

# How linguistic repertoires contribute to the formation of linguistic competence of Primary School preservice teachers in Asturias and Catalonia

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**ABSTRACT:** This study presents the results of a training experience, whose aim is to increase plurilingual awareness in undergraduate students of education faculties of two universities: the Faculty Padre Ossó (University of Oviedo) and the Faculty of Education (University of Barcelona). The specific objectives are to a) explore the representations of the self-portraits that undergraduate students made about their linguistic identity; b) compare the beliefs of undergraduate students and primary school pupils according to data obtained in previous research; c) determine the effects of the training experience. A total of 32 undergraduate students participated in this study. The results, presented in three blocks according to the three instruments used –linguistic self-portrait, explanatory texts, or final reflective texts–, show the symbolic value participants give to languages of their repertoires, and the relations they establish: affective with languages of their own territories and instrumental with languages such as Spanish or English. The training experience is considered of great interest for undergraduate students since it encourages awareness regarding linguistic identities, which will be crucial in the development of their future didactic proposals.

**Keywords:** Beliefs, Linguistic self-portrait; Linguistic repertoire; Teacher training; Plurilingual competence.

## De cómo los repertorios lingüísticos contribuyen a conformar la competencia plurilingüe de los futuros docentes de Educación Primaria en Asturias y Cataluña

**RESUMEN:** Esta investigación presenta los resultados de una experiencia didáctica, cuyo objetivo es incrementar la conciencia plurilingüe de estudiantes de las facultades de educación de dos universidades: la Facultad Padre Ossó (Universidad de Oviedo) y la Facultad de Educación (Universidad de Barcelona). Los objetivos específicos son: a) explorar las representaciones elaboradas por un grupo de estudiantes de grado sobre sus identidades lingüísticas; b) comparar sus creencias con las creencias de los estudiantes de primaria de acuerdo con los datos obtenidos en investigaciones previas; c) determinar los efectos de esta experiencia formativa. Un total de 32 alumnos participaron en la experiencia. Los resultados, presentados en tres bloques de acuerdo con los tres instrumentos utilizados –autorretrato lingüístico, textos explicativos y textos reflexivos finales–, muestran el valor simbólico que los participantes otorgan a las lenguas de sus repertorios y las relaciones que establecen: afectivas con las lenguas de sus territorios e instrumentales con lenguas como el castellano

o el inglés. Los estudiantes de grado consideran que esta experiencia formativa es de gran interés ya que les permite reflexionar sobre sus propias identidades lingüísticas, que tendrán un papel fundamental en el desarrollo de sus futuras propuestas didácticas.

**Palabras clave:** Creencias; Autorretrato lingüístico; Repertorio lingüístico; Formación del profesorado; Competencia plurilingüe.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The study we present considers the current Spanish law of Education, Organic Law 3/2020, 29 December, (referred to from now on as LOMLOE), which for the first time includes the construct of plurilingual competence. LOMLOE, following the guidelines of the Companion Volume of Common European Framework of Reference (2020) and its interest in teaching and learning of languages as a tool of communication, acclaims the co-existence of various languages and encourages their use as a tool of communication and expression “the plurilingual competence involves using various languages, oral or signed, appropriately and effectively for learning and communication” (LOMLOE, 2020, p. 21). The law also states the importance of cultural aspects associated with languages “historical and intercultural dimensions aimed at understanding, valuing, and respecting linguistic and cultural diversity of society with the goal of promoting democratic coexistence” (LOMLOE, 2020, p. 21).

Taking this into account, we consider that the development of plurilingual competence can only take place if pre-service teachers are aware of elements such as plurilingual background –individual and collective–, activating strategies in the processes of learning languages, the role of partial competencies, etc. Robles and Palmer (2020) state that students will build their own identity when they incorporate other people’s experiences. Therefore, it is necessary to look for ways in which teacher training programmes can create experiences which will enhance the development of undergraduate students’ plurilingual awareness. The current approaches in teacher training should integrate, on the one hand, theoretical concepts with practice in the reality of the classroom; and on the other hand, the experience in current didactical and training proposals to develop new ways of connecting the preparation received at university and the knowledge acquired in students’ everyday training at schools.

The research we present stems from an interest in developing a training activity in two bilingual territories in Spain: The Autonomous Communities of Asturias and Catalonia; and it aims to involve undergraduate students at the universities of the corresponding territories: the University of Oviedo and the University of Catalonia. These students are enrolled in a training experience that will raise a plurilingual awareness which will contribute to the development of their teaching competence and will favour the treatment of languages in the classroom. The specific objectives will be a) to explore the undergraduate students’ representations of their linguistic identity through the use of various instruments; b) to compare the beliefs of undergraduate and primary school pupils<sup>1</sup> (Sánchez-Quintana & Fernández-Viciana, 2023); c) to determine the effects of this training experience.

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<sup>1</sup> The present study is part of a broader research carried out in thirteen primary schools and the faculties of education of the universities of Oviedo and Barcelona. In this paper we will refer to the first results, which have been published in 2023.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

We assign this research to a theoretical current related to an understanding of the language teaching training in which the relation between thought and action –between experiences and reflection– plays a fundamental role (Dewey, 1933; Lewin, 1946). The research takes into consideration the reflective approach (Wallace, 1991) as the essential framework in which theoretical background and experience are mobilised in the recursive cycles of thought and action before mentioned, and where participants are involved as reflective practitioners (Schön, 1983, 1992). These cycles have a creative component; they also involve several agents that interact among them developing new perceptions (Korthagen, 2001). Various studies delve into the effects of textual reflective processes that the individual expresses through diaries (Bailey & Ochsner, 1983) or in reflections of experiences that are included in learning portfolios (Landis et al., 2015; Pujolà, 2019).

Action, training and research are considered the constituent elements of the training period (Ramos & Sánchez-Quintana, 2019). They are constructed by the participant, based on a new experience or experiences, and from the individual and collective reflection of collaborative and dialogical processes (Coghlan & Brannick, 2014), which can potentially be improved (Elliot, 1990) when they incorporate a critical perspective (Kemmins & McTaggart, 1988).

We take into consideration research into plurilingual educational experiences conducted through projects collaborating between universities and schools (Palou & Fons, 2021), which are based on the study, explanation and evolution of the ideas of plurilingualism. New trends foster hybridisation between academic and school fields (Corsi & Fons, 2023), which produce new collaborative experiences that will further both fields, and in which changes are produced in open dynamics of creative and horizontal relations (Causa et al., 2024). The representations of languages done by individuals play an important role in the composition of linguistic identities (Borg, 2003). We consider Pajares's (1992) review of the concept of belief, which highlights the affective component of beliefs in contrast to knowledge. Taken as preconceptions or implicit theories, the author validates and legitimizes the study of beliefs since they influence perception, judgements, and ultimately, classroom performance.

The study of these allows a better comprehension of plurilingual awareness during the training period (Pérez-Peitx & Sánchez-Quintana, 2019). Various studies include *multimodal narratives* in the analysis of language representations. *Multimodal narratives* trigger the first manifestation of linguistic identities and conceptions about plurilingualism and plurilingual education (Molinié, 2009; Pérez-Peitx et al., 2019). In this sense, the studies of linguistic repertoires allow us to identify the beliefs of languages in their emotional and symbolic components (Prasad, 2014; 2020). Prasad's studies in Canada show how individuals participate in these processes of study from the first visual representations to the verbalization of linguistic awareness through reflective texts that turn them into co-researchers.

### 3. METHOD

#### 3.1. Educational context

This study has taken place in two different territories, Asturias and Catalonia, and in two educational contexts: the University of Oviedo and the University of Barcelona. Padre Ossó Faculty offers a degree in Primary Education Teaching. Fourth year students who are enrolled in the subject of Practicum IV, in both universities, participate in this research. In Practicum IV, a 12 ECTS subject, students carry out their teaching practice in public, state-subsidised and private schools for five weeks. A total of eight public schools and four state-subsidised schools participated in this research.

In the Faculty of Education of the University of Barcelona, this research was done with students enrolled in the subject of Practicum II, a 30 ECTS subject, which forms part of the degree of Primary Education Teaching. Students carry out their teaching practice in five public schools, which are assigned by a system of freely chosen priorities, for 16 weeks.

#### 3.2. Sample and data

In the University of Oviedo, 18 students, doing their teaching practice in urban primary schools, participated in this study. In the University of Barcelona, 14 students doing their teaching practice in six primary schools, took part in this research.

Data are formed by 32 linguistic portraits and their corresponding explanatory texts, and eight reflective texts. These reflective texts were voluntarily written by some students.

#### 3.3. Methodological design

Before and during the training practice, both groups attended various seminars. In these seminars, students did several activities, one of which involved placing languages on different parts of a silhouette of a human body, according to the significance they had for the participants. It was this activity that formed the basis for this study.

A didactical and training process in four phases guided the study: 1) a drawing of the individual repertoire on a linguistic self-portrait –visual format– done by undergraduate students; 2) an explanatory text in which undergraduate students express the meaning of the visual representation; 3) the implementation of this activity in the primary school classrooms with a drawing and the subsequent oral discussion of the linguistic repertoires; 4) a final reflective text written by the undergraduate students about the meaning and significance of the experience.

The textual analysis was done at different levels following a thematic (Pavlenko, 2005) and lexical-semantic approach at first, in which each of the languages is considered a core of meaning. A procedure of lexical determination (Palou, 2008) was used.

The analysis of this data was carried out based on categories which had emerged in previous research (Sánchez-Quintana & Fernández-Viciana, 2023) –Cognitive, Communicative, Affective/Emotional, Instrumental, Mobility– (shown in Table 1); however, it was open to the appearance of new categories that may emerge.

**Table 1.** *Classification of categories, body and elements.*<sup>2</sup>

CATEGORIES PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS	BODY PARTS	ELEMENTS RELATED WITH
<i>Cognitive</i>	Head	thought
<i>Communicative</i>	Mouth	travels, friendship, family, mother tongue, communication
<i>Affective/Emotional</i>	Breast/Heart	affect, disaffect, experiences/memories, feelings, identification, comfort
<i>Instrumental</i>	Arm/Head	studies, academic difficulties, opportunities, professional experience, improvement, international prestige, curiosity/interest, knowledge
<i>Mobility</i>	Leg/Foot	globe, means of transport, luggage

Data was analysed at two levels. Firstly, the study of undergraduate students' self-portraits of their repertoires of languages according to how they place these languages on the linguistic self-portrait; secondly, the analysis of the associations between languages and elements or objects. The latter analysis distinguishes our study from others and allows us to refine the interpretations of the representations of multilingual repertoires.

### 3.3.1. *Linguistic self-portrait*

Participants placed the languages of their linguistic repertoire on a linguistic self-portrait. There were different types of self-portraits: some students used markers or colouring pencils, others wrote the name of a language on a specific part of a silhouette of a human body, while others used computers.

Cabré and Palou (2021) list various instruments to collect data, among which they highlight the linguistic self-portrait. Sometimes these linguistic self-portraits are complemented with texts, in which case they are called multimodal narrative texts. Multimodal texts offer individuals the possibility of expressing their ideas and feelings about a language, whilst at the same time, they offer researchers the opportunity to learn more about the subjects' beliefs about languages.

<sup>2</sup> To help understanding, categories will appear in cursive and with a capital letter. Body parts will only appear with a capital letter.

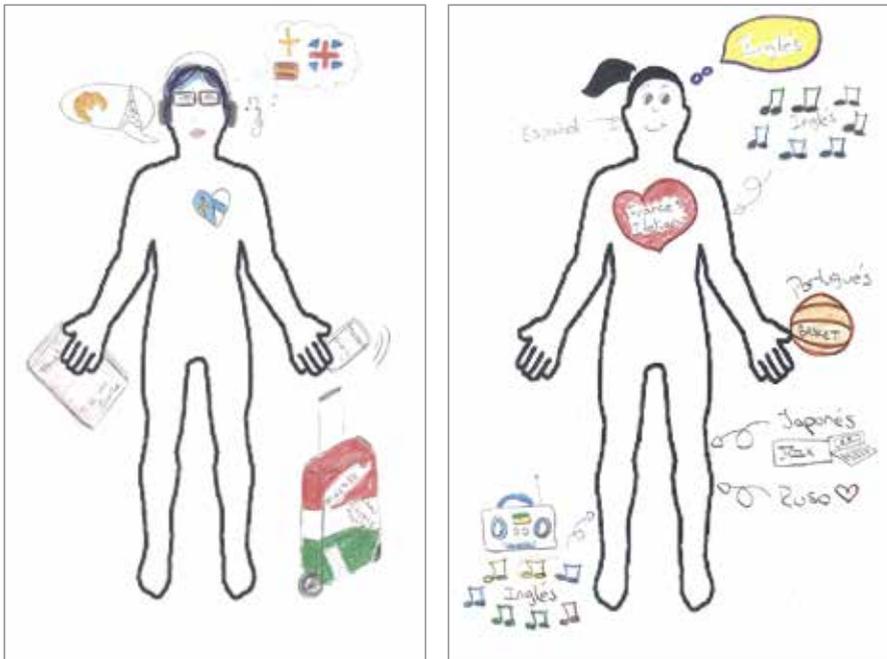


Figure 1. Samples of linguistic self-portraits (University of Oviedo, Asturias)

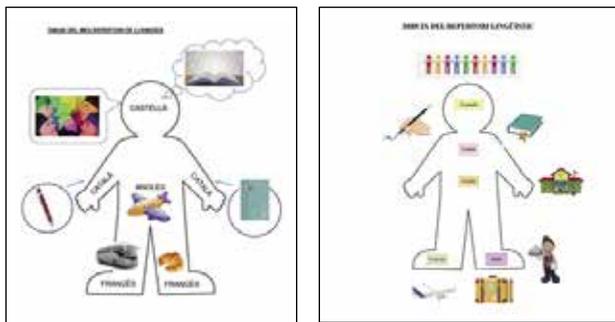


Figure 2. Samples of linguistic self-portraits (University of Barcelona, Catalonia)

#### 4. RESULTS

The results are presented in three blocks: 1) linguistic repertoires obtained in the linguistic self-portrait; 2) explanatory texts; 3) final reflective texts. Results are presented according to the universities of each territory: University of Oviedo in Asturias and University of Barcelona in Catalonia.

## 4.1. Linguistic repertoires

### 4.1.1. Curricular languages and parts of the body<sup>3</sup>

A first analysis of the repertoires shows the relation between the languages and where they are placed on the linguistic self-portrait. Table 2 shows how languages were represented by undergraduate students at the University of Oviedo.

**Table 2.** *Curricular languages and parts of the body. (University of Oviedo, Asturias).*

PARTS OF THE BODY	ASTURIAN	SPANISH	ENGLISH	TOTAL
Head	2	8	11	21
Breast/Heart	3	2	1	6
Arm/Hand	0	1	1	2
Leg/Foot	0	4	5	9

The highest number of relations (11/21) between languages and parts of the body is English and Head. Clearly, English is seen as a language of thought and communication, as previous studies have stated. The second highest number of relations are between Spanish and Head (8/21). Doubtlessly, the key category, according to the relations established, is the *Cognitive* one. Identical results were obtained when the activity was carried out with primary school pupils.

It is important to emphasize that in the *Affective/Emotional* category –represented by Breast/Heart– Asturian receives (3/6), the highest number. Another notable number is the result of the relation established between English and Leg/Foot (5/9), as well as Spanish and this category (4/9).

Table 3 shows how languages were represented by undergraduate students at the University of Barcelona.

**Table 3.** *Curricular languages and parts of the body. (University of Barcelona, Catalonia)*

PARTS OF THE BODY	CATALAN	SPANISH	ENGLISH	TOTAL
Head	2	11	2	15
Breast/Heart	7	0	4	11
Arm/Hand	2	2	3	7
Leg/Foot	2	1	5	8

These data indicate that there is a high number of relationships between Spanish and Head, suggesting that Spanish is perceived as a language of thought or communication, as the results with the primary school pupils' research also stated. There is a discrepancy regarding the data obtained in the relationship between Spanish and Breast/Heart; whereas

<sup>3</sup> The curricular languages in Asturias are Asturian, English and Spanish and in Catalonia they are Catalan, English, and Spanish.

there was a high proportion of relationships in the research done with primary school pupils, there are not any associations in this sample.

In the case of Catalan, the greater proportion in relationships is between Breast/Heart as an *Emotional* category (7/11), as shown in Table 3; in the case of primary school pupils' data, the associations were established with Breast/Heart as an *Instrumental* category.

Regarding English, the category of *Mobility* (Leg/Foot, 5/8) is the one that has the highest number of associations in both studies, although it is interesting to note that the *Emotional* category is also quite strongly represented. Respecting other languages, which are not included in the Spanish curriculum, they receive associations with Leg/Foot and Breast/Heart, as it occurs with Italian and Japanese.

#### 4.1.2. Curricular languages and associations

At a second level of analysis, curricular languages are associated with objects in the linguistic self-portrait. Regarding categories, the group of the University of Oviedo reflects associations with Spanish, English, and Asturian. Heart receives associations with Spanish and Asturian. The highest number of associations (3/3) is between English and Luggage. Clearly, this language is seen as a language of communication not only when travelling but also it is related to Mass media and Written texts as Table 4 shows. If we compare these results to the ones obtained in the aforementioned study of primary school pupils, we see that the trainee teachers' associations only fall into the *Instrumental* category, whereas the primary school pupils' associations were both *Instrumental* and *Cognitive*.

**Table 4.** *Curricular languages and associations. (University of Oviedo, Asturias)*

ASSOCIATIONS	ASTURIAN	SPANISH	ENGLISH	TOTAL
Luggage (travelling, backpack, means of transport, etc.)	0	0	3	3
Drawing Heart	1	1	0	2
National symbols	1	1	0	2
Mass Media	0	0	2	2
Written texts, Words	0	0	1	1
Food	0	1	0	1

Table 5 shows the results obtained in the group of the University of Barcelona. Firstly, the highest number of associations are between English and the elements of Luggage, School, and Mass Media. Spanish tends to be associated with elements such as family and friends. Secondly, the *Instrumental* category is represented by School material. There is a discrepancy regarding the representation of elements such as House and Family and Friends with Catalan; these were very rarely reflected in the study of primary school pupils. Thirdly, the elements which represent the *Instrumental* category are lower in this study whereas the *Affective/Emotional* category receives a much higher number of images, and elements of identity are highly represented.

**Table 5.** *Curricular languages and associations. (University of Barcelona, Catalonia).*

ASSOCIATIONS	CATALAN	SPANISH	ENGLISH	TOTAL
Catalonian flag and National symbols	3	0	0	3
Drawing of a heart	3	0	1	4
Luggage (travelling, backpack, means of transport, etc.)	0	1	6	7
School material (books)	4	4	2	10
Written texts, Words	0	0	0	0
Friends	1	5	0	6
House, Family	5	2	0	7
Food	0	0	0	0
Mass Media	0	2	3	5
Other	0	3	0	3

#### 4.1.3. *Other languages: parts of the body and associations*

According to the data obtained in the University of Oviedo, there are relationships between the other 18 languages mentioned in the linguistic self-portraits and the categories related to the different parts of the body. The languages that receive the highest number of associations are Italian (9/18), Portuguese (5/18) and Japanese (4/18). The highest number of associations with Italian are 3/18 with Head, 2/18 with Arm/Hand and 2/18 with stomach, just 1/18 with Breast/Heart or Leg/Foot. Portuguese associations are 2/18 with Head, and the same number with stomach. There are only 1/18 with Arm/Hand. Finally, Japanese receives 2/18 with stomach and Leg/Foot and 1/18 with Head.

It was also found that languages like German, Dutch, Hungarian, Italian, Russian, and Maori are also associated with parts of the body.

Comparing the languages mentioned by undergraduate students to those mentioned by primary school pupils shows similarities in the languages with the highest number of relationships; however, primary school pupils mentioned languages such as Arab or Galician that do not appear in the findings of undergraduate students.

Also, the highest number of associations, mainly with elements of Luggage (2/18), Food (2/18) and School (2/18), are with Italian, (6/18) in total. There are fewer associations with other languages. There are similarities between this study and the study of primary school pupils: Japanese was related to Mass Media in both cases (2/18 in this study.) The results show a small but significant influence of cartoons and comics over these participants.

In the data obtained in the University of Barcelona, other languages included in the repertoires are Italian (3), which is related with stomach (1/14) and Leg/Foot (2/14); Portuguese, which is linked to Leg/Foot (1/14); Japanese represented in the heart with a Drawing of a heart (1/14); and Euskera in the stomach (1/14).

#### 4.2. Analysis of the explanatory texts about repertoires

In the second stage of our research, we focus on the analysis of the explanatory texts. We began our analysis based on the categories of the study done with primary school pupils. However, after having analysed data of this research, we notice that a new category –*Leisure*– emerges and another –*Mobility*– disappeared.

1. Cognitive
2. Communication: Travels, friendships, family, mother tongue, degree of communication
3. Affective/Emotional: Affect, disaffect, experiences/memories, feelings, identification, comfort
4. Instrumental (professional and academic development): Studies, academic difficulties, opportunities, professional experience, improvement, international prestige, curiosity/interest, knowledge
5. Leisure: Cinema, music, etc., food, sports, reading, culture, use of language

These categories show some discrepancies from the ones which emerged from the data obtained in the study with primary school pupils. In particular, the category of *Leisure* did not appear for that group. The reason might be that the sample in the present study is formed by undergraduate students whose interests, habits and lifestyles differ considerably from those of primary school pupils. This may also explain why the category of *Mobility*, which was a category in the previous study, does not emerge in this study, where elements related to travelling are associate with the professional field and with leisure. Consequently, these elements are integrated into the categories *Instrumental* and *Leisure*.

We have designed a mind map for each territory where the results of the analysis of the explanatory texts about repertoires are shown.

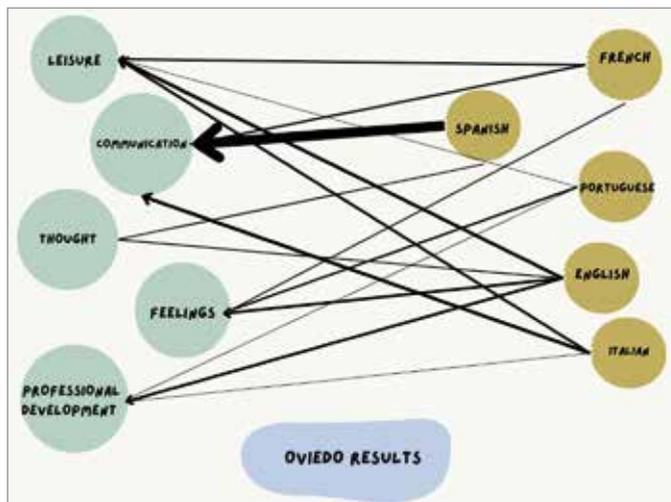
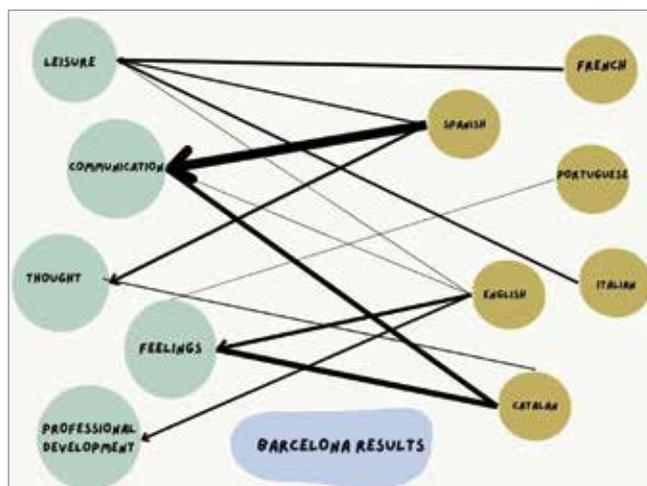


Figure 3. Relations between languages and dimensions. (University of Oviedo, Asturias)



**Figure 4.** Relations between languages and dimensions. (University of Barcelona, Catalonia)

By varying the thickness of the arrows, the results indicate the relative frequency with which each participant established a lexical or metaphorical relation between dimensions –or any of the elements that form them– and each language. The thickness of the arrows represents the number of representations with each dimension.

Below, the results are described in detail, and we include the number of times each idea is expressed by participants in the texts. We also add, in cursive, relevant comments of the participants.

#### 4.2.1. Analysis of the explanatory texts. University of Oviedo.

In terms of curricular languages, the group of the University of Oviedo establishes associations with **Spanish, Asturian, and English**. On the one hand, participants establish communicative associations with **Spanish** since they consider Spanish the main language of communication (3/21): *La lengua que uso para comunicarme la mayor parte del tiempo* (P10/O)<sup>45</sup>. And, some participants not only consider it a language of communication, but also a language of thought (2/21): *Es la lengua con la que me comunico y pienso* (P1/O); *Es el idioma en el que pienso y hablo a diario* (P2/O). On the other hand, *Affective/Emotional* associations with Spanish have also been identified since participants described Spanish as their mother tongue (3/21): *Es mi lengua natal* (P5/O).

**Asturian** receives *Affective/Emotional* associations. It is usually placed in the Heart, and it is described as a language of communication with their families and friends: *Es parte de mi tierra, de mis raíces* (P2/O); *Es la lengua que hablo con mis abuelos en el pueblo*

<sup>4</sup> We use a code to organise the analysis. Letter P + number: participant and the code number given to each by the researchers. The letter (O or B) refers to the university of the participant: Oviedo or Barcelona.

<sup>5</sup> We keep the examples from the Spanish data corpus in Spanish to preserve the value of the original literal discourse.

(P6/O); *Sitío el asturiano en el corazón por motivos familiares* (P12/O). Also, the main language used in their every day lives: *Es la lengua que más escucho en mi vida diaria* (P5/O).

**English** receives many different types of associations that could be grouped into the categories of *Instrumental* and *Cognition*. According to the instrumental associations, English is considered a language of communication used either with foreigners or in foreign countries: *Como mucho lo he utilizado para comunicarme en casos puntuales con alguna persona extranjera* (P1/O); *El inglés es el idioma que más he utilizado cuando me desplazo* (P5/O); *La lengua que más suelo utilizar cuando viajo, la que me abre más puertas* (P11/O).

In addition, some participants express that it is the language that surrounds their lives: *Es el idioma al que más estoy expuesta* (P2/O). Others relate it to Mass Media: *Veo pelis y series en versión original, tengo el móvil y el ordenador en inglés* (P2/O). Also, it is considered a language of study and thought: *El inglés está colocado en una nube de pensamiento* (P10/O); *He aprendido en el colegio y en academias* (P16/O). And they believe it is a language of work and professional development: *Es un idioma que me permite avanzar en la vida... Me hará ser profesor y desarrollar mi carrera como docente* (P8/O); *La que me abre más puertas* (P11/O). Apart from these *Instrumental* associations, one participant also establishes an *Affective* association: *Una parte de mi corazón, mi hermano vive en Inglaterra... En Nueva Zelanda creamos una familia.* (P18/O).

**French**, which is not a curricular language but an optional subject in the Secondary school, is mentioned by ten participants. The associations established are mainly *Instrumental* since it is seen as a language needed for professional development: *Me estoy preparando para el examen de B2* (P2/O); *Cuando era pequeña quería ser profesora de francés* (P15/O). Also, some participants mentioned their frustration in the learning process: *Me cuesta dominar* (P11/O). Other emerging categories, which cannot be easily fitted within the five initial dimensions, are related to the nature of the languages, its sound, the closeness to Spanish, etc.: *Es el idioma que más me gusta por su sonoridad* (P12/O); *Es un idioma que distingo* (P13/O).

Associations are also established with other languages, which are not curricular, primarily Japanese, Portuguese and Italian. The dimension most often with regard to these languages is *Leisure* –specifically food, travel and pleasure–.

Regarding **Japanese**, associations were made with food: *La cultura gastronómica de este país (Japón) es mi favorita.* (P7/O); enjoyment: *Me resulta curioso y además me gusta mucho el anime* (P10/O); *Me gustan las series y la cultura japonesa* (P11/O); and travelling: *Me gustaría viajar allí* (P14/O).

Associations between **Italian** and Food are also common: *Estoy expuesta a él cuando voy a restaurantes italianos* (P2/O); *Lo asocio a la comida* (P7/O). Italian and French share the same emerging categories, these examples illustrate the comments about Italian: *Me gusta mucho el italiano, es fácil de comprender* (P9/O); *Me parece un idioma con unas vocales muy sonoras* (P12/O); *Es un idioma que distingo* (P13/O); *Es un idioma que suena muy bien* (P14/O).

Another language frequently mentioned is **Portuguese** (5). Portuguese is related to their every day lives: *Conozco vocabulario de comida, lo veo en los productos que venden en el supermercado* (P2/O); *Veo esta lengua inconscientemente en productos del supermercado* (P7/O); sports: *Conozco a jugadores de fútbol de este país* (P9/O); family: *Mi padre es portugués, es un idioma que siempre quise aprender* (P10/O); and likes: *Es una lengua que me gusta mucho* (P9/O).

It is important to mention that some participants show interest in Russian since it was the mother tongue of one of the international students of the group. Meeting this Russian student and listening to her background and life-experiences nurtured in the participants a curiosity for the language and its culture: *Es una lengua que me resulta muy curiosa y llamativa y quisiera conocerla para visitar el país* (P10/O).

#### 4.2.2. Analysis of the explanatory texts. University of Barcelona.

In the group of the University of Barcelona, **Spanish** is described as a language of communication by all participants (14/14). Furthermore, they emphasized the high degree of communicativeness of Spanish since it allows communication –and comprehension– with unknown people in public places: *Es la lengua vehicular que me permite asegurarme de que la persona me entenderá (en las tiendas, en los restaurantes, etc.)*<sup>6</sup> (P1/B). In the associations with leisure, participants refer to reading books, watching TV series, theatre, films (3/14): *La mayoría de videos, series y películas que miro son en castellano* (P10/B).

Regarding **Catalan**, the number of associations (6/14) between elements of identity or identification and Catalan draws attention. Sometimes, participants express feelings of comfort or simply of identity, affection, or belonging to a territory and place of birth: *Es la que me siento más cómoda hablando, más identificada* (P1/B). *Es la (lengua) que más quiero* (P1/B). *El catalán lo situó en mi corazón porque he nacido en Cataluña y es la lengua de mi tierra* (P8/B).

Occasionally, Catalan is associated with the academic field, since this is the only context in which certain participants have used this language. It is interesting to note that there is a person who expresses a strong disaffection for Catalan due to the imposition: *Tanto en la escuela como en la universidad es la lengua que más he utilizado para escribir y leer* (E9/B). *Utilizar (el catalán) se convirtió en una imposición constante que me provocaba una especie de frustración* (P12/B).

When discussing **English**, several participants emphasise its international prestige and importance. This is explicitly expressed in the texts: *Es una lengua que a nivel internacional es muy importante* (P1/B); *Es la lengua que se convierte en el ombligo del mundo* (P4/B).

It is surprising that some participants express disaffection for English (6/14). Despite believing that English will be a requirement in their future professional lives, some participants reject it due to the difficulties and the degree of frustration they have experienced while studying it. Some people have even suffered physical symptoms of rejection: *Es el idioma que menos me gusta a pesar de encontrarlo necesario* (P2/B); *Es un idioma que no domino bien y durante la escuela y el instituto a la hora de las clases lo pasaba mal, hasta el punto de que me dolía el estómago* (P9/B). Nevertheless, one participant (1/14) considers learning English a success since she has been able to overcome the learning difficulties and achieve a good level (P12/B). In other cases, students (4/14) associate English with professional opportunities: *Me ha proporcionado un puesto de trabajo estable* (P14/B).

There are also associations established with other languages, which are not curricular, primarily Japanese, Euskera, Italian and Portuguese. One of the students expresses interest in

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<sup>6</sup> The fragments of the texts written by undergraduate students from the University of Barcelona were written in Catalan and translated into Spanish by the authors.

**Japanese** because she associates it to Pokémon and videogames from the 90s. This interest is related to her childhood: *Una consola de videojuegos de los años 90 fueron las cosas que despertaron mi interés por el idioma en la infancia* (P14/B). Similar results were obtained in the study of linguistic self-portraits of primary school pupils in the schools.

The interest in **Euskera** by one of the students is driven by the educational projects and the use of ICT she has known in some schools of the Basque country. This interest in how Euskera is taught in schools makes her wish to move to this territory: *Uno de mis sueños a largo plazo es aprender vasco, trasladarme allí y enriquecerme de su cultura y de su gente* (P11/B).

In the case of **Italian**, the associations (3) are related with culture or gastronomy. In one case, certain cultural similarities between languages motivate the participant to learn it: *Es un idioma que estoy aprendiendo porque es un país que me gusta mucho, la cultura es más o menos la misma que la nuestra* (P2/B).

Finally, **Portuguese** –a language which is very close to Galician– is related to the Galician roots of the participant: *He dibujado dos personas unidas en referencia a mis raíces gallegas* (P4/B).

### 4.3. Analysis of the final reflective texts

In these texts, where participants described their participation in the study, we observe discursive fragments such as “*me he dado cuenta de que...*”, “*he descubierto que...*” that explicitly reflect their awareness of certain aspects of both their ideas of plurilingualism, as well as their ideas of primary school pupils.

In these final reflective texts, the undergraduate students emphasise that the whole training experience has helped them to be conscious of their own repertoire and those of primary school pupils: *Respecto a lo que he descubierto es que tengo preferencias en las lenguas* (P1/B). Undergraduate students compare their own repertoire and the primary school pupils’: *La silueta que yo creé es bastante parecida a la que ellos* (referring to primary school pupils) *han creado* (P11/B). Many of them emphasise their surprise about the highly multilingual variety of many of the primary school classrooms: *Cuando propuse la actividad al grupo, me di cuenta de la gran cantidad de lenguas en el aula* (P6/B). Some participants include an assessment, based on the range of languages spoken, of the sociolinguistic composition of the school and the neighbourhood. In many of the reflections, the *Affective/Emotional* component that motivates both undergraduate students and school pupils is emphasised: *Mi relación con las lenguas viene muy definida por el sentimiento que tengo hacia cada una de ellas* (P12/B); *Se ve la necesidad de esta alumna de mostrar la importancia que para ella tienen sus amigas y amigos y el contacto con estos* (P11/B).

Participants emphasise those aspects that are notable and make them reflect, also, on factors related to learning: *Casos sorprendentes de alumnos que habían aprendido ciertas lenguas casi sin ayuda y que no son sus lenguas maternas* (se refiere al japonés). *Me pareció un ejemplo perfecto que demuestra que los idiomas se aprenden con motivación, sentido y contexto* (P12/B).

## 5. DISCUSSION

The analysis of data in this study leads us to consider English a language for international communication; associations in multimodal environments –professional, leisure and

affective– confirm this. Also, English is considered a prestigious language; socially-rooted stereotypes, instilled in the participants from childhood in different environments, have, perhaps, led participants to this perception. Participants seek to achieve a high communicative competence, which will allow them to develop professionally and to communicate both in foreign countries and with non-Spanish speakers. This clear professional category is also found in the French language. Both English and French are perceived as tools that will allow them to aim for better professional opportunities.

In the study, the relevance that the *Emotional* and *Affective/Emotional* components have for the participants in the shape of the repertoires, as well as in the beliefs of languages and plurilingualism, has been confirmed. In line with the results of other research studies with adolescents such as Prasad (2014, 2020), it is confirmed that linguistic identity is formed by emotional attributions to languages and speakers. In this sense, regional languages of bilingual territories such as Asturian or Catalan are clearly placed in the *Affective/Emotional* sphere. Likewise, attitudes of rejection emerge in the group of the University of Barcelona; this rejection is either linked to the compulsory nature of its study, or with the frustration of not being able to reach a nativelike competency. The latter conception seems typical of language learners who don't reach their yearned competency in English, which suggests that it is worth reviewing in future studies. The complexity of the relationship that future teachers have with languages reinforces the relevance of researching beliefs to review certain conceptions in pre-service teachers (Borg, 2003; Pérez-Peix & Sánchez-Quintana, 2019).

Catalonia is a fully bilingual community, where speakers constantly switch between the two languages in a wide variety of situations and contexts; in Asturias, bilingualism is not established to the same extent, with a marked dominance of Spanish in most contexts. In this study, it is remarkable to note the strong link and identification between the languages Catalan and Asturian and the *Affective/Emotional* component and the linguistic identity. This reflects a social change in the perception of languages in bilingual territories regarding old diglossic situations. The use of the coexistence of languages is expressed in a natural way in the data of this research, although Spanish emerges in both territories as a chosen language –due to its high degree of communicativeness– in social situations, public spaces or means of communication.

The existence of other categories in this study –those not considered at the beginning, and therefore called *emerging categories*– which are related with the acknowledgment of other languages by their own nature, sound, or lexical and territorial proximity, makes us consider the appropriacy of including the descriptor 3 of the plurilingual competence (CP3) “conocer, valorar y respetar la diversidad lingüística y cultural presente en la sociedad, integrándola en su desarrollo personal como factor de diálogo, para fomentar la cohesión social” (RD 157/2022) in the degree programmes.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The training experience, which was assessed positively by the participants, promoted an awareness regarding linguistic identities that makes a contribution to better decision making in didactic proposals.

One of the values of incorporating action-reflection cycles exploring linguistics identities within the degrees of Education (Ramos & Sánchez-Quintana, 2019) is to foster transforma-

tions in the beliefs about languages: acknowledgement of one's own repertoires; increase in the interest in learning languages and learning about cultures; attitudinal changes towards foreign languages; and of the use of the potential learning that multilingual classrooms have. We propose, in addition, a more significant experiential learning, of greater importance through training practices that relate theory and practice, action and reflection and, lastly, university and school environments.

These research conclusions inspire us to conduct to further and broader research projects that will include school mentors' ideas with regard to possible improvements in training of both pre-service teachers and primary school pupils to develop the plurilingual and intercultural competences.

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