



**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND GERMAN STUDIES**

**English Use Across Contexts in a Multilingual**

**Subject: A Qualitative Case Study**

Treball de Fi de Grau/ BA dissertation

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June 2026

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to Allah. It is through His blessings and guidance that I have found the strength to complete this project.

My family has been a significant support during this journey. Their belief in me has granted me unconditional love and encouragement. Thank you so much, Ghailan family.

Besides that, I would also wish to take a moment to extend my sincere thanks to my tutor, Dr. Sònia Oliver Del Olmo. Owing to her guidance and valuable feedback, I would not have been able to complete this research paper.

Finally, to my friends and every person who has supported and encouraged me throughout my studies. Words cannot fully express how grateful I am for having had this experience and the opportunity to go through this journey.

الحمد لله

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## **Abstract**

Multilingual speakers distribute their linguistic repertoire according to family, social or professional domains. This qualitative study examines how English is used alternatively within the linguistic repertoire of a multilingual speaker of Darija (Arabic), Spanish, Catalan and English within the fields of Sociolinguistics, Multilingualism, and Second Language Acquisition. For instance, this study aims to analyse how context may shape English use and how it is intertwined with the subject's other languages across different communicative domains.

The research is based on a qualitative analysis of three transcribed recordings of spontaneous communication within workplace, family and friendship contexts. The results support Fishman's theory of language domains, Cook's concept of multilingualism and finally, Li Wei's concept of translanguaging. These researchers corroborate the idea that English language is predominantly used with academic and professional contexts as well as with informal interactions. The results emphasize how language, identity and social context are connected and provide an updated pedagogical implication that supports context-awareness within multilingual approaches. Overall, this study wishes to contribute to current research on multilingual language practices and the use of English within multilingual repertoires.

**Keywords:** English, Multilingualism, Sociolinguistics, Language Acquisition, Identity, Translanguaging and Language Practices.

## **1. Introduction**

Multilingualism is one of the most central aspects in contemporary societies. In fact, in areas such as Education or Urbanisation, individuals often feel pressured to use different linguistic systems in their daily lives. Rather than using these systems alternately, multilingual speakers assign different functions to each linguistic system depending on the social context, communicative purpose and the topic of speech (Fishman, 1965). This distribution of language systems has been widely discussed in the linguistic field, particularly Applied Linguistics and Sociolinguistics, drawing on researchers such as Cenoz, Cook, Grosjean and Krashen.

In this sense, considering language domains and multilingual repertoires, English has a different and yet significant position within multilinguals usage. Owing to the presence of ELF (English as a Lingua Franca), the language is often acquired for educational and professional purposes. Therefore, its use and function may differ significantly from other languages learnt for other purposes. For instance, analyzing how English's use differs across contexts is essential in order to get a valuable insight of the dynamics of multilingualism within the daily language practice of L2 users.

This study focuses primarily on exploring how the English language is used differently across settings in a multilingual speaker who uses four languages (Spanish, Catalan, Arabic and English) for everyday purposes. And by analysing how English works regarding the other three languages, the study aims to present certain practices which may trigger debates on multilingual issues. Thereby, the main research question guiding this study is:

- 1) How does context influence the English use as a second language of a multilingual speaker?

This respect, within the Sociolinguistics and Multilingualism framework, this

study intends to examine how the English language interacts with other languages across different contexts, and also how this contributes to multilingual language practices. For example: the use of formal vs. non-formal language or the difference between oral and written references.

Therefore, the main objective of this study is to investigate the contextual distribution of English regarding the linguistic repertoire of a multilingual speaker. More specifically, the research aims to firstly identify what kind of settings, such as academic or social, is preferred when using English as a second language. Secondly, to examine the different functions of oral and written uses of the same language. Thirdly, comparing and analysing the role in which English functions within the linguistic repertoire of the speaker, for example for professional purposes. Finally, the research concludes with possible interpretations using multilingualism and Second Language Acquisition frameworks.

In this sense, the present research can be justified for many reasons. Firstly, it contributes within former research on Applied linguistic field and it provides a valuable insight of contextual language use, putting emphasis on sociolinguistics. Secondly, it considers the English language in a multilingual environment taking into account EFL premises. Thirdly, the results may help and contribute to further implications in this area, especially for English language teaching of Multilingual learners. Therefore, understanding the way in which multilingual speakers utilize English as a second language in different contexts and, or situations, can help teachers prepare more context-aware methodologies for real-life practices.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

As previously stated, the present study aims to analyse how the English language is used across completely different settings within the linguistic repertoire of a

multilingual subject (the current researcher). Taking into account the impact that language use has in social interaction and identity of an individual, it is essential to explore the theoretical perspectives that justify multilingual practices and contextual language distribution. Thus, this section presents the main foundations of the study and it is divided into two blocks: the first one focuses on Multilingualism, Sociolinguistics and Second Language Acquisition (SLA) while the second one explores the Linguistic Repertoire, Identity and Multilingual Language practices based on the previous experience and life trajectory of this multilingual subject.

## **2.1 Multilingualism, Sociolinguistics and Language Acquisition**

### **2.1.1 Multilingualism and multicompetence**

Owing to the significance that Globalisation, Education, Migration and international mobility have nowadays, Multilingualism has been established as one of the most important phenomena. According to Cenoz (2013, page 3), multilingualism is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon that focuses on both the ability and use to speak more than one language.

In this vein, traditional approaches to Multilingualism tend to focus on analysing the phenomenon assuming that multilingual speakers possessed two separate linguistic competences, as if they were two monolingual speakers in one person. François Grosjean (1989) challenges this last idea given that he considers bilinguals and multilinguals are not equivalent to “two monolinguals in one person” (Grosjean, 1989 page 3) since these types of speakers use languages within their own distribution according to different settings and communicative needs. In other words, according to Grosjean (1989), languages should not be accounted for with the similar use or

approach but let individuals speak in their own way without basing on language ideologies.

Similarly, Vivian Cook (2016) introduced the concept of multicompetence, which refers to the integrated system of a mind that uses more than one language. According to this author, multilingual speakers have an interconnected linguistics system that helps their language interact dynamically, and to differ them from monolinguals. To this respect, this perspective is particularly relevant for the current study given that the participant's repertoire demonstrates the coexistence of different languages, in particular, Arabic, Spanish, Catalan and English language depending on the context of use.

In addition to that, multilingual speakers attempt to combine different linguistic resources in their daily speech and transfer linguistic features such as vocabulary across their linguistic systems. Practices like combining different linguistic resources and transferring linguistic features, show the flexible nature of multilingual competence and challenge traditional perspectives that explore languages as fully separated systems.

In our study, we could see this when the multilingual subject alternates between Spanish, Catalan, English and Arabic on a daily basis depending on the communicative context. Therefore, this aligns with the idea that multilingual competence is dynamic.

### **2.1.2 Sociolinguistics, Domains and Diglossia.**

As stated before, multilingual speakers tend to use languages for different purposes which are influenced by social context. In this sense, sociolinguistics explores the relationship between language and society and how influences such as the interlocutor, the place and the topic itself shape linguistic practices of a subject. The concept of

domains is one of the most significant theories within sociolinguistics coined by Joshua A. Fishman in 1965.

This author suggests that multilingual speakers use a particular language in a specific social or professional context and, therefore, it becomes dominant in that certain type of interaction. In other words, language choice is not random, speakers choose to speak in a language they feel the most suitable or comfortable within a specific context. To exemplify this, a speaker may use one language to communicate with their families, and then another one at work owing to professional requirements.

Within the Catalan sociolinguistic context, language practices are driven by migration, governmental language policies and educational systems. To this respect, Professors Melissa Moyer and Eva Codó (2005) have highlighted the coexistence of Catalan and Spanish with different sociopolitical positions and prestige. Catalan is often connected with institutional and academic domains, as it is used particularly in these areas, whereas Spanish is like a *lingua franca* since it is used in informal everyday communication. However, Moyer (2011) further shows the flexibility of language choice in institutional settings.

Furthermore, Fishman (1965) emphasizes the difference between diglossia and multilingualism. While bilingualism is based on the ability that a speaker has to communicate in more than one linguistic system, diglossia refers to the separation of different functions that influences language choice depending on prestige values or communicative roles. In some societies, there are languages which are mostly used owing to their greater prestige, institutional success or international mobility. For example, in Catalonia, Catalan and Spanish coexist, but Spanish is more reachable owing to its wide demographic presence while Catalan is mostly used for institutional or educational purposes (Moyer & Codó, 2005).

It is key to mention here the importance of this distinction when focusing on languages such as English, Spanish, Catalan, and Arabic as it is the case of this TFG. Owing to the position of English as a lingua franca, its importance is driven by globalization, education and professional opportunities. In contrast, migrant languages such as Arabic (in our case), become marginalized regardless of family or identity domains. Therefore, language choice demonstrates the impact and/or influence of language ideologies and sociopolitical hierarchies in individuals' linguistic practices and choices. The notion *domains* is particularly relevant for this study given that the subject's linguistic repertoire reflects a clear contextual distribution of language as we will see in section 2.2.

### **2.1.3 Second Language Acquisition and Language Exposure.**

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) explores how speakers have the ability to learn another language besides their first language (L1). There is an important distinction which is essential to mention between SLA and Foreign Language Acquisition (FLA), in other words, SLA is mostly learnt in a social environment and it is used, generally, in everyday communication, whereas FLA is learnt through explicit and formal instructions.

Focusing on Catalonia, Spanish and Catalan may be the second languages of migrant individuals owing to their constant use for social or institutional domains. Conversely, English is often acquired in this society as a foreign language for educational and professional purposes. To this respect, research within SLA examines the importance of exposure and input in language acquisition. In order to get linguistic competence, it is necessary to be exposed to interaction with the target language, prioritising its quantity and quality. Exposure through formal education or media

consumption involving both receptive and productive skills can facilitate language learning. In this sense, Krashen (2013), highlights the significance of input in acquisition, arguing that “Compelling input appears to eliminate the need for motivation, a conscious desire to improve. When you get compelling input, you acquire language - whether you are interested in improving or not” (Krashen, 2013, p.15)

The subject’s (myself) initial exposure to English was mainly receptive as the acquisition was through media consumption, reading and classroom learning. However, with the passing of the years, this individual’s productive competence increased greatly due to university interaction and her professional experience as an English teacher. Therefore, the participant’s use of English has changed from only academic purposes to professional and everyday linguistic domains.

Another pivotal debate within SLA explores the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH), which suggests that learning a language is only effective at a younger age. However, researchers such as Carme Muñoz (2006), challenge the idea that “younger is always the better” especially referring to foreign language acquisition. According to Muñoz (2006), age is not the only significant factor when wanting to learn a language, but motivation, quantity and quality of input and exposure ought to be considered, too. Nevertheless, this author still accepts that early exposure can be more effective for learners:

In other words, the younger children are first exposed to the L2, the more chances they have of coming to be considered native, or near native L2 speakers. These findings corroborate the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) (Lenneberg, 1967), which, in the strong version, states that during the years leading up to puberty children can acquire an L2 more easily and also achieve native-like competence. After puberty, acquisition becomes more difficult and native-like competence impossible. (Muñoz 2, p. 2006)

Furthermore, speakers adapt and choose their language depending on the setting. Moreover, register and communicative genre are chosen taking into account the

formality of a situation, audience and purpose. For example, if a speaker wishes to talk about their advantages as an employee to their boss, they might want to speak in a formal register including academic English to show proficiency and politeness in written mode, too.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) provides a taxonomy of Language levels in order to evaluate a subject's proficiency. These levels are, generally, used to test the level of an English speaker for educational or institutional purposes. See Table 1 (below) to describe the standard CEFR levels:

| Level | Name               | Description                                                                                       |
|-------|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A1    | Beginner           | Ability to understand and use basic expressions to introduce themselves and ask simple questions. |
| A2    | Elementary         | Communication of simple routine tasks.                                                            |
| B1    | Intermediate       | Describe experiences of everyday situations.                                                      |
| B2    | Upper Intermediate | Fluent interaction in spontaneous communication of abstract topics.                               |
| C1    | Advanced           | Produce well-structured speech for academic, professional and social purposes.                    |
| C2    | Proficiency        | Native-like level in which an individual can understand everything.                               |

Table 1. CEFR levels of subject's proficiency. (speech)

It is essential to mention the presence of the four skills of a language: writing, reading, speaking and listening. Each skill has different descriptors and Table 1 only shows the skill of speaking.

However, multilingual competence goes beyond CEFR level. This is owing to the fact that the proficiency of a speaker's language is also based on identity, social context or emotional context not only on what learners can perform in a language.

## **2.2 Linguistic Repertoire, Identity and Language.**

The concept of linguistic repertoire (Gumperz, 1964: page 138) refers to the list of linguistic systems that a speaker has and the ways in which these resources are used in different social domains. Therefore, linguistic repertoires are dynamic and interconnected rather than viewed as completely separated systems. This concept can be driven by potential factors such as migration, education or identity.

Multilingual speakers tend to choose and adapt a language depending on the context, interlocutor, topic and purpose, thus, multilingual practices cannot be expected and completely understood since the speakers use different languages in their speech and interaction. This section analyses the linguistic repertoire of a subject and how it relates to the construction of identity and language ideologies, among other important practices taking our particular case as a possible example.

### **2.2.1. Subject's Linguistic Repertoire**

The subject of the present study is a multilingual speaker who uses four languages on a regular basis: Darija (Arabic), Spanish, Catalan, and English. Each of these languages is used in a different context and it is associated with a particular function. To this respect, as a 22-year-old student born and raised in Barcelona to Moroccan parents who migrated to Spain approximately thirty-five years ago, her linguistic repertoire has been shaped from an early age by this transnational and multilingual context.

During the first three years of my life, Arabic – particularly the Moroccan dialect ‘Darija’ – was her primary language of communication owing to the family domain. At the same time, the participant was exposed to Spanish through interactions with her older siblings, who used the language among each other. Consequently, her

linguistic system was formed of sentences mixing Arabic and some common Spanish words used by my siblings. For example:

(1) Khesni dormir

*I want to sleep.*

(2) Yalah n michu n parque.

*Let's go to the park.*

In both examples (1) and (2), the Spanish transfer only happens with lexical words (*dormir, parque*), rather than with grammatical structures. This fact implies that lexical transfer happened before the acquisition of more complex grammatical structures, which emphasises research such as the one carried out by Stankova (2016) supporting the fact that content words tend to be acquired priorly than functional categories in a bilingual speaker.

Starting nursery education at the age of three marked a turning point in the subject's linguistic repertoire as Catalan and Spanish became the central communicative system in her daily speech. For instance, Spanish became the dominant language when interacting with siblings, cousins and friends while Catalan was only restricted to academic contexts: for example when talking with a teacher at school or work. This phenomenon highlights domain-based language use, where every language is often associated with different functions and settings. Therefore, during the subject's childhood, the linguistic system was divided into three languages, where each one was used depending on different context and interlocutor.

This distribution emphasizes Fishman's concept of domains given that depending on the language used, different functions or settings are assigned. As previously stated, the subject's linguistic repertoire was structured and separated between family, social and academic domains.

In her adolescence (at the age of thirteen), the subject began learning English in Secondary school and independently. In other words, the exposure of English was highly receptive with reading and listening activities as Spanish teachers tended to rely on Spanish and Catalan as the teaching languages. Besides that, she also used to consume a lot of English-language media as well as leisure activities (i.e. reading a book in the target language). However, it was not until the subject began her university degree in English Studies (at the age of eighteen) that her knowledge and proficiency in the language increased owing to the fact that she was exposed to English language (in class) both with students and teachers. At this point, her learning of the language was not only through receptive skills (listening and reading) but also productive (speaking and writing), as she started practicing the language through classmates and lecturers' interactions

Besides that, at the age of thirteen the participant attended a 2-hour class of Arabic, at the weekend to focus on oral and written modes. It is important to mention that even if Darija had always functioned as the oral heritage linguistic system, owing to those classes, the individual was able to be introduced to written Arabic and differences in variation between Arabic dialects and standard forms. This experience allowed the expanding of the multilingual speaker's linguistic repertoire.

At the age of nineteen, the subject began working as an English teacher in a private Language School and that transformed her language use from academic into also professional purposes. This fact contributed to shaping her identity from being just a mere language user to an educator, reinforcing English's instrumental value.

Additionally, visiting Morocco for two months every year resulted in certain exposure to French (given that it is the second language in Morocco owing to colonisation). Words like '*livraison*', which means delivery when ordering food, or

common expressions like ‘*ça va?*’ when (greetings were commonly used in this subject’s speech.

Overall, the subject’s linguistic repertoire shows a context-dependent and dynamic distribution of languages, which is principally shaped by factors such as education, social and family interaction and professional career. Below it is included a breakdown of the subject’s linguistic repertoire according to its domains in Table 2.

|   | Language        | Age of Acquisition             | Contexts                                                 | Pragmatic functions                        | Type of competence                                 |
|---|-----------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Darija (Arabic) | Birth                          | With family at home or visiting Morocco                  | Cultural identity and emotional expression | Oral heritage language                             |
| 2 | Spanish         | Early childhood (0-3 years)    | Everyday social interaction between friends and siblings | Daily communication; socialisation         | Native-like indicating oral and written production |
| 3 | Catalan         | School (3 years)               | Public administration and academic settings              | Education and formal interaction           | Proficiency with oral and written production       |
| 4 | English         | Secondary School (13 years)    | University, at work, online (media) and travelling       | Academic and professional purposes         | Proficiency in oral and written production         |
| 5 | French          | Adolescence (limited exposure) | Visits to Morocco                                        | Basic communication                        | Intermediate                                       |

Table 2. Multilingual subject’s linguistic repertoire (Ghailan, 2026)

### 2.2.2. Language, Identity and Ideology.

As stated before, multilingual speakers are used to shifting between identities and personalities when choosing a specific communicative system. Influenced by

sociocultural context, individuals choose a different behaviour which reflects integration, social positioning or integration (Chen & Bond, 2010; Wei, 2018; Grosjean, 2010)

Considering multilingual speakers, identity is shaped by migration, mobility or contact with other cultures. Focusing on our subject's case, the use of Darija shows the connection of Moroccan heritage, and the use of Spanish and Catalan the integration within its society. In other words, Arabic is mostly chosen as a symbol of family and cultural identity while Spanish and Catalan are used for education and participation purposes within the Catalan and Spanish society. Conversely, English demonstrates how the individual is connected to academic and professional identity as well as international communication.

Throughout the participant's life, language has both granted her not just outstanding opportunities and facilities, but also certain limitations. Although the subject's competence in Spanish and Catalan steadily helped her integrate into Barcelona's community, her deep embedded Arabic accent was sometimes revealed when speaking. Thus, causing a negative effect shown by non-Arabic speakers. This might be due to the fact that Arabic dialects such as Darija are often overlooked and marginalised in terms of literacy. Furthermore, proficiency in Spanish and Catalan is not enough to feel socially integrated if there are traces of an Arabic accent. This clearly shows the linguistic prejudices and ideology that may affect multilingual speakers' identities regarding marginalised languages.

A clear example is that English has become the most transformative and significant language for the multilingual subject in her academic and professional environments. Her relationship with the language is mainly instrumental given that such language gave her access to educational and professional opportunities. Owing to

English becoming the lingua franca for communication, being a fluent English speaker helps individuals increase their social and economic mobility. Besides from that, English became also part of the participant's identity as it was the language that she acquired after the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) and she uses it daily nowadays.

Furthermore, another important ideological concern is the concept of "native-speakerism" connected to language teaching. This ideology focuses on the fact that native speakers are inherently better language teachers than non-native teachers (Holliday, 2006). When this multilingual subject (our case) started working as an English teacher, she struggled with the insecurity of not being viewed as native. Furthermore, even if teaching experience has been the key to being contracted rather than native-speakerism, it is still very important in most language centers: "It was also observed that native speakerism was represented in both Anglophone and non-Anglophone contexts, indicating that the idealization of NES as language models is normalized in globalized SA marketing, and reproduced widely" (Humphreys 2026, p.13).

The subject's linguistic repertoire highlights a speaker who is deeply embedded in migration, multilingualism and mobility. On one hand, it shows her family's history and culture and on the other hand, it also highlights the sociopolitical situation in Catalonia, where two languages coexist and have different levels of prestige and social support, as it will be explained in the following lines.

To this respect, when the participant was little, she thought languages ought to be used in specific contexts; Catalan in formal settings, Spanish for more informal everyday communication and Arabic when communicating with family or travelling to Morocco. Owing to this, during the subject's stay in Spain she was often approached as the "Moroccan girl" and while she was in Morocco she was identified as the "Spanish

girl”. Such experiences demonstrate how multilingual identity is often hybrid. For this reason, coming to an understanding of language as a dynamic resource is essential in order to start using languages pragmatically, efficiently and freely. A multilingual speaker is known to use languages simultaneously and unconsciously change personalities (Chen & Bond, 2010)

Language ideologies are really important in order to understand multilingual experiences. There are some languages that are more socially accepted or prestigious than others. In other words, there are linguistic systems that are mostly admired socially and economically and others that are more marginalised due to their lack of economic and social advantages. For example, English is linked to globalization and educational and professional success while other languages can be marginalised, as previously discussed.

Overall, the participant’s linguistic repertoire and experiences demonstrate multilingualism with positive and negative slides socially. Unfortunately, not all languages are valued the same: English and Spanish are generally viewed as prestigious while Arabic is often marginalised. Therefore, society is what shapes language ideologies and prejudices, determining a multilingual speaker’s identities regarding the language being spoken. Multilingual speakers tend to feel like they would never belong to a single community and, at the same time, consider the fact that they could feel part of different cultures advantageous.

### **2.2.3. Translanguaging and Dynamic Language Practices**

Developed by Li Wei (2017), translanguaging is the flexible way to use different linguistic systems without the need of separating them. This idea challenges traditional debates surrounding the claim that languages should be treated as separated systems.

This author further expands this idea by analysing how in translanguaging, meaning-making practices are essential in order to understand the subject's language choice:

To sum up the discussion so far, Translanguaging reconceptualizes language as a multilingual, multisemiotic, multisensory, and multimodal resource for sense-and meaning-making, and the multilingual as someone who is aware of the existence of the political entities of named languages and has an ability to make use the structural features of some of them that they have acquired. (Li 2017, p. 22)

In this vein, multilingual speakers intertwine languages frequently in their daily speech depending on communicative needs. Consequently, lexical and functional transfer between languages happens as well as code-switching. This last term refers to the use of more than one language in a multi- or bilingual speech (Bailey, 1999)

Translanguaging examples are present in the participant's linguist repertoire. Firstly, early childhood sentences using both Arabic and Spanish lexical items show how languages can be used within multilingual competence. Secondly, the inclusion of French words during her visit to Morocco shows how multilingual speakers can adapt their linguistic resources to the corresponding sociolinguistic context.

Besides that, combining English and Spanish while communicating with coworkers, friends or classmates is also a potential example of translanguaging. Therefore, this term encourages speakers to be creative and flexible while speaking; languages should not be treated as separated systems but instead, they can be mixed and adapted to the speaker's communicative needs.

### **3. Methods and Data Collection \*transcripts in appendices**

This study focuses on a qualitative approach in order to examine how English is used across different contexts within a multilingual subject's linguistic repertoire. The focus

is on spontaneous oral interaction within different domain backgrounds, which allows for an in-depth analysis of how multilingual speakers use translanguaging and code-switching in everyday communication depending on the domain.

The data consists of three transcribed interactions from different communicative settings: family, workplace and friendship. These contexts were chosen in order to underscore different sociolinguistic domains following Fishman's (1965) theory. Each recorded interaction provides a clear example of translanguaging and how multilingual speakers shift languages according to the interlocutor, topic and communicative need. Through this, it makes it possible to have an understanding of the position of English in language use in a multilingual speaker.

The transcripts were written in a simple and basic orthography, following the exact communicative strategies and words used by the multilingual individuals. Some non-standard written representations of the Arabic dialect Darija were used in order to portray transparently how language is used, prioritizing accuracy.

The three selected domains were chosen particularly in order to show different backgrounds and how multilingualism forms part of the three of them, regardless of where and with whom the interaction is. The domains are:

- Family domain: mostly informal, it is an intimate interaction grounded in heritage and emotional connections.
- Workplace domain: it is a semi-formal interaction including professional vocabulary and objectives.
- Friendship domain: it is mostly informal and the interaction is portraying a sense of solidarity and identity construction.

The data collected allows the accessibility of a deep understanding on the position of English in a distributed linguistic repertoire across different domains.

## 4. Discussion

This section explores how the English language works across the three different domains of the subject's multilingual linguistic repertoire. The study focuses on how choosing a language can show a particular identity and function. The analysis is going to take into account the domain theory by Fishman (1965), the multicompetence concept by Cook (2016) and translanguaging by Li Wei (2017).

### 4.1 Family Domain

Within the family domain, Darija, Spanish and Catalan are present while English is absent. This fact shows how language choice is connected to emotional and intimate ties, in which heritage and cultural languages are used dynamically in the conversation. The interaction is between a mother, four siblings and a niece.

The Arabic dialect Darija is central in the interaction as the mother uses it to reflect authority: “*Insaf, jib lkhobz mn cuzina* / Insaf, bring bread from the kitchen”. The other two languages, which are Spanish and Catalan, are used as secondary resources given that they are intertwined between the siblings' speech.

Sentences like “*Ana masha. Nihad, ¿quieres pan?* / Going. Nihad, do you want bread?” portray code-switching in which Spanish words are mixed with Arabic sentences. As seen in the interaction, the conversation flows spontaneously, showing how translanguaging is mostly unconscious and natural within multilingual speakers.

It is significant to talk about the English absence in the interaction. English as a lingua franca helps us understand the reason behind the common utilisation of the language as a Foreign language owing to international or professional purposes rather than within the family or cultural domain. This idea supports Fishman (1965) notion of domains as languages are related to specific functions.

Catalan is used when interacting with the nieces as it is the primary language for education in Catalonia. Kids get used to speaking every day in Catalan at school and therefore use it within their daily life routine.

Overall, the interaction shows how family and culture domains prioritise non-prestigious languages such as Darija Arabic and exclude English due to its lack of relevance in this setting.

#### **4.2 Workplace Domain**

Considering the workplace domain, English is the principal communicative resource, supporting the idea of lingua franca in multilingual backgrounds. Besides that, this language is intertwined with Spanish, which can also be considered as a lingua franca within Catalan society. These two languages are combined dynamically instead of fully separated.

Sentences such as “*Better than expected, the writing part fue bastante bien* / Better than expected, the writing part went really well” show how English is used for specific terminology (“writing part”) while Spanish is used for evaluating (“*fue bastante bien*”).

Throughout the interaction, it can be analysed how translanguaging (Wei, 2017) between the languages happens unconsciously. Immersed in an English and Spanish language center, both languages are used to convey meaning. In addition to that, it is also important to mention how English is mostly used when talking about educational or institutional terms while Spanish for more informal expressions.

### 4.3 Friendship Domain

This interaction portrays the highest degree of multilingual communication as three different languages are used: Spanish, English and Arabic. As it is a conversation between two best friends who share origins and cultural background, language use is used according to identity and emotional expression rather than for professional or educational purposes.

English appears with informal words, portraying the inclusion of the language within youth in sentences like: “*girl, they are so expensive right now*”. The word “girl” highlights friendship and solidarity as well as the prioritisation of ELF in informal communication.

Furthermore, Darija is used to reflect cultural and religious ties. The term “*wlah*” translates literally as “by the word of Allah” or “I swear to God”. Owing to religious closeness, which in this case is with Islam, muslim multilingual speakers tend to use the language for this purpose.

Besides that, it is clear that Spanish remains the principal language and English and Darija are just used for emphasis or identity demonstration. This domain portrays how code-switching between three different languages is naturally and spontaneously used in friendships.

## 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study aimed to examine how context influences English use of a particular multilingual speaker that has a linguistic repertoire composed of Darija Arabic, Spanish, Catalan and English. By exploring the spontaneous interactions between family, workplace and friendship domains, this paper supports the fact that English as a second language does not function as a fixed or separated language but it is

rather used dynamically with other languages depending on the specific social contexts or environments.

Our TFG study supports Fishman's (1965) theory of domain-based languages given that each context portrayed a different function depending on the corresponding communicative needs. For instance, in the family domain, English was not used given that it is not a language that can be considered within family usage for affective reasons as Darija and Spanish because of the subject's geographical and cultural origins.

In contrast, English was the main language at the workplace domain as it was used for educational and/or professional purposes. However, it was not used as a separate system but was code-switched and translanguaged with Spanish. Therefore, this finding may show that multilingual speakers do not view languages as completely different systems but linguistic resources which can be intertwined and used together to convey meaning.

As to the friendship domain, it had the highest level of linguistic fluidity when using three languages: English, Spanish and Darija. In fact, they were used naturally and spontaneously by the multilingual speakers. In this case, English was not used for institutionalised purposes but for interactional ones within an informal interaction. This observation supports Li Wei's (2017) claim that multilingual speakers tend to use languages as meaning-making systems rather than separated resources.

Consequently, this TFG emphasizes the connection between multilingualism, identity and language ideologies. Often, the multilingual individual goes through experiences that show the impact that sociopolitical linguistic ideologies have had in language choice and English language is often associated with international communication and mobility due to the globalization phenomenon while Darija remains a "marginalized" language in Spanish society. Thus, when multilingual individuals

usually shift across languages portraying different identities when influenced by migration and education contexts.

Overall, the results of the particular study on English use across contexts in a multilingual subject show that multilingual competence, as Cook (2016) supports, is not just about reaching proficiency and following CEFR level requirements, but using a language in different ways (formal or informal) considering several contexts (family, work or friends), identities and communicative aims (professional or emotional). Therefore, English as an L2 is understood as a dynamic linguistic resource whose function changes flexibly according to the specific setting.

Finally, this study might contribute to further debates on Sociolinguistics and Multilingualism by supporting the presence of several domains in the subject's language choice. Furthermore, it also puts emphasis on accepting translanguaging and multilingual competence as a natural phenomenon within multilingual practices. In other words, the findings of the present TFG may shed some light into English L2 teaching methodology. They could imply some practical applications as well as certain implications within the field of knowledge which comprises Sociolinguistics, Multilingualism, 2nd Language Acquisition and Applied Linguistics as the main background for this study.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Family gathering.

*Mother: Insaf jib lkhoz mn cuzina. \*Insaf bring bread from the kitchen*

*Insaf (researcher): Ana masha. Nihad, ¿quieres pan? \*Going. Nihad, do you want bread too?*

*Nihad (sister): Lawalo, jib ghir un vaso de leche para la Meli. \*Nope, bring a cup of milk for Meli.*

*Melissa (niece): No! Jo vull suc. \*No! I want juice.*

*Insaf (researcher): Ah vale. Yara tu també vols? \*Oh okay. Yara, do you want too?*

*Yara (niece): Mmm, no vull. \*Mmm, no.*

*Houda (sister): Mama, 3yit man9olek que no me gusta la tortilla. \*Mom, I have told you several times that I do not like omelettes.*

*Mother: Iwa ghir kola. \*You will eat it either way.*

*Ismail (brother): Es lo que hay. \*It is what it is.*

### Appendix 2: At the workspace.

*Marta (director): How did your Ap2 tests go? \*How did your Ap2 tests go?*

*Insaf (researcher): Better than expected, the writing part fue bastante bien. \*Better than expected, the writing part went really well.*

*Sofia (coworker): No se si soy la unica que I had to explain them the instructions como 4 veces. \* I do not know if I am the only one that had to explain them the instructions like 4 times.*

*Marina (coworker): No literal \*Yeah literally*

*Marta (director): Que mal que el speaking les cueste tanto. \*It's a pity that they struggle with the speaking.*

*Insaf (researcher): ¿Escuchaste a X? I was trying to help him so bad pero es que se bloqueaba todo el rato. \*Did you hear X? I was trying to help him so badly but he gets blocked the whole time.*

*Sofia (coworker): Pero that's normal. Como saben que van a ser evaluados they get really nervous and forget most of the knowledge learnt. \*But that's normal. As they know that they are being evaluated, they get really nervous and forget most of the knowledge learnt.*

#### Appendix 3: Conversation with a friend.

*Insaf (researcher): tia, cuando cogemos el vuelo? \*Girl, when are we booking the flights?*

*Nihad (best friend): girl, they are so expensive right now. \*girl, they are so expensive right now.*

*Insaf (researcher): Es que if we don't do it right now veras como nos costará mucho más luego. \*It's just that if we don't do it right now you will see how it will be more expected later.*

*Nihad (best friend): Tia pues ghada aji 3andi y vemos todo el itinerario. \*Girl then tomorrow come by and we prepare the itinerary.*

*Insaf (researcher): Okay girl, we also need to look for outfits. \*Okay girl, we also need to look for outfits.*

*Nihad (best friend): bua ya ves, im so excited makrahtchi hta houda tji m3ana wlah. \*Oh yes definitely, I'm so excited I wish Houda could come too.*

*Insaf (researcher): ya tia pero es que ma3aykhaliwhachi. \*I know girl but her parents won't let her.*

*Nihad (best friend): khsara wlah i wish she could come with us. \*What a pity I wish she could come with us.*