

**TALES atHOME** TALKING ABOUT LANGUAGE AND EMOTIONS AT HOME UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI PALERMO

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<http://www.talesathome.eu/>

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### SUMMARY OF RESEARCH ON MULTILINGUAL FAMILIES

Elisabetta Di Giovanni  
 University of Palermo

1

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### PARTICIPANTS

- 44 Couples of parent-child coming from multilingual families (Children: 30 females, 14 males; age range 6-15 years; Parents: 41 females and 3 males; age range 28-54 years).
- The families come from 25 different countries. Most of them moved for work reasons and the other ones for marriage or war situations.

Country of origins

Reasons of travel

2

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### METHODOLOGY: QUALI-QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

Semi-structured interview aimed at assessing:

- Family background
- Language usage (frequency)
- Language skills/competences
- Use of languages in different situations and relative moods
- Language-emotional portrait (colour and bodily representation of language)
- Language learning and mood timeline

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### LANGUAGE PORTRAIT TOOL

Language-emotional portrait (colour and bodily representation of language)

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### QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

**FAMILY BACKGROUND**

- What is the family history?
- What journey have they had (physically and emotionally)?
- Have there been major events affecting their lives?
- What implications has this had on their sense of home and where they feel they belong?
- To what extent have they been made to feel 'at home' in their local community?
- What implications has their journey had on family relations – (immediate and extended family)?
- What is their current situation in terms of housing / employment / unemployment / training / schooling etc.)

5

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### CONCLUSIONS

**RESULTS OF QUANTITATIVE ANALISES**

Results from interviews showed that emotions are more nested to languages on the basis of competence and usage

Quantitative results showed that languages indicated as first language was:

- the language the interviewed people known best
- the language the interviewed people used in most situations and in the more pleasant mood
- the language most frequently associated to the hearth and to the head

It was followed by second language, with similar results

6

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### CONCLUSIONS

**How languages and emotions are handled in the families?**  
**Which attitudes we observe influence language learning?**

The choices of learning and use of languages are related to the emotional nuances (positive or negative) associated with a particular language (mother or host). Specifically, positive emotions correspond to an openness (positive attitude) towards language use / learning; otherwise - therefore in the presence of negative emotions - we observe attitudes of closure and / or "forced" adaptation (negative attitude) towards the language in question.

**Which aspects return frequently or are more specific for a certain situation?**

The management of language use / learning choices hardly seems to be agreed between family members but for the benefit of one of these poles: child-centered, parent-centered, environment-centered.

7

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**Did we observe a link with the wellbeing of the families?**

The well-being of families seems influenced by the perception of social integration of its members that is reflected on the integration within the family (united family or conflicting dynamics, lack of communication) and, consequently, on the management of emotions and linguistic attitudes.

8

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### CONCLUSIONS

For all the considered reasons, the App Tales@home could be a very useful tool for facilitating people in:

- Talking about their family histories
- Reflect upon their own emotions towards languages
- Discuss these aspects with others family members
- Reflect upon emotions towards languages of the other family member

All that could facilitate:

- the process of integration and inclusion and the developing of a sense of belonging to the hosting community;
- the development of pleasant emotions towards language;
- an improvement in learning of language of hosting community.

9