A
Concerns regarding study aims (e.g., ethically/morally questionable, unsuitable topic area for level of study, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Detailed account of participants, including inclusion and exclusion criteria	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concerns regarding participants/target sample	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> X	<input type="checkbox"/>

Detailed account of recruitment strategy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concerns regarding recruitment strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All relevant study materials attached (e.g., freely available questionnaires, interview schedules, tests, etc.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Study materials (e.g., questionnaires, tests, etc.) are appropriate for target sample	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clear and detailed outline of data collection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Data collection appropriate for target sample	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If deception being used, rationale provided, and appropriate steps followed to communicate study aims at a later point	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If data collection is not anonymous, appropriate steps taken at later stages to ensure participant anonymity (e.g., data analysis, dissemination, etc.) – anonymisation, pseudonymisation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concerns regarding data storage (e.g., location, type of data, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concerns regarding data sharing (e.g., who will have access and how)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concerns regarding data retention (e.g., unspecified length of time, unclear why data will be retained/who will have access/where stored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If required, General Risk Assessment form attached	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any physical/psychological risks/burdens to participants have been sufficiently considered and appropriate attempts will be made to minimise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any physical/psychological risks to the researcher have been sufficiently considered and appropriate attempts will be made to minimise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If required, Country-Specific Risk Assessment form attached	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If required, a DBS or equivalent certificate number/information provided	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If required, permissions from recruiting organisations attached (e.g., school, charity organisation, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All relevant information included in the participant information sheet (PIS)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information in the PIS is study specific	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Language used in the PIS is appropriate for the target audience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All issues specific to the study are covered in the consent form	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Language used in the consent form is appropriate for the target audience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All necessary information included in the participant debrief sheet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Language used in the debrief sheet is appropriate for the target audience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Study advertisement included	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Content of study advertisement is appropriate (e.g., researcher's personal contact details are not shared, appropriate language/visual material used, etc.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Decision options

APPROVED	Ethics approval for the above-named research study has been granted from the date of approval (see end of this notice), to the date it is submitted for assessment.
APPROVED - BUT MINOR AMENDMENTS ARE REQUIRED <u>BEFORE</u> THE RESEARCH COMMENCES	In this circumstance, the student must confirm with their supervisor that all minor amendments have been made <u>before</u> the research commences. Students are to do this by filling in the confirmation box at the end of this form once all amendments have been attended to and emailing a copy of

	<p>this decision notice to the supervisor. The supervisor will then forward the student's confirmation to the School for its records.</p> <p>Minor amendments guidance: typically involve clarifying/amending information presented to participants (e.g., in the PIS, instructions), further detailing of how data will be securely handled/stored, and/or ensuring consistency in information presented across materials.</p>
<p>NOT APPROVED - MAJOR AMENDMENTS AND RE-SUBMISSION REQUIRED</p>	<p>In this circumstance, a revised ethics application <u>must</u> be submitted and approved <u>before</u> any research takes place. The revised application will be reviewed by the same reviewer. If in doubt, students should ask their supervisor for support in revising their ethics application.</p> <p>Major amendments guidance: typically insufficient information has been provided, insufficient consideration given to several key aspects, there are serious concerns regarding any aspect of the project, and/or serious concerns in the candidate's ability to ethically, safely and sensitively execute the study.</p>

Decision on the above-named proposed research study

Please indicate the decision:	
-------------------------------	--

Minor amendments

Please clearly detail the amendments the student is required to make
--

Written permission from a school is indicated as being attached but it is not there in the appendices. This needs to be included.

More child level information needs to be included in the documents aimed at the participants in order to achieve real informed consent. For example, the children could see the pictures of the tools you intend to use which you include in your appendices, in the consent form. Also the language for the consent form, PIS and debrief sheet could be broken down further to aim it at children including those of 7 who may have little or no reading skills. If it is being read out by parents, they may feel the need to read it verbatim. It needs to be written in a style which is more inclusive of the child's world. More like a book they would be familiar with in school or school based information, this is aimed at a higher level of understanding.

Major amendments

Please clearly detail the amendments the student is required to make
--

--

Assessment of risk to researcher

Has an adequate risk assessment been offered in the application form?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
If no, please request resubmission with an <u>adequate risk assessment</u> .		
If the proposed research could expose the <u>researcher</u> to any kind of emotional, physical or health and safety hazard, please rate the degree of risk:		
HIGH	Please do not approve a high-risk application. Travel to countries/provinces/areas deemed to be high risk should not be permitted and an application not be approved on this basis. If unsure, please refer to the Chair of Ethics.	<input type="checkbox"/>
MEDIUM	Approve but include appropriate recommendations in the below box.	<input type="checkbox"/>
LOW	Approve and if necessary, include any recommendations in the below box.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reviewer recommendations in relation to risk (if any):		

Reviewer's signature

Reviewer: (Typed name to act as signature)	
---	--

Date:	
-------	--

This reviewer has assessed the ethics application for the named research study on behalf of the School of Psychology Ethics Committee

RESEARCHER PLEASE NOTE

For the researcher and participants involved in the above-named study to be covered by UEL's Insurance, prior ethics approval from the School of Psychology (acting on behalf of the UEL Ethics Committee), and confirmation from students where minor amendments were required, must be obtained before any research takes place.

For a copy of UEL's Personal Accident & Travel Insurance Policy, please see the Ethics Folder in the Psychology Noticeboard.

Confirmation of minor amendments

(Student to complete)

I have noted and made all the required minor amendments, as stated above, before starting my research and collecting data

Student name: (Typed name to act as signature)	Iris Sayag
Student number:	2047733
Date:	19/05/2022

Please submit a copy of this decision letter to your supervisor with this box completed if minor amendments to your ethics application are required

School of Psychology Ethics Committee

REQUEST FOR AMENDMENT TO AN ETHICS APPLICATION

For BSc, MSc/MA and taught Professional Doctorate students

Please complete this form if you are requesting approval for proposed amendment(s) to an ethics application that has been approved by the School of Psychology

Note that approval must be given for significant change to research procedure that impact on ethical protocol. If you are not sure as to whether your proposed amendment warrants approval, consult your supervisor or contact Dr Trishna Patel (Chair of School Ethics Committee).

Required documents

A copy of your previously approved ethics application with proposed amendment(s) added with track changes.	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Copies of updated documents that may relate to your proposed amendment(s). For example, an updated recruitment notice, updated participant information sheet, updated consent form, etc.	YES <input type="checkbox"/>
A copy of the approval of your initial ethics application.	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Details

Name of applicant:	Iris Sayag
Programme of study:	Child and Educational Psychologist
Title of research:	Multi-me: multicultural children's experiences and perceptions of selves and relationships
Name of supervisor:	Mary Robinson

Proposed amendment(s)

Briefly outline the nature of your proposed amendment(s) and associated rationale(s) in the boxes below

Proposed amendment	Rationale
Recruitment strategy: the researcher will extend her recruitment beyond her local authority by reaching out to schools in other local authorities across London, using acquaintances and snowballing (acquaintances of participants who already agreed to join the research).	The research topic and population are not specific to the local authority. Adding knowledge from outside the LA will enhance the diversity of the research and make it more meaningful. The subject and area of study are not sensitive and prior knowledge of the participants should not interfere with the collection or analysis of the data.

--	--

Confirmation

Is your supervisor aware of your proposed amendment(s) and have they agreed to these changes?

YES

NO

Student's signature

Student:

(Typed name to act as signature)

Iris Sayag

Date:

14/10/2022

Reviewer's decision

Amendment(s) approved:

YES

NO

Comments:

To include written permission from local authorities in the thesis (i.e., appendices).

Reviewer:

(Typed name to act as signature)

Trishna Patel

Date:

14/10/2022

School of Psychology Ethics Committee

REQUEST FOR AMENDMENT TO AN ETHICS APPLICATION

For BSc, MSc/MA and taught Professional Doctorate students

Please complete this form if you are requesting approval for proposed amendment(s) to an ethics application that has been approved by the School of Psychology

Note that approval must be given for significant change to research procedure that impact on ethical protocol. If you are not sure as to whether your proposed amendment warrants approval, consult your supervisor or contact Dr Trishna Patel (Chair of School Ethics Committee).

Required documents

A copy of your previously approved ethics application with proposed amendment(s) added with track changes.	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Copies of updated documents that may relate to your proposed amendment(s). For example, an updated recruitment notice, updated participant information sheet, updated consent form, etc.	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
A copy of the approval of your initial ethics application.	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Details

Name of applicant:	Iris Sayag
Programme of study:	Child and Educational Psychologist
Title of research:	Multi-me: multicultural children's experiences and perceptions of selves and relationships
Name of supervisor:	Mary Robinson

Proposed amendment(s)

Briefly outline the nature of your proposed amendment(s) and associated rationale(s) in the boxes below

Proposed amendment	Rationale
Data collection: Conduct two interviews in the participants' homes when the participants are external to the researcher's Local Authority Educational Psychology Service.	Ideally the interviews will take place in the participants' school and home (one visit each) but, should any of the schools find it difficult to provide additional space for the sessions, a home visit will be offered, in line with the home visiting policies of that Local Authority Service.

--	--

Confirmation

Is your supervisor aware of your proposed amendment(s) and have they agreed to these changes?

YES

NO

Student's signature

Student:

(Typed name to act as signature)

Iris Sayag

Date:

16/11/2022

Reviewer's decision

Amendment(s) approved:

YES

NO

Comments:

Please ensure that the option of two interviews at the participant's home is clearly included in all study materials (e.g., PIS etc.).


Reviewer:

(Typed name to act as signature)

Trishna Patel

Date:

17/11/2022

 UEL Risk Assessment Form			
Name of Assessor:	Iris Sayag	Date of Assessment:	
Activity title:	Multi-me: multicultural children's experiences and perceptions of selves and relationships	Location of activity:	Schools and homes of research participants in London.
Signed off by Manager: (Print Name)	Helena Bunn	Date and time: (if applicable)	14.3.23
<p>Please describe the activity/event in as much detail as possible (include nature of activity, estimated number of participants, etc.). If the activity to be assessed is part of a fieldtrip or event please add an overview of this below:</p> <p>Meetings for interviews for a postgraduate research in Child and Educational Psychology course. The participants are children at between the ages of 7-11. The interviews will take place at schools and homes of the participants. During the interviews, the participants will be alone with the researcher, with other adults on the premises at all times; at school, other teacher will be available and at home, the children's legal guardians or parents will be present. The interviews will be conducted with play-based materials such as dice, cards, sand and small objects.</p> <p>Overview of FIELD TRIP or EVENT:</p> <p>The researcher will travel to schools and homes across London, via public transport.</p>			

Guide to risk ratings:

Likelihood of Risk	Hazard Severity	Risk Rating (a x b = c)
1 = Low (Unlikely)	1 = Slight (Minor / less than 3 days off work)	1-2 = Minor (No further action required)
2 = Moderate (Quite likely)	2= Serious (Over 3 days off work)	3-4 = Medium (May require further control measures)
3 = High (Very likely or certain)	3 = Major (Over 7 days off work, specified injury or death)	6/9 = High (Further control measures essential)

Hazards attached to the activity

Hazards identified	Who is at risk?	Existing Controls	Likelihood	Severity	Residual Risk Rating (Likelihood x Severity)	Additional control measures required (if any)	Final risk rating
Catching COVID-19 and other infections	Researcher, participants	The researcher will be vaccinated according to guidelines. Masks will be worn when with other adults. The	2	2	4	The sessions will be conducted in places the children are already exposed to. The research is conducted similarly to	2
Harm while traveling and visiting the personal homes of the participants	Researcher	The researcher will exercise caution and adhere to the home visit policy of the local authority in which she is	1	1	1	A buddy system will be put in place with colleagues in UEL and in the training practice.	

