Department of English Studies

EARLY MULTILINGUALISM: AN ANALYSIS OF PRAGMATIC AWARENESS AND LANGUAGE ATTITUDES IN CONSECUTIVE MULTILINGUAL CHILDREN

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

Presented by:
Laura Portolés Falomir

Supervised by:
Dr. Maria Pilar Safont Jordà

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MULTILINGÜISME PRECOÇ: ANÀLISI DE LA CONSCIÈNCIA PRAGMÀTICA I ACTITUDS LINGÜÍSTIQUES EN INFANTS CONSECUTIUS MULTILINGÜES

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Presentada per:
Laura Portolés Falomir

Supervisada per:
Dra. Maria Pilar Safont Jordà

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CODES USED THROUGHOUT THE STUDY

CLI………………....Cross-linguistic Influence

CLIL………...……...Content Language Integrated Learning

CLIN……………..…Cross-linguistic Interaction

DMM……………....Dynamic Model of Multilingualism

DST……………….....Dynamic Systems Theory

ELLiE……………....Early Language Learning in Europe

FLA……………..….First Language Acquisition

ILP……………....…..Interlanguage pragmatics

L1……………….…...First Language or mother tongue

L2……………….….Second Language

L3……………….….Third Language

LAD……………….....Language Acquisition Device

M……………………Mean

N…………………….Number

p……………………..Probability

PEV…………………*Programa d'Educació en Valencià*

PIL…………………*Programa d'Immersió Lingüística*

PIP…………………..*Programa d'Incorporació Progressiva*

RQ1……………..……..First research question

RQ2…………………....Second research question

RQ3…………………Third research question

RQ4……………........Fourth research question

RQ5………..……..…Fifth research question

SD…………………....Standard Deviation

SLA……………....…Second Language Acquisition

SPSS…………..….…Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

TLA…………………Third Language Acquisition

χ^2…………………....Chi square

INTRODUCTION

The lesson that multilingualism research can teach multilingual education is that only by leaving traditional concepts and boundaries behind will new perspectives be able to emerge along with a holistic understanding of the phenomena in question (Jessner, 2008b, p.45).

The lesson proposed by Jessner (2008b) inspired us to carry out research on multilingualism in order to provide a better understanding of multilingual acquisition and open new avenues for the implementation of multilingual education practices. Multilingualism has been widely investigated over the last few decades; however the perspective adopted to approach multilingualism has been fully monolingual (Aronin & Singleton, 2012; Cenoz & Gorter, 2011; Jessner, 2013). Traditionally, multilingualism has been examined by taking into account only one language and considering the process of language acquisition as something linear, static, and independent from other factors (Dewaele, 2012). The present dissertation attempts to further understand multilingualism from a truly multilingual, holistic and dynamic perspective and, thus, cover the existing research gap on this issue.

The existing research on multilingualism has frequently omitted the Valencian Community which offers a rich linguistic context (Martí, in press; Safont, 2007). More specifically, the Valencian educational system includes a minority language (Catalan), a majority language (Spanish) and a foreign language (English). The present study will focus on this sociolinguistic context by examining the multilingual development of consecutive multilingual children in relation to the wider context. Therefore, the present study will contribute to the small corpus of work on consecutive multilingual children (Safont, 2011,

2012, 2013b) by focusing on four-year-old and nine-year-old school children. These two age periods have not been addressed even though they seem to play a paramount role in language acquisition (Franceschini, 2009; Nicholas & Lightbown, 2008).

This study will take into consideration the language background of the learners, the relationships established among the languages and interactions among other non-linguistic factors. The underlying theory adopted in the present dissertation is the *Dynamic Model of Multilingualism* proposed by Herdina and Jessner (2002) which has been under investigated. This well-founded theory will allow us to examine the interplay of several factors on multilingual development and gain insights into early language acquisition processes. We will particularly focus on pragmatic awareness and language attitudes.

According to some authors, the level of pragmatic awareness in multilinguals may be enhanced by a complex dynamic system with its own parameters which is not found in monolinguals (Jessner, 2008). In order to establish the degree of pragmatic awareness displayed by our young multilingual participants, this study will concentrate on a specific pragmatic item, namely that of request. Research (Ervin-Tripp, 1977; Ellis, 1992; Achiba, 2003) on pragmatic awareness with a focus on child requestive behaviour has adopted a monolingual analytical perspective and the results have suggested that pragmatic awareness shows a linear, static and homogenous development.

The study of pragmatics in multilingual children remains little explored or documented, with the exception of the studies accomplished by Barnes (2008) and Safont (2011, 2012, 2013b) which

focused on the production of requests. The findings from these studies have pointed out that interaction among language systems does exist and has shown high levels of pragmatic awareness displayed by multilinguals. Taking into account those results, the present study attempts to cover the research gap existing in the field by examining the pragmatic comprehension of requests by young multilingual learners in instructional contexts. To our knowledge, no previous research has addressed this issue.

Additionally, the affective side of languages is also paramount in order to better understand early language acquisition processes. One of the main tenets of the Dynamic Model of Multilingualism is the focus on affective factors, such as language attitudes, which are considered the most significant variable in language acquisition (Manolopoulou-Sergi, 2004, p.432). However, little research has examined language attitudes among young learners (Mihaljevic-Djigunovic & Letica, 2009; Wu, 2003) from a dynamic and holistic perspective. Therefore, the present study will explore the language attitudes of our participants in order to broaden our knowledge of multilingual acquisition and gain insights into the current sociolinguistic situation of the context of our study.

Attitudes towards a language may explain certain behaviours, such as language choice, status and use. We wonder whether children's pragmatic awareness may be related to their language attitudes. As far as we know, no studies have investigated the relationship of child pragmatic awareness and language attitudes. There is a research gap that needs to be further investigated and the present study hopes to

provide insights into the interaction between language attitudes and pragmatic awareness.

As noted above, multilingual acquisition is a dynamic phenomenon where several variables influence each other, although very few studies (Cenoz, 2009; Jessner, 2013; Safont, 2013a) have worked with this dynamic view of language as a point of departure. Apart from examining the relationship between pragmatic awareness and language attitudes, we are also interested in linking our results to the wider context. The age factor will be investigated in order to draw existing differences between pre-schoolers and primary school students with respect to pragmatic awareness and language attitudes. Additionally, this study also attempts to reveal to what extent the linguistic model the participants follow at school has an influence on the degree of pragmatic awareness and language attitudes.

In sum, the present dissertation aims to investigate early consecutive multilingual learners by focusing on pragmatic awareness in relation to language attitudes but also in relation to the wider context. Considering the above research gaps and examining the main issues of the current investigation, the present study addresses the following aims:

(1) To examine the pragmatic awareness of young learners in the three languages under investigation (Catalan, English and Spanish) in a multilingual context.
(2) To analyse the language attitudes of young learners in the three languages under investigation (Catalan, English and Spanish) in a multilingual context.

(3) To investigate the relationship between language attitudes and pragmatic awareness.

(4) To explore factors in the wider context that may influence multilingual development.

After explaining the rationale and motivation underlying this study, we shall next present its general structure. The present dissertation is divided into two main parts. The first part provides an overview of the theoretical framework on which our investigation is based, and consists of three main chapters. The second part presents the empirical study that was carried out and is organised in three different chapters. Therefore, this thesis contains six chapters whose contents can be summarised as follows:

Chapter 1 provides a review of the relevant literature and sets out the theoretical foundations for the study of multilingualism. We first present the general framework of the context of our study and its linguistic situation by paying special attention to the language policies implemented in preschool and primary education. Second, we offer a sociolinguistic overview of Europe as a multilingual continent and highlight the large diversity of language manifestations. After commenting on the importance of learning languages, we describe multilingual education and its new trends. Here, special attention is given to the *Continua of Multilingual Education* proposed by Cenoz (2009). Subsequently, we examine the rationale behind multilingualism in traditional research and the need to adopt new research methods that take into account the dynamism and complexity of multilingualism. The Dynamic Model of Multilingualism, which is mainly based on *Dynamic Systems Theory*, is described along with its implications for

Third Language Acquisition. We also tackle the main characteristics of L3 learners in comparison to L2 and L1 students by focusing our attention on the linguistic awareness of multilingual speakers. Here, we advance our interest in examining pragmatic awareness leading into the following chapter which narrows the scope of the study by focusing on child pragmatic development.

Chapter 2 opens with a brief review of the relevant theoretical foundations for the term pragmatics from a First, Second and Third Language Acquisition perspective. Having established the main premises of pragmatics in the present study, we move on by describing the targeted item of focus (the speech act of requesting). This speech act is defined and its main constituents are described and classified with the taxonomies proposed by Trosborg (1995) and Alcón, Safont and Martínez-Flor (2005). This chapter also provides us with an overview of the pragmatic development of requests in a child population. For this purpose, results from previous research are discussed thereby focusing on the production and comprehension of requests from a First, Second and Third Language Acquisition perspective. Special interest is given to the few studies focused on L3 pragmatic development as they take into consideration the multilingual background of the learners. The chapter finishes by suggesting that, apart from pragmatic aspects, the affective domain also plays an important role in the process of language acquisition.

Chapter 3 examines the role of language attitudes in a child population and emphasises that one of the main tenets of the Dynamic Model of Multilingualism is the focus on affective factors. We define

the notion *language attitudes* and its main characteristics and approaches employed in language attitude measurement. Furthermore, a general overview of the studies on language attitudes conducted in the context of our study, specifically the Valencian Community, are documented and discussed. Having established the general framework for language attitudes, the last part of chapter three is devoted to narrowing the scope of language attitudes to empirical research carried out with children. This last chapter, which closes the theoretical review and the first part of the study, leads to our empirical study on pragmatic awareness and the language attitudes of young learners in multilingual schools.

The empirical analyses of the data are reported in the second part of our research project throughout chapter four. A brief summary of the motivation for the present study and the research gaps identified are taken as a point of departure to formulate the five research questions and related hypotheses guiding the present study. After stating them, we introduce the main traits of the subjects participating in this investigation, according to their age, gender, language background, place of origin and linguistic model followed at school. In this chapter, we also explain and clarify methodological issues from the different instruments used in the collection procedure and the statistical analysis employed with the data. All data are processed by means of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences.

The explanation of the methodology employed in this doctoral thesis is followed by Chapter 5. In this chapter, we present the results of the investigation and discuss the findings with respect to the research

questions and hypotheses presented in the previous chapter, in an attempt to integrate both statistical analytical findings and some qualitative examples which may contribute to the ongoing discussion within the field.

Finally, towards the end of the present study, we include a recapitulation of the main outcomes derived from this research and then provide some pedagogical implications. Afterwards, we suggest possible points of departure for future research and remark on the main limitations of our investigation. The concluding chapter is followed by a list of references and a set of appendices. The appendices provide copies of the materials employed in the data collection procedure. Last but not least, the very last part of the thesis is a summary of the thesis in our official language (i.e. Catalan) in order to meet the demands of the International PhD Mention at *Universitat Jaume I*.

PART 1

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

CHAPTER 1

1. MULTILINGUALISM

The study of multilingualism has increased over the last few decades. The growth of multilingual studies may be linked to factors such as the increasingly interconnected social world, freedom of movement and residence, international trade, and globalisation throughout Europe and beyond. The hegemony of English as the lingua franca of research and instruction is undisputable, although English alone is not enough. In fact, the acquisition of more than two languages over time has increasingly become commonplace (Alcón & Safont, 2013; Martí & Safont, 2008).

Multilingualism is present across the majority of educational centres in European countries. The early introduction of English as a foreign language in the school curriculum has prompted the study of several external and internal factors which may have an effect on language acquisition and development, especially on those bilingual communities where English is learnt as a L3. In fact, existing research (Chevalier, 2011; Dewaele, 2012; Otwinowska & de Angelis, 2012) has accounted for the paramount role of social and individual factors in language acquisition processes in instructional contexts.

Multilingualism has been traditionally investigated from an isolationist perspective by examining languages in pure linguistic terms or isolated from the wider context. Recent research argues that languages are systems which are in constant interaction with the environment (Jessner, 2013). In that regard, considering language as a dynamic and complex system may be the point of departure in multilingual studies. Recently, new models, such as the Dynamic

Model of Multilingualism (Herdina & Jessner, 2002), have been proposed. A considerable amount of researchers (Jessner, 2008b; Cenoz, 2009; Safont, 2013a) have reported that acquiring a third language is quantitatively and qualitatively different from acquiring a second language. Traditionally, First and Second Language Acquisition researchers have considered the multilingual factor a hindrance to language acquisition and learning. Owing to this fact, new approaches claim that monolingual perspectives should be avoided by adopting multilingual ones.

Taking all the above points into consideration, the present study takes multilingualism as a general framework. Section 1.1 will provide us with a brief account of the multilingualism in the Valencian educational system in order to set the context of the present study. Section 1.2 will describe the current sociolinguistic situation by focusing on the complexity of language manifestations, functions and roles. New concepts of multilingual issues will be explained. Section 1.3 will deal with language policies and new trends in the establishment and spread of multilingual education. In section 1.4 we will tackle the study of multilingualism in traditional research and the need to adopt new research methods that take into account the complexity of multilingualism. Section 1.5 will narrow the scope of the study by focusing on third language acquisition and the Dynamic Model of Multilingualism. Finally, section 1.6 will pay special attention to examining the interaction among language systems in a multilingual speaker and the development of language awareness.

1.1. Setting the Context: Multilingualism in the Valencian Educational System

Spain is a rich multilingual country where many languages coexist, as is the case of the Valencian Community, Galicia, Catalonia, the Basque Country, Eastern Aragon, and Asturias. Since the Spanish Constitution (1978), the wide linguistic diversity existing in Spain has been somewhat recognised. Spanish is the official language in the whole territory, but other minority languages spoken in the country have received co-official status alongside Spanish in their respective autonomous communities. These languages are Catalan in Catalonia, the Valencian Community and the Balearic Islands, Basque in the Basque Country, and Galician in Galicia. However, other minority languages spoken in the country, such as Asturian in Asturias, Aranese in the Val d'Aran (Catalonia), and Aragonese in Aragon, have not been granted official legal status (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Linguistic map of Spain.
Source:http://languagesoftheworld.info/europe/language-and-ethnicity-spain.html

The extent of the linguistic diversity in Spain has been extensively documented (Etxebarria; 2002; Pérez-Vidal, Juan-Garau *&* Bel, 2007; Siguan, 1992; Turell, 2001), however these studies have frequently omitted the Valencian Community. For that reason, the present study was undertaken in this context - a Spanish bilingual community located in the east of Spain and composed of three provinces: Castelló, València and Alacant. In 2011 a population census of the Valencian Community was carried out; the results of which are distributed as follows (see Table 1):

Table 1. Number of inhabitants in the Valencian Community

Year	Alacant	Castelló	València	C. Valenciana
2011	1,934,127	604,344	2,578,719	5,117,190

Source: National Institute of Statistics

In this community, two official languages, Spanish and Catalan, are recognised in accordance with the Autonomous Statute of 1982. With the approval of the Spanish Constitution, the Valencian Community gained the statue of Autonomy (*L'Estatut d'Autonomia*) in 1982 and became partly independent from the central government. Since then, Catalan has been given the status of heritage and co-official language along with Spanish. Valencian is the popular name of the Catalan variety spoken in Valencia. Certain historical, political, social and cultural factors have left the Valencian Community characterised by asymmetric bilingualism. Catalan is the minority language, mainly reduced to the private sphere, whereas Spanish is the majority and dominant language which enjoys a higher social prestige. According to the latest sociolinguistic survey (Pons & Sorolla, 2009, p.31), 78.2% of

the population understands Catalan, while 57.6% can speak it, 54.9% can read it and 32.5% can write it.

Table 2. Linguistic Competence in Catalan-speaking communities.

	Understand	Speak	Read	Write
Catalonia	97.4	84.7	90.5	62.3
Valencian Community	78.2	57.6	54.9	32.5
Balearic Islands	93.1	74.6	79.6	46.9

Source: Pons and Sorolla (2009, p.31)

As illustrated in Table 2 above, the Valencian Community shows the lowest rates of bilingualism within the population among the regions where Catalan is a co-official language alongside Spanish. In Catalonia and the Balearic Islands, Catalan is no longer a minority language, in fact, it is the predominant language for education, culture and mass-media. In the context of our study, the use of Catalan has only made some progress in the education system; the exposure of Catalan in other social spheres is very limited.

In 1983 the *Act on Use and Teaching of Valencian (4/1983)* was approved in order to promote and spread the use of the minority language in the education system. Accordingly, all students enrolled in the Valencian educational system have the right to and, in fact, are obliged to learn both languages: Catalan and Spanish. To achieve this goal, several linguistic programmes were proposed which aimed to foster bilingualism in different ways (*Consell de la Generalitat Valenciana*, 1984; *LLei d'Ús I Ensenyament del Valencià*, 1983).

1.   The PIP (*Programa d'Incorporació Progressiva*) model mainly consists of Spanish as the basic language of teaching and learning. In the early stages of education, Spanish is the language of instruction in all subjects, except for the Catalan subject. In the following years, the subjects taught in Catalan progressively increase, at least, one non-linguistic subject taught in the minority language. This program is recommended for Spanish-speaking children.

2.   The PIL (*Programa d'Immersió Lingüística*) model is also addressed for Spanish-speaking students, but the difference is that Catalan language is used as a means of instruction from early ages. In contrast, Spanish is progressively introduced from the first or second cycle of primary school. This program adopts an immersion methodology in order to guarantee the integration of children into the target community.

3.   The PEV (*Programa d'Educació en Valencià*) model includes Catalan as the basis for learning. This model is meant to foster bilingualism by adopting Catalan as language of instruction in most courses while Spanish instruction is reduced to one course (e.g. Spanish language). The PEV model is addressed for Catalan-speaking students.

These linguistic programmes may be divided into two main lines depending on the language of instruction: *Linea en Valencià* or Valencian-based schools include PIL and PEV programmes and *Linea en Castellà* or Spanish-based schools include PIP programmes. In addition to these bilingual models, the early introduction of English in the school curriculum has prompted the introduction of multilingual

programmes, such as Enriched Bilingual Education Programme (*Programa d'Educació Bilingüe Enriquit,* PEBE) which can be combined with other linguistic programmes. This programme consists of the introduction of English from a very early age. As a result, several schools offer a multilingual school system in which the students study a majority language, an official minority language and an international foreign language.

The present study aims to further examine the multilingual context of the Valencian community by focusing on consecutive multilingual children learning English as a L3. In order to further explore this issue, we shall examine multilingualism in more detail by taking into account different perspectives and new approaches.

1.2. Multilingualism from a Sociolinguistic Perspective

Over the last few decades, a growing interest has arisen in the study of multilingualism. Currently, it is estimated that there are 6000 languages in the world (Graddol, 1997). Multilingualism is the norm rather than the exception, indeed, "there are almost no territories in which only one language is used by the citizenry" (Cenoz & Genesee, 1998). Increasing global communication, the growth of international trade and freedom of mobility from one country to another have contributed to the spread of English all over the world as a lingua franca as well as to the revitalisation of minority languages as a sign of identity (Alcón & Safont, 2013). With reference to this, Hoffmann (2000) reports on the existence of two new trends: internationalisation and regionalisation.

As a result, the increased number of languages and the constant interaction among them has made this new linguistic order as one of the most remarkable social changes in our contemporary world. For this reason, Aronin and Singleton (2008) suggest that the term *new linguistic dispensation* might be applicable to this new sociolinguistic situation occurring in all parts of the world as this fact is intrinsically related to core aspects, such as migration and globalisation in general. Nevertheless, we should emphasize that multilingualism is not a new phenomenon because multilingual users and communities have existed throughout history, although multilingualism was not taken into account until the last two decades (Aronin & Hufeisen, 2009). The current linguistic dispensation requires a reconsideration of multilingualism and language use in society.

The spread of multilingualism implies a wide variety of languages and patterns of language use. One language may have different roles and functions depending on the user as well as different status and vitality depending on the context. For instance, as Kemp (2009) argues, the same language may have different names according to the geographical location where it is spoken or other issues, such as political ones. Competing terms may promote linguistic secessionism and asymmetric bilingualism in a region. Ferguson (1959) introduced the notion *diglossia* in sociolinguistic studies. This term refers to the widespread phenomenon which occurs in a society where two different varieties show functional separation. In diglossic communities, each variety is used in a set of circumstances; there is usually a high, powerful and prestige variety and a low variety which is frequently employed for informal situations. Languages in contact may become

languages in conflict when the majority language pushes the minority language around. Nevertheless, if language conflict is declared, it may also be profitable for the language in decline and can lead to the standardization of a language in question (Ninyoles, 1969). As Mollà and Palanca (1987) point out, the standardization requires the social construction of favourable social-political conditions, the will of the linguistic community and the appropriate social action.

Historical, social, political and cultural forces determine the importance given towards the languages in contact. Franceschini (2009, p.28) argues that "although becoming multilingual is a natural phenomenon at the individual level, given the capacity for any speaker to become multilingually proficient, the potential must be developed and enhanced within and by means of social context, by exposure to real speech". With reference to this assumption, the author suggests that multilingualism does not only exist at the individual level, but also at the societal level. Accordingly, the European Commission (2007, p.6) defines multilingualism as "the ability of societies, institutions, groups and individuals to engage, on a regular basis, with more than one language in their day-to-day lives".

In contrast, the European Council (2007) claims that the term multilingualism should only be applied in reference to the societal level since that may differ from the individual level. The term *plurilingualism*, instead of multilingualism, is preferred at the individual level. Accordingly, multilingualism "refers to the presence in a geographical area, large or small, of more than one variety of language" (European Council, 2007, p.8) while plurilingualism is defined as follows:

"[it] refers to the repertoire of varieties of language which many individuals use, and is therefore the opposite of monolingualism; it includes the language variety referred to as 'mother tongue' or 'first language' and any number of other languages or varieties. Thus in some multilingual areas some individuals are monolingual and some are plurilingual" (European Council 2007, p.8).

Therefore, the European Council proposes the term multilingualism at the societal level and plurilingualism at the individual level. An example of this is the Valencian Community which is a multilingual community where two official languages coexist together with several migrant languages. Nevertheless, this diversity of languages does not mean that every single person living in a multilingual context is plurilingual. Indeed, a large number of monolingual speakers may be found in multilingual countries. In the present study, a monolingual speaker should be understood as a "person who has an active knowledge of only one language, though perhaps a passive knowledge of others" (Richards & Schmidt, 2002).

The complexity of language manifestations is evident and the markers of diversity are multiple and various (Aronin & Singleton, 2010). These authors claim that diversity linguistic markers are better defined in terms of *language affordances*. Language affordances refer to all those factors that interact in the language acquisition process; that is, all the chances both at the individual and societal level which make communication possible (see Aronin & Singleton, 2010; Ziglari, 2008). Aronin and Singleton (2010, p.119) differentiate between individual and societal language affordances. On the one hand, individual language affordances are those found in biological traits (e.g., age or race), psycholinguistic factors (e.g., attitude, motivation or interest) and

linguistic skills (e.g., aptitude, bilingualism, or intelligence). On the other hand, societal language affordances include a wide array of dimensions from the micro level (family, school or community) to the macro level (nation, world). Individual affordances are more specific to the subject, although they are highly conditioned by the surrounding environment, that is, the societal language affordances. The concept of language affordances may help us to clarify and understand the large number of variables interacting in multilingualism as well as provide us with more comprehensive classifications and definitions for multilingual issues.

Therefore, from the extensive variability and heterogeneity of language manifestations has emerged a series of discrepancies regarding definitions and nominations. The arbitrary use of terms, such as minority language, community language, heritage language, and migrant language, among many others, has prompted terminological confusion among researchers, professors and students interested in this area of applied linguistics. The present study will follow the classification of languages proposed by Extra and Gorter (2008). These authors include a hierarchy of languages which may be applicable in Europe and divide language manifestations into four categories: (a) English as a lingua franca, (b) national or "official state" languages, (c) regional or minority languages and (d) migrant languages.

With reference to the first category, English as a lingua franca might be understood as "a contact language between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture, and for whom English is the chosen foreign language of communication" (Firth, 1996, p.240). Currently, the power of English as a lingua franca

all over the world is indisputable. Crystal (2006, p.227) believes that English has full power in the following domains: "politics, economics, the press, advertising, broadcasting, motion pictures, popular music, international travel and safety, education and communications". However, English may become weaker in the future, like the power and decline of Latin in the Middle Ages and French from the 17th to the early 20th century. Graddol (2006) suggests the potential of Spanish, Chinese, Arabic and Hindu as possible lingua franca in the future.

The second category "national or official state language" is not as clear-cut because these terms cannot be applied in all contexts. According to the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (2002), a national language should be understood as a "language in widespread and current use throughout a specific country or in parts of its territory, and often representative of the identity of its speakers. It may or may not have the status of an official language". In contrast, an official state language is "a language that has legal status in a particular legally constituted political entity such as a State or part of a State, and that serves as a language of administration. Thus, national and official languages might be understood as different concepts. This thesis will use the term majority language since we consider that it entails those aforementioned concepts and is more appropriate for our purposes. On that account, a majority language is a "dominant language in a community. It is used at the institutional level and spoken by most of inhabitants in a specific area" (Cenoz, 2009, p.4).

As regards the third category, the Council of Europe (1992, p.2) defines Regional or Minority Languages as (i) traditionally used within a given territory of a State by nationals of that State who form a group

numerically smaller than the rest of the State's population; and (ii) different from the official language of that State. For instance, regional or minority languages in Spain, such as Catalan, Galician and Basque, have co-official legal status along with Spanish -the only official language in the country. In line with the definition given by Cenoz (2009, p.4), a minority language is a "language spoken by a group numerically inferior to the rest of population of a State with a more restricted use at the institutional level". Minority languages are languages which have been spoken in established and historical communities for several centuries.

Last but not least, migrant languages are those languages spoken by migrant communities who have arrived in a new country relatively recently (e.g., Romanian and Arabic in Spain). The number of migrant languages in Spain is very high. In fact, the economic boom in Spain, particularly in the context of our study, has been a focus of migratory flows in the last decade (Vigers, 2011). Despite the recent financial crisis, the presence of immigrant population is still high, especially Romanian and Arabic populations.

In this study, we will refer to (i) English as the lingua franca, (b) majority languages instead of national or official state languages, (c) minority languages and (d) migrant languages. In the case of the Valencian Community, Spanish would be the majority, Catalan would stand for the minority and languages, such as Romanian, Arabic and French, among others, would refer to migrant languages. The following Table presents the classification that we will employ in this study as follows:

Table 3. Classification of languages in the present study.

Lingua Franca	English
Majority Language	Spanish
Minority language	Catalan
Migrant languages	Romanian, Arabic, French…

In Europe, the European Union has increased the need to and importance of learning languages. Nowadays, it has 28 countries with 24 official state languages plus more than 60 minority and migrant languages. The growth of languages will increase as countries continue to join the European Union. This phenomenon makes Europe an interesting multilingual and multicultural place where many languages and cultures are in continuous contact, although it only represents 3% of all the languages in the world (Gordon, 2005). In the majority of the countries that comprise Europe, there is more than one language coexisting with another, as shown in Figure 2 below.

As indicated by the Eurobarometer 386 (2012, p.8), more than half of the European citizens "speak at least one other language in addition to their mother tongue". More specifically, "54% are able to hold a conversation in at least one additional language other than their mother tongue, a quarter (25%) are able to speak at least two additional languages and 1 in 10 (10%) are conversant in at least three". However, the spread of English all over the world as a global language may diminish the importance of learning other languages. According to the Eurobarometer 386 (201, p.69), 67% of the Europeans choose English as the most useful language to know followed by German (17%) and

French (16%). In fact, the report (2012, p.21) claims that "English is the most widely spoken foreign language in 19 out of the 25 member states where it is not an official language." The overwhelming influence of English in our contemporary society has produced controversy and debate on whether the use of English is a threat to other languages or not.

Figure 2: Languages in Europe.
Source: http://ec.europa.eu/languages/pdf/doc5088_en.pdf

On the one hand, some authors (e.g., Phillipson, 1992, 2006; Swales, 1997) have considered that the phenomenon of English as a dominant language may debilitate other languages and lead to negative attitudes towards learning languages others than English. Swales (1997) defines the globalisation of English as a "Tyrannosaurus rex". In this regard, Phillipson (2006, p.82) argues that "using English inhibits the maintenance and equality of other European languages". This scholar suggests that the spread of English as the language of research, scholarship and international trade is more related to political and economic interests rather than common sense. This author believes that the emotional commitment towards multilingualism plays a very important role in the assumption against "linguistic imperialism".

On the other hand, other authors (Alcón, 2007; Alcón & Safont, 2013; Graddol, 2006; House, 2001, 2008) offer a contrastive perspective. In their opinion, English and the rest of languages are not in competition, but they supplement each other. From this point of view, languages are in continuous contact in this multilingual and heterogeneous scenario. According to House:

> "Paradox[ical] as this may seem, the very spread of English can motivate speakers of other languages to insist on their own local language for identification, for binding them emotionally to their own cultural and historical tradition. There is no need to set up an old-fashioned dichotomy between local languages and English as the 'hegemonic aggressor': there is a place for both, because they fulfil different functions.… Using English as a lingua franca in Europe does not inhibit linguistic diversity, and it unites more than it divides, simply because it may be 'owned' by all Europeans – not as a cultural symbol, but as a means of enabling understanding" (House, 2001, p.84).

In House's opinion, English would not represent a threat to other languages, but a link of union to the minority language and culture. This author (2008, p.79) emphasizes that English may stand for the global language of communication, but "never a substitute for Europeans citizens' mother tongues". Hence, English may be viewed as a language for communication and not as a language for identification. From this perspective, Alcón (2007, p.29) claims that "languages are used for affective and identification purposes, which cannot be achieved through English as a lingua franca". Nevertheless, languages are sometimes linked to political identities instead of being linked to cultural identities. With reference to this, Lasagabaster (2002, p.1693) posits, "the more the L2 language and culture is admired, the higher the probabilities for succeeding in the learning process". Further attention will be devoted in Chapter 3 to students' attitudes towards languages which seem to play a very important role in the process of language acquisition (Nightingale, 2012; Portolés, 2011; Safont, 2007).

In the educational field, the hegemony of English as the lingua franca is undisputable, although English alone is not enough. Linguistic policies play a pivotal role in the promotion of multilingual education and the basis for future language learning methodologies. The next subsection will provide us with a general framework for multilingual education as well as new insights into language learning which has become a major concern at all levels of education (primary, secondary and tertiary).

1.3. Multilingualism from an Educational Perspective

Given the variety of the languages existing in Europe, the European Union has been preoccupied with language diversity and language promotion at all educational levels. In fact, it has made huge efforts by establishing decrees and reforms taking into account the new linguistic order. In our study, multilingual education should be understood as "teaching more than two languages provided that schools aim at multilingualism and multiliteracy" (Cenoz, 2009, p.32). This section describes how language teaching and learning has evolved in the last three decades, focusing more particularly on Spain.

With reference to foreign language teaching in Spain, French and English, especially French, were introduced in the curriculum of secondary education until the 1980s as they were considered powerful tools for the labour market. However, the importance of learning languages was not promoted at any level in society. Only children of high socioeconomic status had the chance to receive private foreign language classes and stay in English-speaking countries during the summer period (Alcón & Safont, 2013). In addition to the lack of interest in learning languages, the arrival of two dictatorships (Primo de Rivera and Franco) in the 20th century strengthened the motto that one nation means one language. From this perspective, Spanish was exclusively the language of the nation and internationalism was seen as a threat to the Spanish identity.

In this period, not only the position of international foreign languages was weakened, but also that one of minority languages. Franco's dictatorship from 1939 to 1975 forbade the use of Catalan in

the school system as well as other minority languages, such as Galician and Basque. These languages were reduced to the private and rural spheres. In contrast, the use of Spanish was promoted and considered the high prestige language. This differential use of languages is a clear example of a diglossic situation. In fact, the influence of this political scenario was crucial in the formation of people's language attitudes towards minority languages. As Safont (2007) argues, this factor was determinant for the supremacy of Spanish over Catalan in the context of our study, even today where some parts of society are still reticent and unmotivated towards learning and using the minority language on a regular basis.

After the forty-year dictatorship, the position of foreign and minority languages in education have steadily increased over the last three decades because of two historical facts. Firstly, the birth of the Spanish Constitution in 1978 posited that Catalan, Basque and Galician were co-official languages alongside Spanish. Thus, communities were allowed to partly implement their own language policies in the school system after more than forty years where minority languages were banned. Secondly, the introduction of Spain as a member of the European Union in 1986 accelerated the promotion of foreign and minority language learning. In fact, the European Union, the Council of Europe, and UNESCO have been functioning as leading transnational agencies in the promotion of multilingualism. These agencies encourage all their citizens to learn at least three languages: their mother tongue and two more (European Commission, 2005a, p.4).

At present, English is the first foreign language introduced in the school system in the European Union, with the exception of English

speaking countries (Eurydice, 2008). Additionally, as previously mentioned in Section 1.2, the majority of citizens in various European countries possess knowledge of at least two languages due to the sociolinguistic context of their countries (Alcón & Safont, 2013; Cenoz, Hufeisen & Jessner, 2001). As multilingual education can be an opportunity to combine the use of the L1, L2 and L3, specific curricular adaptations have taken place in multilingual communities in Spain, namely in Galicia, Catalonia, the Basque Country and the Valencian Community (Lasagabaster & Huguet, 2007). In this regard, the presence of more than two languages in the school curriculum is a common practice in multilingual societies in Spain, as described in the Valencian Community where English is introduced as a third language (Safont, 2005). As a result, the schools offer a multilingual school system in which the pupils study a majority language, a minority language and a foreign language.

Therefore, the gradual shift from bilingual to multilingual education has generated three new trends: (i) the protection and revitalisation of minority and migrant languages, (ii) the early introduction of English in primary and preschool education and (iii) the instruction of English through content and the integration of languages.

With reference to the first trend, according to the Europe Commission (2011), school curricula need to respect the heritage and the culture as well as ensure proficiency and high level literacy in the minority language. In the context of our study, the presence of Catalan cannot compete with the presence of Spanish outside the school; in this sense the instruction of school subjects through the minority language is a necessary condition to maintain multilingual contexts. In addition,

several research studies (Bialystok, 2001; Cummins, 2003) have proven that bilingual immersion in the minority language has positive effects on children's academic and linguistic outcomes. Both majority and minority language speakers may benefit from instruction through the minority language in order to become balanced bilinguals in both languages; in this vein, the exposure to the minority language inside the classroom may counterbalance the strong exposure of the majority language in the wider context.

However, what happens with immigrants' home languages? The results from the Programme for International Student Assessment (2010), known as PISA, state that students of immigrant origin show poor language achievement in the target languages of the community and in other curriculum areas. Several studies (Ball, 2010; Benson, 2009; National Agency for Education, 2008) have put forward that language instruction at the first stages of education through the mother tongue results in better language achievement. The European Commission (2011, p.5) highlights the need "to provide opportunities for migrants to learn the language of the host country and to cultivate their own native language at the same time". In the Spanish educational system, the role of migrant languages in the school system is very limited in comparison to that of minority languages (Cenoz, 2009). Some schools have developed their own diversity language programmes in order to raise students' intercultural awareness with the aim of integrating immigrant students and developing their multilingual competence. However, there is still a lot of research to be done in this area.

As regards the second trend, the early introduction of English in the school curriculum is a controversial issue when it comes to deciding the right moment for the pupils to learn English. Currently, the introduction of English as a compulsory subject starts approximately at the age of 7 in 13 out of the 27 countries of the Europe Union, at the age of 8-9 in 10 countries and just 4 countries preserve the mandatory introduction of English at the age of 10-11 (Enever, 2011; Figure 3). In addition, English has also increasingly being introduced in the non-compulsory preschool education.

FL start age in Europe – 2011
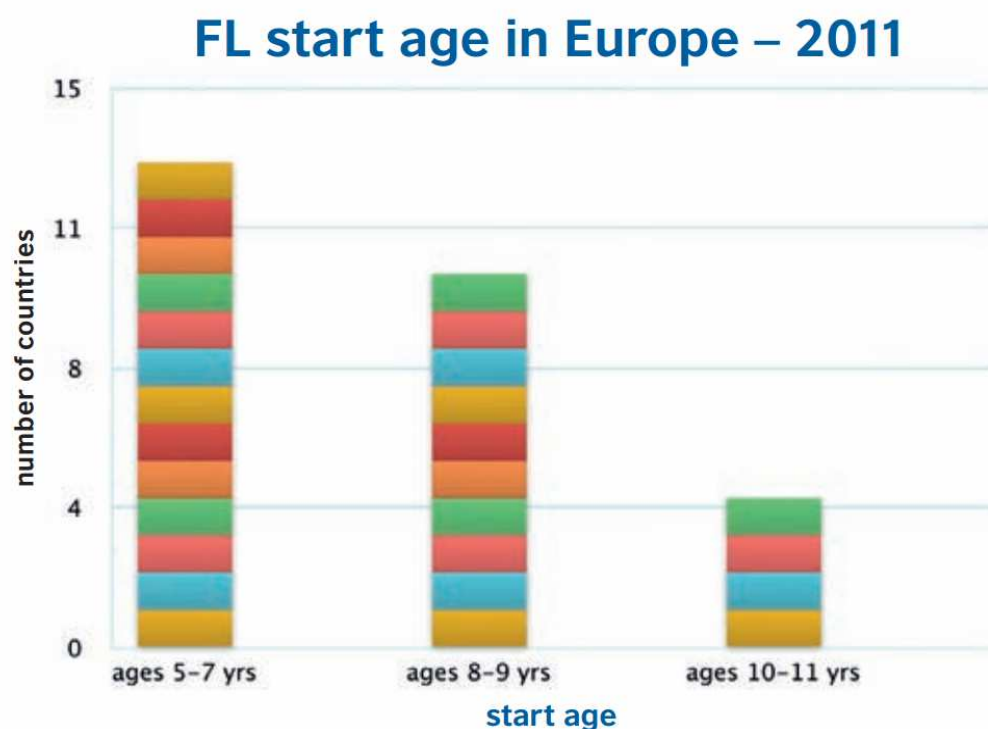
Figure 3. Early Language Learning across Europe.
Source: Enever (2011, p.24)

In the case of Spain, the early introduction of English as a foreign language from the age of four has become commonplace in some parts of Spain, although very little research has been published to date (Cenoz, 2009). The economical business of English, parental demand and some European decrees have been determinant factors for

the early introduction of English. In fact, the European Council (2002, p.3) has asked "for further actions to improve the mastery of basic skills, in particular by teaching at least two foreign languages from a very early age". Nevertheless, there is still limited consensus on the assumption, 'the earlier the better'.

The popular belief that children are like sponges for absorbing language in their brains is grounded on the Critical Period Hypothesis (Lenneberg, 1967). This hypothesis assumes that after the onset of puberty is almost impossible to acquire a native-like competence in a language. According to Muñoz (2006), there exists evidence for the Critical Period Hypothesis in studies of (i) First Language Acquisition and, (ii) Second Language Acquisition in naturalistic settings (context of full immersion in the target language). However, 'the earlier the better' assumption has become widespread in foreign language learning in formal contexts, despite the lack of studies focused on the effectiveness of this measure (Cenoz, 2009; Muñoz, 2006; Ortega, 2009; Singleton, 2000).

On the one hand, the findings show that older learners outperform younger starters after similar amounts of exposure to the foreign language in the classroom (Cenoz, 2002, 2009; Muñoz, 2006). According to these authors, older learners have more fully developed their cognitive and linguistic systems in comparison to younger learners. Singleton (2000), on the basis of his findings in full immersion contexts, suggests that younger learners will surpass older learners in instructional settings, if enough curricular time is given to foreign language instruction. With regard to this, Muñoz (2008, p.582) also reports that "an early starting age produces long-term benefits

when associated with greater exposure, as in immersion programmes, but not when associated with limited time and exposure, as in typical foreign language learning classrooms". From our perspective, we support the views held by Singleton and Muñoz that more quantity and a higher quality of input will result in better language outcomes by younger learners.

On the other hand, other studies (e.g. Le Pichon-Vorstman, 2010) argue that early foreign language does not present any disadvantage in terms of academic achievement and suggest that foreign language instruction from a very early age develops students' language awareness and sensitivity towards other languages. Younger learners may be more motivated in the foreign language classroom and their attitudes towards multilingualism may be higher in comparison to older learners. However, further research of this age period is needed (Lakshmanan, 2009; Nikolov & Mihaljevic-Djigunovic, 2006). Franceschini (2009, p.51) emphasises the research gap that exists in the early childhood (from age 4 to 7 approximately) where early foreign language learning has been commonly introduced in the last decade.

With reference to the third trend, namely that of instruction through English, new methodologies have been proposed to those schools aiming at multilingualism. One of the most recent approaches in language teaching has been Content Language Integrated Learning (henceforth CLIL). CLIL methodology focuses on the acquisition of content from one discipline (e.g., arts, physical education or computer science) as well as the acquisition of the foreign language at the same time (Cenoz, 2009). The integration of language and content has been a

major influence on the development of multilingual education (Dalton-Puffer, 2007; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2010).

Another recent methodological approach is the integration across languages. In this method, languages are not isolated from each other in order to avoid the traditional monolingual behaviour in the language classroom (García & Sylvan, 2011). According to Ó Duibhir and Cummins (2012, p.36), "the central rationale for integration across languages is that learning efficiencies can be achieved when teachers explicitly draw children's attention to similarities and differences between their languages and reinforce effective learning strategies in a coordinated way across languages". Therefore, the main goal in this approach is to develop students' language awareness, that is, "an awakening to languages" (Cenoz, 2009, p.13). This concept will be further developed in Section 1.6.

After reviewing these trends in language learning and teaching, we may consider that multilingual education is like a melting pot with different possibilities and perspectives. In this sense, it is rather difficult to gain an accurate typology of multilingual education as well as measure the degree of multilingualism that a school has. Several classifications have been provided for bilingual education (see Baker, 2011 for a review), but few attempts for multilingual education (Ystma, 2001).

The European Commission, on behalf of Mercator-Education, launched an extended comprehensive account of multilingual education. The report 'Trilingual Primary Education in Europe' (Beestma, 2001) provides us with an overview of multilingual education in seven

member states of the European Union (Austria, Finland, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Spain). This report includes a comparison of multilingual education in those countries by taking into account several variables, such as context, teaching materials, and status of language, among others. The diversity and complexity of variables that interact in multilingual education are numerous which makes it difficult to establish a general framework for multilingual education. In fact, Ystma (2001) proposes 46 different types of multilingual education by taking into account only three variables: (i) the sociolinguistic context, (ii) the linguistic distance between the languages involved and (iii) the introduction and organization of languages in the school curriculum.

Such variables proposed by Ystma (2001) play a very important role in multilingual education; however the number of language affordances both at the macro and micro level are much more numerous. With reference to this, Cenoz (2009) emphasises the need to design a tool in order to provide more exhaustive accounts about the different types that multilingual education presents. Therefore, Cenoz (2009, pp.32-36) proposes a typology of multilingual education that embraces a large number of educational, linguistic and sociolinguistic variables.

With reference to educational variables, Cenoz suggests four main variables: (1) subjects (e.g., English and French as language subjects), (2) language of instruction (e.g., maths and arts through English and social sciences through Catalan), (3) teachers (e.g., the competence and training of teachers in multilingual education) and (4) school context (e.g., the language of communication in the school, the

linguistic model and the linguistic landscape). Regarding sociolinguistic variables, Cenoz distinguishes between factors at the macro level (e.g., number of speakers of the different languages, their status, vitality and use in the media or the linguistic landscape) and the micro level (e.g., students' use of languages with the parents, peers or the community). These educational and sociolinguistic variables are represented in continua that go from less multilingual to more multilingual. As regards linguistic variables, the author considers that the degree of linguistic distance between the languages involved may go from less distant to more distant and this factor may have an effect on multilingual education (e.g., for a Catalan–speaker it is not the same to study Italian as to study English because Catalan and Italian are less distant to each other than Catalan and English).

Cenoz (2009) emphasizes that multilingual education is a complex dynamic process where several variables are in constant interaction. For the purpose of our study, this typology will provide us with a more comprehensive framework to analyse the schools where the present study was carried out. This typology may help us to understand the variability of results from one school to the other. The following triangle (see Figure 4) represents the Continua of Multilingual Education as follows:

LINGUISTIC DISTANCE
<-------------------->

SCHOOL
SUBJECT
<--------------->
LANGUAGE OF
INSTRUCTION
<--------------->
TEACHER
<--------------->
SCHOOL
CONTEXT
<--------------->

MACRO
<------------->
SPEAKERS
STATUS
MEDIA
LANDSCAPE

MICRO
<------------->
PARENTS
SIBLINGS
PEERS
NEIGHBOURS

SOCIOLINGUISTIC
CONTEXT
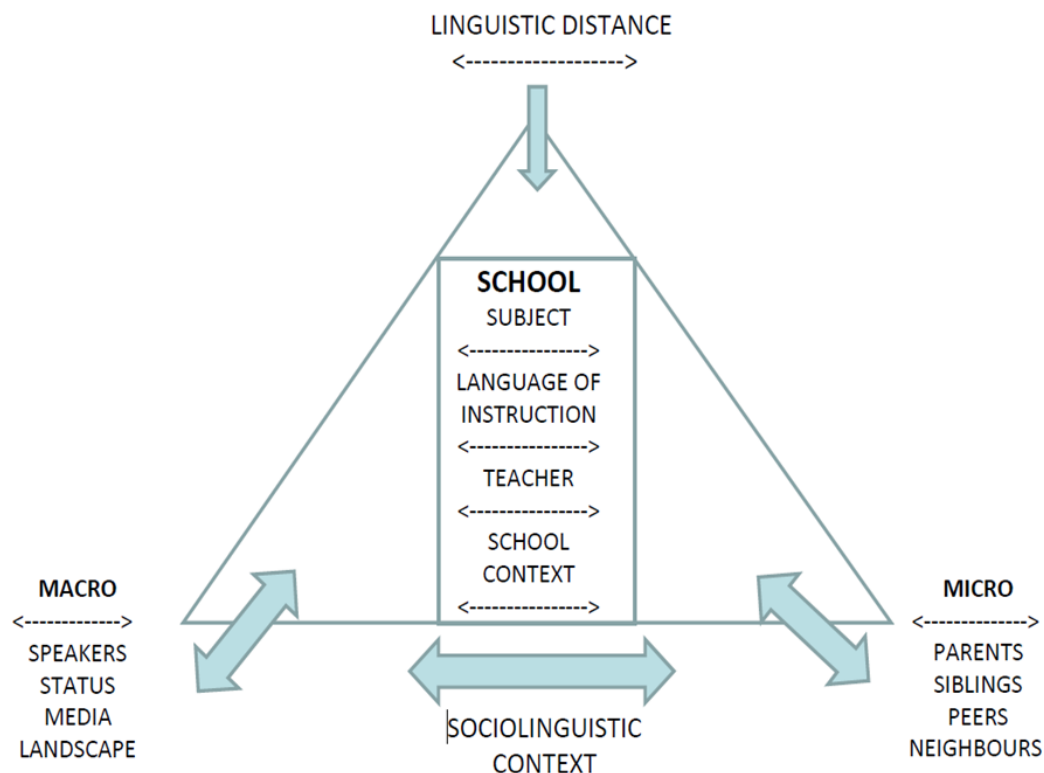
Figure 4. Continua of Multilingual Education
Source: Cenoz (2009, p.35)

In what follows, we shall turn our attention to describe and explain the theoretical foundations of language acquisition from a multilingual and dynamic perspective. Multilingualism should be further analysed because traditional researchers have considered the multilingual factor a hindrance for language acquisition and learning. Pavlenko (2006, p.xiii) has accused linguistic theory of "militant monolingualism" as it does not take into account learners' language repertoire; that is, the development of several languages in a multilingual mind. For this reason, multilingualism should not only be analysed in pure linguistic terms, but should consider languages as systems which are in constant interaction with the environment and are highly determined by the affordances provided in the external and internal context. The next subsection is devoted to provide further

insights into this topic by adopting Dynamic Systems Theory perspective in the study of multilingualism.

1.4. Multilingualism and Dynamic Systems Theory

This section describes the shift from monolingualism to multilingualism in language acquisition research. Influential research approaches of the 20th century, as proposed by Chomsky, have contributed to the study of language acquisition although we do not necessarily agree with their theories. Early research on additional language was driven by a completely monolingual bias originated by Chomskian linguistics.

Chomsky, distinguished linguist of the 20th century, claimed that language is an innate faculty of the brain. According to this author (1965), people are born with a set of rules, dispositions and principles in their mind that need to be developed. He has referred to this knowledge as *competence*. As argued by this scholar, this competence is an underlying feature of all human living systems since we all share a *Universal Grammar* that represents the core grammar of all languages. Chomsky (1965) stated that children learn language by means of the *Language Acquisition Device* (henceforth LAD) in any possible language when input is available to them. The input that children are exposed to is referred to as *performance*. The Universal Grammar approach, proposed by Chomsky (1968), has been applied to Second Language Acquisition studies as the LAD contains universal features which are found in all known languages. The author argued that children do not inherit one language rather than another, but the language they are exposed to.

Furthermore, the author reported that this LAD is a system autonomous from other cognitive domains in the brain. In this regard, we may infer that the linguistic system is located in an independent box from other cognitive boxes in the brain. With reference to the process of language acquisition, Chomsky (1965) stated that the path is linear and systematic. In this sense, learners steadily escalate the learning ladder in a chronological order without any kind of deviation throughout the process. In Second Language Acquisition studies, as Chomsky (1968) reported, this linear conception leads to the achievement of an "invariable competence" in the target language. This concept implies that language learners gain a finite, invariable and ideal competence in the target language almost identical to that of native speakers. From this perspective, language acquisition is a static and homogeneous process in which language learners are identical in terms of proficiency, regardless of the contextual variables involved in each subject.

In traditional scientific approaches, the research method has consisted of identifying aspects of language out of context. These approaches have only focused on the linguistic domain and have not taken into account other factors at the macro and micro level. Early researchers thought that the study of isolated parts would reveal techniques of more efficient language learning and teaching. The lack of variability produced homogeneous data (Dewaele, 2012). As a matter of fact, dissimilar and diverse data, known as "bad data", were usually discarded.

Hence, traditional research has considered languages as something closed, homogeneous, independent and isolated from other

factors. The new linguistic dispensation and the complexity of the language acquisition process have put in evidence the need to adopt new research approaches to the study of multilingualism, leaving aside the isolationist methodology used in traditional research. From this new perspective, language acquisition is a complex process in which a range of variables emerge at different levels, although few theoretical foundations have worked with this dynamic view of language as a point of departure. Some of these theories are language ecology (Kramsch, 2002; Kramsch & Whiteside, 2007), language emergence theory (Ellis & Larsen-Freeman, 2006) and Dynamic Systems Theory (de Bot, Lowie & Vespoor, 2007; Herdina & Jessner, 2002; Vespoor, Lowie & van Dikj, 2008; Van Geert, 1994, 2008). In the present study, we will focus on Dynamic Systems Theory, closely linked to Chaos theory and complexity theory (Larsen-Freeman, 1997; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008).

Dynamic Systems Theory (henceforth DST) is 'the science of complex systems' (de Bot et al., 2007, p.8). This theory provides a comprehensive approach which includes insights from the theories previously mentioned. Although DST has its roots in mathematics, a broad variety of scientific fields, such as meteorology, physics, biology and psychology, have already applied this theory. This construct may be applied to multilingualism as this phenomenon is also a complex and dynamic system. According to Ellis (2007, p.23), DST is "an important theoretical maturation in that it brings together the many factors that interact in the complex system of language, learning, and use". In this approach, a system should be understood as follows:

A system (…) is more than just a collection of variables or observables we have isolated from the rest of the world. It is a system primarily because the variables mutually interact. That is, each variable affects all the other variables contained in the system, and thus also affects itself. This is a property we may call complete connectedness and it is the default property of any system. The principal distinctive property -compared to a constant- is that it changes over time. Consequently, mutual interaction among variables implies that they influence and co-determine each other's changes over time. In this sense, a system is, by definition, a dynamic system and so we define a dynamic system as a set of variables that mutually affect each other's changes over time (van Geert, 1994, p.50).

This comprehensive definition given by van Geert (1994) may explain the concept of system. The following example of a flower as a dynamic system may provide further clarification for this term. If our focus is to study a flower in a particular garden, we cannot analyse the different parts of a flower (e.g., pistil, petal or peduncle) as independent constituents. All parts are nested and interconnected in the flower as a living system. Minor damage in a petal may cause major consequences in the whole flower. Therefore, the flower is the sum of its constituents plus the interactions the flower has with the surrounding environment. The development of the flower might be highly influenced by the context and therefore subject to change over time. The same flower planted in the next garden may die because the soil quality is different, there is not enough water or no fertilisers are used; in this vein, the flower is completely determined by its initial conditions. Hence, each flower is different from every other.

Figure 5. Flowers as a complex and dynamic system.

Figure 5 above clearly shows how flowers provide an excellent illustration of a complex dynamic system. Therefore, we may summarise the basic properties of DST as follows (de Bot et al., 2007): (i) change over time, (ii), interconnection, (iii) variability, (iv) uniqueness, (v) non-linearity, (vi) self-organization, (vii) emergence and, (viii) non-predictability.

One of the main tenets of DST is the change over time which is expressed in mathematical terms with the equation $x(t+1)=f(x(t))$: i.e. any function that describes how a state x at t is transformed into a new state x at time t+1. This equation indicates the changing nature of a dynamic system over time. A dynamic system is also characterised for its interconnectedness among the variables that form the system. In fact, all the variables in a dynamic system are nested among themselves forming part of another subsystem and influencing each other.

Language as a dynamic system in a multilingual mind interacts with other languages in one´s linguistic repertoire. This repertoire emerges and develops over time and space cooperating with a broad range of learner and learning factors. According to Vespoor et al. (2008, p.215), intra- and inter-individual data should be treated and analysed in order to understand the variability in language acquisition processes as 'the environment is not an independent factor that influences the behaviour, but the learner also actively shapes and changes the environment'. The interactional pattern between the social and the cognitive is paramount in the DST approach. Thus, a dynamic system is "a process of constant adjustment to the changing environment and internal conditions aiming at the maintenance of a state of (dynamic) balance" (Herdina & Jessner, 2002, p.86).

The variability in dynamic systems is a paramount concept to understand the complexity that linguistic systems present. As this theory provides a more exhaustive account of the relationships among factors, there is a wider range of possibilities of real data since all the available data are analysed without discarding "bad" data. In fact, DST 'points to the potential importance of variability, not as error variance, but rather as a lightning rod for studies of critical points during development and as a means of creating opportunities for developmental change' (Aslin, 1993, p.397). This approach avoids reductionism and includes all those factors that may affect the system. In contrast to traditional research, variability is not viewed as "noise" (bad data) but as "sound" (Thelen & Smith, 1994, p.67).

On that account, each learner is a single individual with different language backgrounds, uses and competences. Individuals' prior

knowledge as an initial condition determines language development (Todeva & Cenoz, 2009, p.4). Although two learners may have a similar prior knowledge of a language at a specific point, the language learning may diverge as time evolves because a large number of factors may interact within the process. In this regard, multilingualism phenomena are sensitive dependent on initial conditions (Aronin & Singleton, 2012). This issue is connected to the butterfly-effect phenomenon and chaos theory. Lorenz (1972) introduced the butterfly-effect in his studies of meteorology. This meteorologist claimed that minor local perturbations may have a huge impact on the global weather. The following statement was reported in the chaos theory: "it has been said that something as small as the flutter of a butterfly's wing can ultimately cause a typhoon halfway around the world."

With reference to the statement above, initial conditions may be significant in the long run. Each single variable in the process of multilingual acquisition is important. As Aronin and Singleton (2012, p.183) posit, language learners may differ widely regardless of their similar education and environment. According to Dewaele (2012, p.159), "learners have unique previous histories that may, for example, determine their reaction to an L2 class and shape their future trajectories". As a matter of fact, it is almost impossible to accurately measure all variables to predict an outcome. In addition, any subtle change in one of the variables during the process will affect the other variables and vice versa. This is related to the non-linearity feature in DST which states that minor differences may have bigger consequences and huge effects may not have any consequence in the system.

Dynamic systems have the ability to self-organize over the span of time and space due to the variability and development through interaction with the environment. A dynamic approach does not contemplate the existence of processing devices, fixed structures or universal grammars, but only sees dynamic, emergent self-organization. The notion of self-organization implies a great variety of patterns, although a dynamic system usually settles into a preferred mode of behaviour (known as "attractor" state). An attractor state is the most frequent and preferred mode whereas "repellor" state is just the opposite. Kin and Sankey (2010) provide the following example to understand the notion attractor and repellor:

> Picture an artificial landscape with hills and valleys. A small ball like a glass marble is perched on a top of a hill. This is an unstable repellor, for the ball will be easily dislodged. On the other hand, a ball lodged in a deep valley will require considerable energy to dislodge it into another way. If disturbed only gently, it will return to its stable attractor. A ball in a shallow valley, by contrast, will be more easily moved to another valley, although given time will probably end up in a more stable attractor (Kin & Sankey, 2010, p.93).

As described in the example above, language learning also settles in attractor states. Thus, "the development is the individual's trajectory, not through predetermined stages, but rather through a shifting landscape of repellors and attractors" (Kin & Sankey, 2010, p.93). In this sense, language learning is not a linear path, but a chaotic itinerary with turbulences and stabilities. With reference to this line of research, Vespoor et al. (2008, p.217) suggest that 'children may use more advanced approaches on one occasion and then regress to less advanced techniques on the next, but these regressions are temporary as

the general trend of change is upward'. This assumption challenges the linear conception postulated by Chomsky's (1965) Universal Grammar.

This self-organization gives place to a new form of "emergence", that is, 'the spontaneous occurrence of something new as a result of the dynamics of a system' (van Geert, 2008, p.182). Features, such as non-linear behaviour, self-organization and emergence provide outcomes that are not predictable. In this sense, language acquisition is not a predictable process since there is not any magic potion with the clue for success. As a conclusion, in line with DST research, language is a complex, non-linear, emergent, non-predictable and self-organising system.

In the last two decades, the DST has been successfully applied to first and second language acquisition studies (Hohenberger & Peltzer-Karpf, 2009; Larsen-Freeman, 1997; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008; de Bot et al., 2007; Kramsch, 2002; Kramsch & Whiteside, 2008; van Geert, 1994, 2008). Studies of Second Language Acquisition (henceforth SLA) have mainly focused on different aspects of a second language and the outcomes of being bilingual. This research field has become paramount in order to gain a deeper understanding of language acquisition processes. Nevertheless, such studies have ignored the existence of multilingual communities and individuals. They have not taken into account the acquisition of an additional language in one's linguistic repertoire. As a result, SLA studies do not reflect the interaction between more than two languages or the possible benefits of knowing more than two languages. The study of DST is challenging due to the complexity of interacting factors in the language systems.

In the present study, as the focus of attention is Third Language Acquisition, the following section examines the main research on multilingualism and how DST approach has been applied to studies interested in more than two languages.

1.5. Multilingualism and Third Language Acquisition

Traditionally, multilingualism has been included within the competences of SLA and its theories. According to Sharwood Smith (1994) and Gass (1996), SLA stands for all languages (L2, L3, L4...) acquired after the L1. These authors consider that the processes and mechanisms involved for learning a L2 are the same those involved for learning a L3. In contrast, other authors (Cenoz et al., 2001; Herdina & Jessner, 2002; Safont, 2005, 2013a) argue that learning a L3 is very different from learning a L2 and consider that multilingualism should be more connected with the notion *Third Language Acquisition*.

Third Language Acquisition (henceforth TLA) is a complex and dynamic phenomenon with some specific characteristics that widely differ from SLA. According to Herdina and Jessner (2002), TLA involves monolingualism and bilingualism as possible forms, but addressing those languages learnt after a second one. Following this line of research, Cenoz (2003, p.72) states, "TLA processes should form the basis for studying bilingual and monolingual learning and not vice versa". The interest for TLA is what happens to the people who know more than two languages, if there is any benefit or not. Cummins' threshold hypothesis (1976) indicates that bilinguals must attain some degree of proficiency in both languages in order to take advantage of the cognitive and linguistic advantages. In this regard, the

condition of being balanced bilingual seems to have an advantage in additional language acquisition (Muñoz, 2000; Safont, 2005; Stafford, Sanz & Bowden, 2010). Nevertheless, other studies (Bialystok et al., 2003; Le Pichon-Vorstman, 2010) suggest that bilingualism *per se* is not a determinant condition for additional language success and claim that many other variables may influence the process of language acquisition.

Similarly, the distinction between bilingualism and multilingualism also requires further exploration. Haugen (1956) suggests that the term bilingual could be used as synonym for polyglot and plurilingual. In contrast, other scholars (Herdina & Jessner, 2002) report that bilingualism is not the same as multilingualism because the former involves the acquisition of more than two languages. In light of this, trilingualism and TLA may be covered by the notion multilingualism, and bilingualism may be seen as a variant of multilingualism. Dewaele (2008) prefers to distinguish multilingual speakers depending on how many languages they know, as there are qualitative and quantitative differences between monolinguals and bilinguals, bilinguals and trilinguals, trilinguals and quadrilinguals, and so on.

As a result, the ways in which people become multilingual differs greatly (Baker, 2011). In SLA research, bilingual acquisition in childhood is often divided into two types: simultaneous and consecutive (Lakshmanan, 2009). On the one hand, the informal acquisition of languages from birth is often referred as simultaneous acquisition. This situation is usually based on family circumstances, for instance, when two parents with different mother tongues speak to their

child in their own languages. In this case, children learn both languages at the same time. On the other hand, consecutive bilingualism happens when the child has almost established his or her mother tongue before learning the L2 in the school setting. The discussion on the cut-off point between simultaneous and consecutive bilingualism is not clear-cut, but researchers (McLaughlin, 1978; Paradis, 2010) often set it at 3 years old.

Similar boundaries have been found when distinguishing child language acquisition, adolescent language acquisition or adult language acquisition. In SLA, some authors (Nicholas & Lightbown, 2008) consider that the exposure to a L2 after the age of three until the onset of puberty constitutes "Child Second Language Acquisition" while exposure to a L2 after the onset of puberty is "Adult Second Language Acquisition". Other authors (Schwartz, 2003) argue that the cut-off point to distinguish child L2 acquisition from other forms of acquisition is at age 7. The age period between about 3 and 7 seven years old is characterised by the rapid development of the language system(s) without instruction. After the age of 7, SLA becomes more adult-like. However, as childhood embraces the onset of puberty, Nicholas and Lightbown (2008) have suggested distinguishing the "younger child period" (from 3 to 7 years old) from the "older child period" (from about age 7 to the onset of puberty). The latter is characterized by the incorporation of adult language acquisition features, but it is still slightly different.

In TLA literature, the complexity of acquiring more than two languages increases the routes of acquisition. Cenoz (2000) describes at least four possible routes: (a) simultaneous acquisition of L1/L2/L3, (b)

consecutive acquisition of L1, L2 and L3, (c) simultaneous acquisition of L2/L3 after learning the L1 and (d) simultaneous acquisition of L1/L2 before learning the L3. As Cenoz (2000) argues, these processes are not mechanical and may be interrupted and re-started at any point, and, in addition, the language learning setting may be naturalistic, instructed or both. In line with this argument, Hoffmann (2001, p.9) states that "it is not possible to discern clear cut-off points between the infant, the child and the older trilingual, or between simultaneous and subsequent trilingualism, or between natural acquisition and acquisition as a result of structured learning".

In those aforementioned patterns, the language system in one's repertoire may vary in terms of order and level of acquisition, their roles and functions, the speaker's skills, strategies, individual differences and all the environmental factors at the macro and micro level (Davidiak, 2010). Therefore, TLA is a different process from SLA. According to Schumann:

> It has to be viewed as a more complex process, whose complexity derives from the more diversified patterns of acquisition: various sequences of languages learnt, different ages of acquisition, different contexts and functions/domains of language use, varied motivations and attitudes, as well as different linguistic, learning and communicative sensitivity and awareness (1997, p.26).

The complexity and diversity of multilingualism has put in evidence the need to analyse language development by applying a multilingual norm. As a result, Herdina and Jessner (2002) have proposed a theoretical model, known as the Dynamic Model of Multilingualism (henceforth DMM), which applies the DST approach.

In fact, this theory comprises of all the features previously mentioned in DST. The DMM model may provide us with an adequate theoretical framework to research multilingual development. Herdina and Jessner (2002, pp.86-87) have presented the DMM to achieve the following goals:

(a) To serve as a bridge between SLA and multilingual research

(b) To indicate that future language acquisition studies should go beyond studies of the contact between two languages, turning their attention toward trilingualism and other forms of multilingualism.

(c) To overcome the implicit and explicit monolingual bias of multilingualism research through the development of an autonomous model of multilingualism

(d) To provide a scientific means of predicting multilingual development on the basis of factors found to be involved

(e) To provide a theory of multilingualism with greater explanatory power.

Taking these purposes into consideration, this approach may shed light on a number of problem areas in current theory. The DMM goes beyond the analysis of two languages in contact, turning its attention towards other forms of multilingualism. In fact, the DMM tries to cope with the complexity that multilingual acquisition presents (Jessner, 2013). According to Aronin and Singleton (2012), complexity is not only a characteristic of multilingualism, but its inherent and key quality. This complexity not only lays on all the affordances available,

but on the interactions and variations between all these variables. As argued by Ecke (2004, p.341), it is "helpful to conceive language development holistically as the interplay of environmental, cognitive, social-affective, and linguistic variables." Thus, the analysis of variables in isolation may facilitate the study, but it may provide an unreal picture of what actually happens in TLA (Safont, 2005).

As complex human beings, the acquisition of a third language might be influenced by several variables, such as (a) neurophysiological factors, (b) learners external factors, (c) affective factors, (d) cognitive factors, (e) foreign language specific factors and (f) linguistic factors. Figure 6 shows Hufeisen's (2005) Factor Model as follows:

Neurophysiological Factors: General language acquisition capability, age, ...

Learner External Factors: Learning environment(s), type and amount of input, L1 learning traditions, ...

Affective Factors: Motivation, anxiety, assessment of own language proficiency, perceived, closeness/distance between the languages, attitude(s), individual life experiences,...

Cognitive Factors: Language awareness, metalinguistic awareness, learning, awareness, learner type awareness, learning strategies, individual learning experiences, ...

ForeignLanguage Specific Factors: Individual foreign language learning experiences and strategies (ability to compare, transfer, and make interlingual connections), previous language interlanguages, interlanguage of target language, ...

Linguistic Factors: L1, L2

L3

Figure 6. Factors influencing TLA according to Hufeisen (2005, cited in Hufeisen and Marx 2007, p.314).

The DMM emphasizes that the interaction among all these factors is what makes multilingualism a complex and dynamic system. Hence, interaction is the basis for understanding multilingualism. Cook (1991) and Grosjean (1985) propose a holistic view to approach multilingualism by suggesting that the parts of a whole are dynamically interrelated and they should not be studied in isolation. This view contrasts with the monolingual perspective in which the multilingual speaker is seen as several monolingual speakers in one person. Multilingual speakers use the language systems in their linguistic repertoire as a continuum, not separated from each other (Garcia, 2009). Indeed, the third language learner has a unique linguistic system which is influenced by the relationships established among the languages involved (Safont, 2005). Jessner (2008c) points out that multilingualism may refer to any type of language acquisition, but she remarks that qualitative changes may be found in language learning as languages are involved. In this sense, the multilingual system is "not the product of adding two or more languages but a complex system with its own parameters exclusive to the multilingual speaker" (Jessner, 2003, p.48). As early researchers reported, language systems are not located in different boxes in the brain, but in a continuum.

Traditionally, early research on bilingualism (Weisgerber, 1966) claimed that bilinguals were two deficient monolinguals in one person. Herdina and Jessner (2002, p.7) state 'as long as bilinguals are measured according to monolingual criteria, they appear to be greatly disadvantaged both in linguistic and cognitive terms'. In the early 1990s, researchers, such as Firth and Wagner (1997), criticized that the native speaker's competence should be the model for all L2 learners as

Chomsky indicated. With reference to the ideal native speaker, Cook (2002, p.5) reports that "few second language users can pass for native speakers; their grammar, their accent, their vocabulary give away that they are non-native speakers, even after many years of learning the language or many decades of living in a country". In addition, competence in a language is not a constant but a variable, and even more in multilingual speakers. In this vein, multilinguals' competence in each of the languages in their repertoire is not static and may fluctuate over time.

The variability of individual and external factors may determine the growth or decay of one's language system. Herdina and Jessner (2000, p.87) argue that "according to biological principles language development is seen as a dynamic process with phase of accelerated growth and retardation. The development is dependent on environmental factors and is indeterminate". Consequently, a wide array of affordances may promote the maintenance of a language system or even may lead to language attrition or loss (Jessner, 2008c). For instance, if we imagine an immigrant subject who moves to another country for a long period of time, it is most likely that his or her home language will suffer from language attrition if no linguistic affordances are provided. In contrast, his or her foreign language competence will increase over the span of time due to the wide range of affordances in the wider environment. This fluctuation increases as language systems are involved in a multilingual mind. Nevertheless, we should emphasize that not all the language systems may have the same purposes, functions and uses. From this perspective, multilingual users

may not have the same competence in all languages, but a multicompetence (Cook, 1991).

Cook (1991) introduced the term multicompetence, largely inspired by Grosjean (1985), which refers to 'the knowledge of more than one language in the same mind' (Cook, 1994). This new view of competence may substitute the monolingual-biased term "language proficiency". However, the term multicompetence does not take into consideration the dynamic component between language systems which is indispensable in the DMM approach. For that reason, Herdina and Jessner (2002) have proposed the notion "multilingual proficiency". According to these authors, multilingual proficiency is based on the interaction of the various language systems (LS1, LS2, LS3, etc.), cross-linguistic interaction (henceforth CLIN) and the M(ultilingualism)-factor, as shown in the following formula:

$$LS1 + LS2 + LS3 + CLIN + M\text{-factor} = Multilingual\ Proficiency$$

This novel approach refers to the multilingual speaker as a complex psycholinguistic system which comprises individual subsystems interacting among themselves. Therefore, Herdina and Jessner (2002) propose that the DMM should focus on the development of individual language systems (LS1, LS2, LS3, etc.) rather than on languages (L1, L2, L3, etc.). Multilingual proficiency cannot be analysed from a monolingual perspective, a multilingual perspective must be applied. In this regard, the M-Factor refers to those linguistic and cognitive skills that multilingual users possess in comparison to monolingual speakers based on prior knowledge and experience.

According to Jessner (2008a), these skills contribute to the development of language awareness in multilinguals.

The following section will examine the concept of language awareness in detail.

1.6. Multilingualism and Language Awareness

Several studies have proven that the interaction among language systems in a multilingual speaker develops a high level of awareness toward languages (Jessner, 2006). In fact, subjects who acquire an additional language might be influenced by the fact that they have already learnt a previous language. As a result, multilinguals develop a set of skills due to their prior linguistic experience and the process of language acquisition seems to be easier (Gass & Selinker, 2008). However, there is terminological confusion and competing terms to refer to language awareness. To name just a few, (1) linguistic awareness, (2) metalinguistic awareness or (3) knowledge about language (see James 1999 for a revision). In this study, we prefer the use of language awareness as an umbrella term for different kinds of awareness.

Ança and Alegre (2003, p.31) define language awareness as "a very wide phenomenon, characteristic of speakers and learners of a language, which consists in the ability they have to think about language and to verbalise those considerations". However, as Oliveira and Ança (2009, p.406) have pointed out, language awareness not only focuses on the reflections about the use of language, but also on the relationships among language systems in one's linguistic repertoire, the processes underlying the learning process and the external and internal

factors influencing the acquisition process, among others. As Singleton and Aronin (2007, p.83) have argued, the wide range of affordances that are available to language learners "provides them with especially favourable conditions to develop awareness of the social and cognitive possibilities which their situation affords them". In this sense, awareness encompasses a wide range of factors.

In line with the DMM, Jessner (2006) defines multilinguals' language awareness as an emergent property of their multilingual proficiency which is composed of metalinguistic awareness and cross-linguistic awareness.

On the one hand, metalinguistic awareness is defined as "the ability to focus attention on language as an object in itself or to think abstractly about language and, consequently, to play with language is one of the features typical of a multilingual's cognitive style in contrast to most monolinguals" (Bialystok, 1991, p.114).This awareness tends to be more enhanced in multilinguals than monolingual users. In fact, users with a high level of metalinguistic awareness use a wide variety of strategies in the process of language acquisition (Jessner, 2006). Students' prior linguistic experience has an effect on the strategies they will later adapt. Multilingual speakers have a higher ability and flexibility in using strategies, and thereby a higher communicative ability. The positive benefits of metalinguistic awareness have been proven in studies of metacognitive strategies (Bialystok, 2009; Cenoz 2003; Lasagabaster, 1997), divergent thinking and originality (Baker, 2011), in the use of learning strategies (Kemp, 2009), communicative sensitivity (Alcón, 2012) sociocommunicative skills (Dewaele, 2007, 2008) and affective factors (Otwinowska & de Angelis, 2012).

On the other hand, cross-linguistic awareness refers to "learners' tacit and explicit awareness of the links between their language systems" (Jessner, 2008b, p.30). The phenomenon of cross-linguistic influence, (henceforth CLI) coined by Kellerman and Sharwood Smith in 1986, is a broad term in SLA studies that refers to all the existing transfer phenomena when two languages are in contact. The complex nature of TLA increases the routes of acquisition and thereby the influence and interaction among languages is higher as languages are involved.

Therefore, as Cenoz (2000) suggests, in TLA there are more possibilities to investigate than in SLA, that is, the influence of L1 on L2, L1 on L3, L2 on L1, L2 on L3 and L3 on L1. Cenoz (2000) assumes that these processes are not mechanical and may be interrupted and re-started at any point as languages systems are dynamic over time. As we have previously mentioned, SLA differs both quantitative and qualitative from TLA. Some authors argued that CLI is a notion applied to SLA studies and this term should be further developed for TLA studies. In this vein, Jessner (2003) reported that the term CLIN should be used instead of CLI.

Thus, CLIN results from the interaction of more than two languages in a multilingual system. CLIN is seen as an umbrella term for all the existing transfer phenomena which comprises interference, code-switching, and borrowing. Although there is terminological confusion among researchers about the nature and type of transfer phenomena, what it is clear is that multilingualism should be the standpoint (Jessner, 2003). This widespread phenomenon is seen as evidence of multilingual competence and proof that a multilingual is

not the sum of several monolinguals. In this sense, CLIN is not a sign of a problem or language deficit as traditional research has assumed. Multilingual speakers alternate languages in a conversation to negotiate the language for the interaction, to accommodate other participants' languages and competences with the aim of facilitating conversation and to organize the conversational pattern (Shin & Milroy, 2000). The constant alternation of languages in the classroom has been coined as *translanguaging* (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; García, 2009). According to García and Sylvan (2011, p. 389), this term may be defined as "the communicative norm of multilingual communities". Translanguaging refers to the access to "different linguistic features or various modes of what are described as autonomous languages, in order to maximize communicative potential" (García, 2009, p.140) The studies by Portolés and Safont (in press) and Portolés and Martín (2012) have provided evidence for translanguaging practices in the context of our study. The results illustrate the great variety of resources employed by multilinguals in communicative interaction and the existing differences between linguistic programmes.

The transfer phenomena between languages in multilingual systems are an area which has received more attention in TLA studies (see de Angelis & Dewaele for a review, 2009). Williams and Hammarberg (1998) and Hammarberg (2001) presented the following criteria which they consider paramount in order to understand the relationships among languages:

> 1) *Typological and cultural similarity*: The typological and cultural distance of the languages plays an important role in language learning. According to Singleton (1987), the general

tendency for the speakers is to borrow items from languages that are typologically closer. Ringbom (2001) finds that the transfer of form is more common across related languages whereas the transfer of semantic patterns and word combinations is nearly always based on the L1. In his studies about the type of transfer that Finnish students produce in their L3 (English), he showed that Finnish students transferred more lexicon from the L2 (Swedish in this case) than from the L1. In other words, Finnish native students perceive the similarity between English and Swedish.

2) *Level of Proficiency*: There is also some research regarding the proficiency in the languages involved. In fact, learners with a low level of proficiency in the L2 tend to use the L1 as the main source for transferring (Möhle, 1989; Ringbom, 2001). In this sense, unless the level of the L2 is high, the influence L2 has on L3 is marginal. Similarly, L1 influence decreases with the increase in L3 proficiency; trilingual learners transfer more when they are less proficient in their foreign languages (Cenoz, 2001).

3) *Recency of use*: The recency of use refers to the tendency to transfer more from the most recent foreign language actively used by the speaker. As Cenoz (2005) remarks, TLA is not a mechanical process and exposure to the languages could vary throughout the learning process. In Hammarberg's (2001) study, her informant transferred more from the foreign language she had most recently used.

The interest on the activation and deactivation of languages in a multilingual mind has put forward different models of language production: Levelt's (1989) monolingual model, Green´s (2000) inhibitory control model, William and Hammarberg's (1998) model, de Bot's (2000) model, and Grosjean's (2001) bilingual language mode, among others. In line with Green' inhibitory model, "speakers do not switch their languages on and off, rather than their languages show different levels of activation" (cited in Jessner, 2008b, p.21). The different levels of activation of one's language repertoire explain the CLIN among languages. As a result, there is no doubt that many variables converge in speakers' transfer phenomena enhancing students' language awareness.

The study of language awareness in multilingual learners has been widely investigated; however, the awareness of how to use language appropriately and effectively depending on the context has received scant attention. In the process of language acquisition, students learn how to use "please" or "sorry" as well as ask for something or understand an imposition. This type of knowledge is known as "pragmatics". Pragmatics studies the links between linguistic signs and their communicative function. According to some authors (Lee, 2010; Wilkinson, Wilkinson, Spinelli & Chiang, 1984), the understanding of this relationship is what constitutes pragmatic awareness and it starts at around 7 years. According to Takahashi (2013, p.4505), pragmatic awareness is "the knowledge of the way in which language is used to encode social meaning through conscious reflection of relationships among factors involved in pragmatic comprehension and production".

Over the last few decades, the study of pragmatics in adults has received special attention because the importance of the appropriateness in discourse has been noticed. However, little research has been done among the field of interlanguage pragmatics, child language development and multilingualism (Safont, 2011). As Safont (2011, p.56) reports, the linguistic background of the learners has been ignored in pragmatic research. Studies of language awareness in contexts where a third language is introduced from a very early age are limited to date (Safont, 2011, 2012, 2013b).

We believe that further research is needed on child pragmatic awareness of their language systems in multilingual contexts. Apart from analysing multilinguals' metalinguistic and cross-linguistic awareness, there is a need to investigate pragmatic awareness which also seems to develop to a higher degree in multilingual speakers (Jessner, 2008a; Safont, 2011, 2012, 2013b). Bearing in mind the relevance of pragmatic awareness in language acquisition, we shall devote the next chapter to examine the existing literature on pragmatics. More particularly, we will focus on specific pragmatic realisations, namely those of requests.

CHAPTER 2

2. MULTILINGUAL PRAGMATIC DEVELOPMENT IN CHILDREN

"When we say that a child is acquiring [a] language, we must account for [one] aspect of what is being acquired- that is, its function or communicative intent or how to get things done with words" (Bruner, 1983, p.18). Children acquire the rules of language, but they also learn how to use these rules. Knowing the rules of how to use a language appropriately and effectively depending on the context is paramount in the process of language acquisition. Pragmatics studies the links between linguistic signs and their communicative function. The understanding of this relationship is what constitutes pragmatic awareness. As defined by Takahashi (2013, p.4505), pragmatic awareness is "the knowledge of the way in which language is used to encode social meaning through conscious reflection of relationships among factors involved in pragmatic comprehension and production". Understanding and producing language appropriately in a specific context is a complex process, and even more so in multilinguals who need to master more than two linguistic systems. In addition, this pragmatic awareness includes pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic knowledge. However, little research has been conducted on the pragmatic awareness of multilingual populations.

As one of the goals of the current study is to investigate child pragmatic awareness from a multilingual perspective, a clear understanding of the concepts involved should be the point of departure. In order to do so, this chapter comprises three sections organized as follows: Section 2.1 gives the reader an overview of the theoretical

framework for the notion of pragmatics from three different perspectives: a First Language Acquisition perspective in subsection 2.1.1, a Second Language Acquisition perspective in subsection 2.1.2 and a Third Language Acquisition perspective in subsection 2.1.3 Section 2.2 is devoted to exploring the speech act of requesting. We will deal with the main foundations related to such a speech act by describing this pragmatic item and presenting the strategies and modifiers employed in request speech acts. Finally, section 2.3 reviews the studies of child requestive behaviour by focusing on (i) production and (ii) comprehension from the perspectives previously mentioned.

2.1. Pragmatics

This section begins by providing a description of the concept pragmatics. Several definitions of the term pragmatics have arisen over the last few decades. According to Crystal (1997, p. 301), pragmatics may be defined as follows:

> "the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication".

Crystal (1997) emphasizes that language use is determined by contextual factors. In that sense, becoming pragmatically competent in a language requires managing skills beyond those entailed by the acquisition of the linguistic system; that is, it requires knowledge about the social rules of language where the interaction is taking place. These rules include when to speak, how to respond to others and what register is appropriate. In what follows, the role of pragmatics in L1, L2 and L3

studies will be thoroughly examined in order to provide a complete account of the theoretical foundations in this research area.

2.1.1. Pragmatics from a First Language Acquisition Perspective

The investigation of L1 pragmatics is carried out by researchers from a First Language Acquisition (henceforth FLA) perspective. The major focus of attention in L1 pragmatics has been a child population. Child pragmatic development, also known as "developmental pragmatics", can be defined as "pragmatics in the study of child language which deals with children's linguistic competence as part of communicative competence" (Takakuwa, 2000, p.5). As a result, pragmatic competence is an important component in the process of child language acquisition and development. Such pragmatic competence may be defined as follows:

> The ability to express verbally an intention, as well as to understand the intention of others, with respect to significant contextual factors, or simply put: to understand and to use language (for various purposes) in a variety of situations (Cromdal, 1996, p.6)

As Cromdal argues (1996), children learn how to use language appropriately and strategically in social situations and, as a result, their pragmatic systems are under constant development. As explained in the DMM (described in section 1.4), the path of language acquisition is a complex, nonlinear and dynamic process. In the first years of life, children acquire a wide variety of linguistic skills and abilities due to constant interaction with their family and caregivers. The transition from home to school is significant, complex and challenging owing to

the fact that children are exposed to new forms of speech and new expectations. Parents' ways of speaking may greatly differ from the speech used in the language classroom by teachers. In this regard, young learners may have a hard time trying to understand the new patterns of speech.

Children´s entry into the school system at age 3 plays a major role in their linguistic development. It is a period of rapid cognitive, social, emotional and linguistic development. According to Dore (1979, p.353), "the most significant development in terms of language acquisition is the three-years-old's control of forms and functions". In the school context, child discourse starts to become closer to that of adults, despite the fact that complete language development continues throughout childhood (Strozer, 1994). In late childhood and early adolescence, the majority of individuals have developed a solid understanding of the rules of language (Ely, 2005). Existing research (Dore, 1979; Solé & Soler, 2005) has found that the role of instructional contexts in child language development is paramount. Instructional contexts "constitute a kind of ecosystem where learning originates as a result from the convergence of pedagogical and social aspects through interaction" (van Lier, 2004; cited in Portolés & Martín, 2012). Throughout the significant years of infant and primary education, children, through interaction with others, discover the meaning of words (i.e., semantics), the way in which meaning is represented (i.e., phonology, morphology and syntax) and the way in which language is used for the purpose of communication (i.e., pragmatics) (see Brandone, Salkind, Michnick & Hirsh-Pasek, 2006, p. 511).

In addition to children's increased ability in phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics, the area of pragmatics is not left aside through the school years. As Hymes (1967, p.16) stated, "a child capable of any and all grammatical utterances, but not knowing which to use, not knowing even when to talk and when to stop, would be a cultural monstrosity". The research has found that children show pragmatic abilities from a very early age (Dore, 1979). Pragmatic expressions, such as "please", "thank you", "hello" and "bye" are acquired before the age of two (Fenson et al., 1994). Infants need to learn how to use conversational strategies, such as initiate, maintain or conclude conversations. They must understand terms of politeness and situational factors as well as ways of asking questions, making requests, expressing agreement or disagreement, apologising and praising, among others. Such knowledge is known as pragmatics. A considerable amount of research has been produced in child pragmatic development from a FLA perspective (Becker-Byrant, 2009; Ervin-Tripp, 1977; Ervin-Tripp, Guo & Lampert, 1990; Garvey, 1975). Just as in L1 pragmatics, some attention has been paid to L2 pragmatic development. In what follows, the models that have dealt with L2 pragmatic competence and the perspectives employed in the analysis of pragmatics are examined.

2.1.2. Pragmatics from a Second Language Acquisition Perspective

This subsection deals with the concept of pragmatic competence taking into consideration SLA models. Over the last few decades, several models of communicative competence have been proposed in SLA studies which include not only grammatical competence, but also pragmatic competence as one of the main constituents. This revision

will then be followed by a description of the main approaches employed for the study of pragmatics, namely cross-cultural and acquisitional.

From a SLA perspective, pragmatics has been influenced by the model of communicative competence which aims to develop learners' effective and efficient use of the target language in communication. The term "communicative competence" was coined by Hymes (1970), but the existing models dealing with this concept are those of Canale and Swain (1980), Bachman (1990), Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei and Thurrell (1995), Celce-Murcia (2007) and Alcón (2000). These models of communicative competence have contributed to promoting interest in pragmatic studies since the study of language in a given context, that is, pragmatics, is considered one of the main constituents.

Hymes (1970) argued that linguistic knowledge is as important as sociolinguistic knowledge. Thus, apart from knowing the rules of a language, it is reasonable to know how to use these rules appropriately. Hymes, however, did not introduce the term pragmatics, the introduction of the notion sociolinguistic competence implies pragmatic ability. Such interest in the study of language in context appeared as a reaction to Chomsky's (1965) idea that social factors were outside the domain of linguistics.

Since Bachman's model (1990), pragmatic ability has been considered one of the main components of communicative competence. This author distinguished between organisational and pragmatic competence. The former focuses on those abilities related to noticing and performing grammatical forms and their functional meanings. The

latter refers to the relationship between utterances and the illocutionary force involved in the action. Two subcomponents were included in the pragmatic competence, namely those of illocutionary and sociolinguistic competence. Other researchers have preferred the use of pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic instead of the terms previously mentioned to refer to the dimensions of pragmatic competence (Leech, 1983; Thomas, 1983).

On the one hand, pragmalinguistic competence involves "the particular resources which a given language provides for conveying particular illocutions" (Leech, 1983, p.11). These resources may include a wide array of strategies, such as directness, indirectness, routines, intensifiers or softeners. In other words, as argued by Cenoz (2007, p.125), pragmalinguistic competence is concerned with "the linguistic elements used in the different languages to perform speech acts".

On the other hand, sociopragmatic competence refers to "the sociological interface of pragmatics" (Leech, 1983, p.10). Particularly, Kasper (2001, p.51) described sociopragmatics as "the link between action-relevant context factors and communicative action (e.g., deciding when to apologize or not) and does not necessarily require any links to specific forms at all". In this regard, such competence may involve an understanding of (i) the culture involved, (ii) the relative age and gender of the interlocutors, (iii) their social class and occupations and (iv) their roles and status in the interaction (Thomas, 1983). Having sociopragmatic competence in a language means that you know what is socially appropriate in a specific situation.

The model proposed by Celce-Murcia et al. (1995, p.17) refers to pragmatic competence as actional competence and this term is defined as "the competence in conveying and understanding communicative intent, that is, matching actional intent which linguistic form based on the knowledge of an inventory of verbal schemata that carry illocutionary force". In this vein, the focus of actional competence is on the pragmalinguistic aspect of language. The sociopragmatic competence, known as the sociocultural component in this model, involves the appropriate use of language within a particular context. In addition to actional and sociocultural competence, Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) included another three interrelated components, namely those of discourse competence, strategic competence and linguistic competence. In the revised and modified version of her communicative model, Celce-Murcia (2007) added formulaic competence in her framework (see Figure 7).
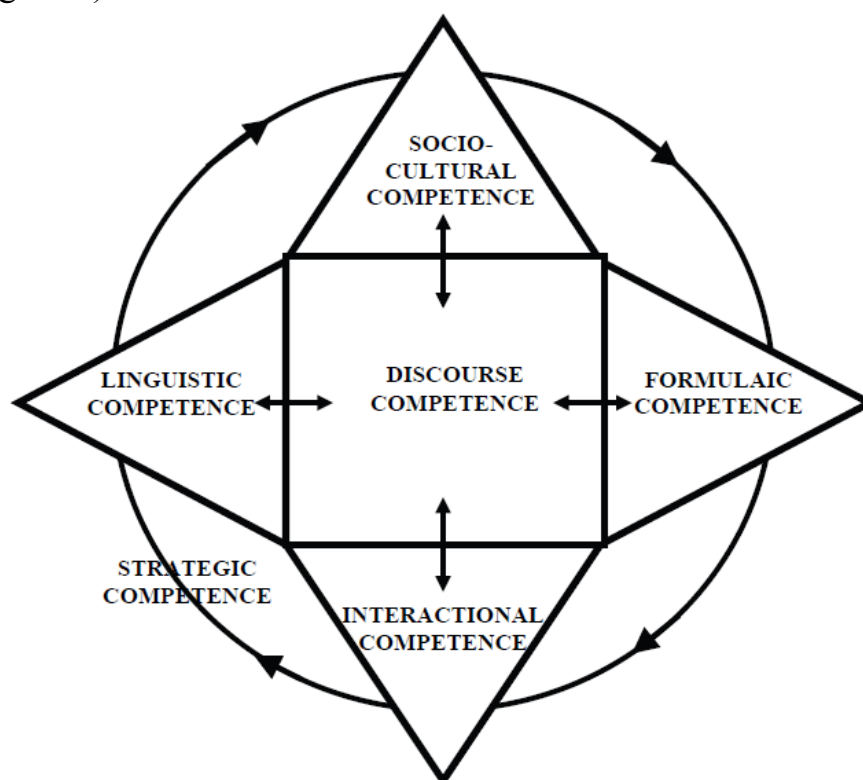
Figure 7. Celce-Murcia's (2007, p.47) revised model on communicative competence.

Alcón (2000) has suggested a model consisting of three main components, specifically (i) discourse competence, (ii) psychomotor abilities and competencies and (iii) strategic competence. According to this author, the majority of research in the field of pragmatics has analysed the pragmalinguistic component in isolation from the sociopragmatic component. Alcón has argued that all these components should not be viewed as separate components, but as a whole component. The global component, under the name pragmatic competence, includes both aforementioned subcomponents which are in constant interaction. In the framework proposed by Alcón (2000), pragmatic competence is a subcomponent alongside linguistic and textual subcomponents of discourse competence, as illustrated in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Alcón's (2000) model of communicative competence

Discourse Competence	Linguistic Component
	Textual Component
	Pragmatic competence
Psychomotor skills and competencies	Listening
	Speaking
	Reading
	Writing
Strategic Competence	Communication Strategies
	Learning Strategies

After reviewing the main models concerned with pragmatic competence, we should note that pragmatic competence has been widely examined in adults and SLA studies adopting a (i) cross-cultural or (ii) acquisitional perspective.

On the one hand, cross-cultural studies draw a contrast among speakers of various linguistic backgrounds concerning the pragmatic norms underlying language use. Such studies compare learners' performance with that of native speakers of the target language. Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989) conducted a well-known contrastive research on request and apology realizations in eight different languages by both native and non-native speakers taking into account the level of politeness in their strategies and the modifiers employed.

On the other hand, acquisitional studies deal with the acquisition of pragmatic norms by learners of a given language (see Barron 2012 for recent overview). This perspective is known as Interlanguage pragmatics (henceforth ILP) and may be described as "the study of non-native speakers' acquisition, comprehension and production of pragmatics" (Bardovi-Harlig, 2002, p.185). From a longitudinal perspective, some studies (Barron & Celaya, 2010; Taguchi, 2010) have focused on learners' pragmatic development in the target language. From a cross-sectional perspective, other studies (Alcón & Safont, 2008; Martí, in press; Martinez-Flor & Usó-Juan, 2010; Salazar, Safont & Codina, 2009) on ILP have focused on language learners' competence of pragmatics and those factors influencing the development of pragmatic competence, such as proficiency level, instruction, stay abroad period and availability of input, among others.

Cross-cultural and ILP studies have made important contributions to the field of pragmatics by providing valuable insights into the process of acquiring a L2. Current research on L2 pragmatics has engendered the study of L3 as a result of the existing interest in multilingualism over the last decade. In what follows, we will give the reader a brief overview of the theoretical framework from a Third Language Acquisition perspective.

2.1.3. Pragmatics from a Third Language Acquisition Perspective

The acquisition of pragmatic competence in multilingual subjects has recently been addressed with a focus on the L3. From a Third Language Acquisition (henceforth TLA) perspective, very few studies (Alcón, 2012; Alcón, Safont & Portolés, 2012; Safont, 2005; Portolés & Safont, 2012; Safont & Alcón, 2012; Safont & Portolés, 2013) have taken into consideration the multilingual background of the learners in the study of pragmatics.

Particularly, one of the pioneering studies in the field of pragmatics and TLA was carried out by Safont (2005). This author approached trilingualism in her empirical study conducted in the Valencian Community. Safont (2005) examined the differences between bilingual and monolingual speakers with reference to pragmatic awareness. Bilinguals outperformed monolinguals in the production of requests and showed a higher number of strategies. The author suggests that multilingual speakers have a higher ability and flexibility in using strategies in pragmatic tasks because of their linguistic repertoire and their experience as language learners.

Similarly, the positive effect of bilingualism when performing speech acts and using strategies has been reported in Alcón et al., (2012), Portolés and Safont (2012), Safont and Alcón (2012), and Safont and Portolés (2013). Additionally, Alcón (2012) has provided further evidence on how multilingualism may enhance L3 pragmatic acquisition. The author compared productive and receptive bilinguals learning English as a L3 and the results showed that productive bilinguals displayed a higher communicative sensitivity to the interlocutor's feelings.

On the basis of the specific abilities and competencies that multilingual learners present (see section 1.6), we may expect that multilingual pragmatic awareness is accurate and appropriate in the languages they know. As Hoffman (2001, p.14) reported, "the experience of three different languages also results in further enhanced awareness of the analysis and control components of processing to enable the speakers to make the right choices and respond in linguistically and communicatively adequate ways". As argued in the DMM, the effects of knowing more than two languages may provide learners with a high level of awareness towards languages because of their prior linguistic experience (Cenoz & Jessner, 2009; Herdina & Jessner, 2002; Jessner, 2008a). As we have seen in Chapter 1, previous findings point to the peculiarities of third language acquisition that further confirm the inherent complexity of multilingualism (Aronin & Hufeisen, 2009). In fact, the M-factor (i.e., linguistic and cognitive skills that multilingual users possess in comparison with monolingual speakers) may contribute to the catalytic effects of additional language learning. In this regard, the M-factor may have an effect on

multilingual pragmatic awareness. Safont (2013a) states the need to link the field of pragmatics with the field of multilingualism in order to provide more insights into this topic.

One particular issue that has received further attention in pragmatic studies is that of speech acts. In a conversation, the utterances that participants exchange may have the purpose of performing some acts. For instance, if a teacher says to a pupil "Give me the ball", these words are clearly conveying the speaker's underlying intention. These utterances with intention are known as speech acts and are one of the main streams of research dealing with pragmatic development.

The present study deals with the speech act of requesting, also known as "directive" in the taxonomy proposed by Searle (1969). The speech act of requesting has been extensively studied and documented because it is often employed across cultures, ages and situational contexts (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989). Furthermore, as Safont (2005) posits, the act of requesting is commonly employed in the three languages under investigation, specifically those of Catalan, Spanish and English.

2.2. The Speech Act of Requesting

This section starts by explaining what a speech act is and its components. Thereafter, it defines requests as speech acts and describes the strategies and modification devices used to mitigate or strengthen the impositive nature of this pragmatic realisation.

According to Austin (1962), speech acts are utterances that perform communicative acts. Speech act theory was originated by Austin (1962) and further developed by Searle (1969). These acts, as Austin (1962) reported, are composed of the "locutionary act" (the words of an utterance said by the speaker), the "illocutionary act" (the intention that the speaker has when saying these words) and the "perlocutionary act" (the effect that the words may have on the other participant in the interaction). Thus, the speaker produces an utterance conveying a specific intention which has an effect on the hearer. Coming back to the previous example above "Give me the ball", the locutionary act would be the utterance itself, the illocutionary act would be the request and the perlocutionary act would be that the pupil presumably passes the teacher the ball.

Requests are those illocutionary acts which belong to the group of directive speech acts proposed by Searle (1969). However, the present study prefers the term "request" instead of directive to refer to this speech act. As described by Searle (1976, p.13), ''these are attempts by the speaker to get the hearer to do something. They may be very modest attempts as when I invite you to do it, or they may be very fierce attempts as when I insist that you do it''. The interaction between the speaker and listener in requests is paramount since the action requested by the speaker will be only fulfilled after the hearer's acceptance (Alcón & Safont, 2001). For this reason, as argued by Trosborg (1995, p.20), "only in the case of directives [requests] is the hearer's subsequent act part of the speaker's intention".

The speech act of requesting includes two different parts, namely those of (i) the head act and (ii) its peripheral elements (Trosborg,

1995). The head or the core unit is "the part of the sequence which might serve to realize the act independently of other elements" (Blum-Kulka & Olshtain, 1984, p.200). The head act is the main utterance and performs the act of requesting. As Sifianou (1999) argues, the core unit may be realised by interrogatives, declaratives, imperatives, negatives and elliptical forms. In contrast, the peripheral elements involve all the optional items which are used to soften, mitigate or aggravate the face-threatening nature of requests (Safont, 2008). Such modification devices could be external or internal (Sifianou, 1999). On the one hand, external modification devices appear within the request head act itself. On the other hand, internal modifiers are those elements which externally modify the core and appear in the immediate linguistic context preceding or following the request head act. The following example illustrates the components that comprise the request:

May I ask you a favour? , would you possibly bring me a glass of water?
External modifier   **Internal modifier**
                                          _____

                                          Request Head Act

Several taxonomies have been put forward to analyse the act of requesting and its modifiers (Achiba, 2003; House & Kasper, 1981; Trosborg, 1995). However, these taxonomies have mainly focused on grammatical aspects without taking into account contextual factors. As Alcón et al. (2005) argue, learners not only need to have knowledge of linguistic elements and devices (pragmalinguistic competence), but also knowledge of social and interactional factors (sociopragmatic competence) for performing the act of requesting and its modifiers appropriately. Sociopragmatic competence may determine the use and

interpretation of request modification items. Nikula (1996) proposes the following contextual variables which may influence the choice of peripheral modification items: (i) the power of the requester in relation to the hearer (an employee addressing his boss will use more modifiers to mitigate the act of requesting), (ii) the degree of familiarity between interlocutors (a speaker will tend to use more modification items with a stranger than with a friend), (iii) the ranking of imposition (demanding a cigarette is not the same as asking for money to buy a packet of cigarettes), (iv) the type of interaction (transactional or interactional purposes) and (v) the type of speech act (the more impositive a request is, the more modification items will be used to soften its face-threatening nature).

On that account, the present study will use the classification of request modification items by Alcón-Soler et al.(2005), which is based on previous literature, and takes into account both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic knowledge. In line with previous theory, this taxonomy is divided into external and internal modifiers, as illustrated in Table 5 below as follows:

Table 5. Classification of request modification items by Alcón et al. (2005, p.14).

TYPE	SUB-TYPE		EXAMPLE
Internal Modification			
	Openers		- *Do you think* you could open the window? - *Would you mind* opening the window?
	Softeners	Understatement	- Could you open the window *for a moment*?
		Downtoner	- Could you *possibly* open the window?
		Hedge	- Could you *kind of* open the window?
	Intensifiers		- You *really* must open the window. - *I'm sure* you wouldn't mind opening the window.
	Fillers	Hesitators	- I *er, erm, er – I wonder* if you could open the window
		Cajolers	- *You know, you see, I mean*
		Appealers	- *OK?, Right?, yeah*
		Attention-getters	- *Excuse me ...; Hello ...; Look ...; Tom, ...; Mr. Edwards ...; father ...*
External Modification			
	Preparators		- *May I ask you a favour?* ... Could you open the window?
	Grounders		- *It seems it is quite hot here.* Could you open the window?
	Disarmers		- *I hate bothering you but* could you open the window?
	Expanders		- Would you mind opening the window? ... *Once again, could you open the window?*
	Promise of reward		- Could you open the window? *If you open it, I promise to take you to the cinema.*
	Please		- Would you mind opening the window, *please*?

Request head acts may also be performed on the basis of politeness criteria by using different realization strategies, namely those of direct strategies, conventionally indirect strategies and indirect strategies (Trosborg, 1995). Directness is understood as the degree to which the speaker´s intention is consistent and apparent from the locutionary act. Blum-Kulka and House (1989, p.133) observed that "the more direct a given request strategy type, the shorter the inferential path to the requestive interpretation; such a request can then be said to be more illocutionary transparent". These three degrees may be characterized as follows:

Direct forms are mainly realised by means of imperatives, performatives and obligation statements (Safont, 2008). A request is direct when the locutionary act and the illocutionary coincide. For instance, if a speaker A says to the hearer B "Give me some water", the words uttered by the speaker (locutionary act) coincide with the speakers' intention (illocutionary act). In this case, the requester is explicitly addressing the requestee to achieve his or her goal. Direct request strategies are regarded as the most explicit, direct and impolite.

Conventionally indirect strategies are more polite than direct strategies and are used to soften the face-threatening nature of requests. Searle (1975, p.76) reported that "can you", "could you", "I want you to" and numerous other forms are conventional ways of making requests, […] but at the same time they do not have an imperative meaning". For example, the utterance "Could you give me some water?" implicitly has the same intention as the direct one, "Give me some water", although the propositional content (the question which include a modal verb) is not consistent with the speaker's intent. The

speaker is asking the listener about the possibility of doing the action proposed to achieve his goal.

Trosborg (1995) distinguishes between speaker-oriented and hearer-oriented conventionally indirect strategies. The first category focuses on the speaker and it includes wishes, as in "I would like to have a glass of water", and desires, as in "I need a glass of water". These speaker-oriented strategies, particularly the second one, increase the level of directness, although they are not regarded as explicit and impolite as the direct forms. With reference to the second category, hearer-oriented strategies are focused on the listener and are realised by means of expressions of ability (e.g., "could you bring me some water?"), willingness (e.g., "will you bring me some water?"), permission (e.g., "might you bring me some water?"), and suggestory formulae (e.g., "how about bringing me some water?"). Despite the fact that hearer-oriented conventionally indirect requests are realised by means of questions, they are often regarded as requesting rather than as questioning because they attempt to obtain information and not clarification.

Indirect strategies (also known as nonconventional indirect strategies or hints) are more difficult to interpret as they only work in specific situational contexts (Bernicot & Legros, 1987). The utterance "I am thirsty" may have different meanings depending on the context. The locutionary act and the illocutionary act do not coincide. The speaker could be asking for some water without explicitly showing his or her intention. The hearer may perceive this statement as a request or not. As Safont (2008, p.44) argues, hearers may interpret the above

statement as a request if it becomes routinized between two individuals and they have background knowledge of the interlocutor's use of hints.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987) and Sifianou (1999), indirect strategies are the most polite forms since the speaker can avoid the responsibility for making a request and the listener may misinterpret the interlocutor's intentions. Searle (1975, p.76) reported that "politeness is the most prominent motivation for indirectness in requests, and certain forms tend to become the conventionally polite ways of making indirect requests". However, indirect requests are not only employed for politeness purposes, but "people also use indirect strategies when they want to make their speech more interesting, when they want to reach goals different from their partners or when they want to increase the force of the message communicated" (Thomas, 1983, p.143).

Table 6 below shows the taxonomy of requests realisation strategies, based on the typology proposed by Trosborg (1995, p.204).

Table 6. Degree of politeness

1. Direct Strategies	*Give me some water*	
2. Conventionally Indirect Strategies		
2.1 Speaker-oriented	Wishes (*e.g., I would like to have a glass of water)*	
	Desires (e.g. *I need a glass of water)*	
2.2 Hearer-oriented	Expressions of ability (*e.g., could you bring me some water*?)	
	Willingness (e.g.. *will you bring me some water*)	
	Expressions of permission (*e.g. might you bring me some water?*)	
	Suggestory formulae (*e.g., how about bringing me some water*?)	
3. Indirect strategies	*I am thirsty*	

LESS POLITE

MORE POLITE

Concluding this section, the speech act of requesting can be summarised as follows:

> Requests are very frequent in language use (far more frequent, for example, than apologizing and promising); requests are very important to the second language learner; they have been researched in more detail than any other type of speech act; they permit a wide variety of strategies for their performance; and finally, they carry with them a good range of subtle implications involving politeness, deference, and mitigation (Fraser, 1978, p.6).

As Fraser (1978) argues, requests are frequently performed and a large number of strategies, mitigation devices and implications are involved. The typologies suggested by Trosborg (1995) and Alcón et al. (2005) have been widely employed in the analysis of requests in adult

learners (see Alcón 2008; Barron, 2012; Schauer, 2009). Nevertheless, the requestive behaviour of young learners deserves further attention in the field of pragmatics since few studies have accounted for that age period. For this reason, Section 2.3 reports on findings from earlier studies that have examined child requestive behaviour. We will particularly refer to those studies within a close age period to that of our subjects (i.e., from 3 to 12 years old).

2.3. Studies of Child Requestive Behaviour

This section moves us closer to one of the central questions to be examined in this study, that is, the pragmatic awareness of young learners. To that end, since the object of study is the act of requesting, we will describe child requestive behaviour and divide this section into two main subsections: (i) those studies conducted with a focus on the production of requests and (ii) those studies concerned with the comprehension of requests.

The majority of studies of requestive behaviour have mainly focused on teenagers and adults. It may be the case that their competence in the target language is low (false 'beginner') and quite similar to that of young learners. However, these populations have fully developed their pragmatic systems in the L1 as well as their cognitive and processing skills. As Flores (2011, p.33) reported, "studies in which "beginners" are involved […] have the necessary abilities to fill in a DCT or participate in a role play in the target language". Despite the fact that the findings in such populations have broadened our knowledge of pragmatic awareness, further research is needed to analyse early young learners whose L1 cognitive and pragmatic skills

are still not completely developed. The present understanding of multilingual learners' pragmatic systems and their overall pragmatic development is very limited.

Bearing in mind the relevance of pragmatics in language acquisition, next section sets out the studies focused on the production and comprehension of requests. More specifically, Section 2.3.1 and Section 2.3.2 will revise those studies dealing with child requestive behaviour by focusing first on production, and then, on comprehension.

2.3.1. Child Production of Requests

In this section, the existing research conducted with a focus on child production of requests will be discussed in detail. Over the last few decades a great amount of studies have been conducted with a focus on the production of requests in the L1 and L2. Very few studies have accounted for L3 production of requests. In what follows, we will first review studies that focus on the L1 (in subsection 2.3.1.1). We will then concentrate on studies conducted with a focus on L2 (in subsection 2.3.1.2) and later on those studies focused on the L3 (in subsection 2.3.1.3).

2.3.1.1 Child Production of Requests from a First Language Acquisition Perspective

From a FLA perspective, a considerable amount of research has been devoted to the analysis of requests from a developmental point of view. The majority of studies of L1 requestive behaviour have focused on aspects, such as level of directness, age of acquisition, politeness and conventionality. In what follows, these studies (Bates, 1976; Ervin-

Tripp, 1977; Ervin-Tripp et al., 1990; Garvey, 1975; Gordon &Ervin-Tripp, 1984; Read & Cherry, 1978; Spekman & Roth, 1985) will be discussed in detail.

Garvey (1975) examined the requests produced in thirty-six free play dyads of preschool children whose ages ranged between 3.6 and 5.7. The sample was divided into three age groups. The author reported that children in the three groups mainly produced the same amount of direct requests. However, the use of conventionally indirect requests was more limited in the three groups, especially in the younger children. Over the age range, subjects tended to use more complex conventionally indirect requests. In this study, no examples of indirect requests were found. Ervin-Tripp (1977) suggested that Garvey's children did not use indirect requests because the data were only based in peer interaction.

Ervin-Tripp (1977) examined the requests produced by infants in the nursery school. The findings showed that 3-year-old monolingual speakers had a wide range of requestive repertoire at their disposal. This repertoire included imperatives, permission and ability forms. She reported an increase of conventionally indirect strategies over the age range analysed (3-year-old to 4-year-old). In addition, the author found that the participants were able to modify their requests by adding the external modifier "please". The results showed that 4-year-old learners were able to perform indirect requests, especially when addressing adults rather than children.

Read and Cherry (1978) analysed the production of requests in three groups of preschool children: 2.6-year-old, 3.6-year-old and 4.6-

year-old. The children were asked to say something to some puppets to get certain toys. The results found no statistical differences in the number of requests produced in the three groups. In other words, the three groups produced similar amounts of requests. This study emphasized that younger children had many ways of expressing requests by means of direct strategies (imperatives and declaratives), conventionally indirect strategies (need statements, permission and ability expressions) and indirect strategies. However, with increasing age, children employed more conventionally indirect strategies and modifiers, such as "please".

The case study by Gordon and Ervin-Tripp (1984) analysed the requestive behaviour of a four-year-old monolingual speaker over a period of seven months. On the whole, the authors found that direct strategies in the form of imperatives were the most employed when asking for something and the use of modification devices was limited during the whole period of analysis. Conventionally indirect strategies, of the form "Can I?" and "Could I*"*, accompanied by external modifiers, such as grounders (i.e., let's go. *I'm tired*), were employed when the child doubted his request would be successful and was afraid of noncompliance. In this case, the subject employed more polite requests to satisfy his goals since he was aware of the effectiveness of using more conventionally indirect requests.

In this line of research, Ervin-Tripp et al. (1990) examined the production of requests of 31 American children ageing from 2 to 11 in naturalistic contexts, such as peer and family interactions. On the whole, children more frequently employed need statements ("I want") over the age range analysed and used more mitigation devices as their

age increased. Additionally, the authors identified that participants employed mitigation devices when they were aware of non-compliance. 4 and 5-year-old participants added conventionally indirect strategies to their requests, such as ability forms ("Can you do the?") and the external modification device "please" after being ignored. The mitigation of the children started with the use of "please" and later continued with the use of ability and permission forms. These authors reported that infants by four and five may know who to be polite to and when it is the appropriate context to be pragmatically appropriate.

Bates (1976) examined 60 Italian children's production of requests in order to analyse their knowledge of the degree of politeness. In the task, children were instructed to ask a puppet for a piece of candy in the most polite way. The findings showed three main stages in the development of politeness forms. First, children performed direct requests by means of imperative forms at age 4. Second, they started to command the subtleties of politeness at 5-6, but they were not able to produce conventionally indirect requests and indirect requests. Third, the author concluded that the ability to produce and understand an indirect request was fully gained at the age of 7-8.

Spekman and Roth (1985) investigated the requestive behaviour of 30 preschool children. Both production and comprehension were assessed in order to provide a complete account of child requestive behaviour. The sample was divided into three groups: 3-year-old, 4-year-old and 5-year-old children. The experimental design for the production part was similar to the one employed by Read and Cherry (1978). The children were asked to address two puppets to borrow certain toys. The results showed that pre-schoolers produced a wide

variety of request strategies (direct, conventionally indirect and indirect strategies). The mean number of requests strategies employed was almost identical in the groups analysed. The majority of children addressed the puppets by means of direct strategies in the form of imperatives (e.g., "Give me the magic tube"). This direct form was significantly used more often than other strategies. Permission forms (e.g., "May I have the crayon?") and desire statements (e.g., "I want that crayon") were employed more frequently than indirect requests (e.g. "That magic tube looks like fun"). The latter were rarely found. The requestive repertoire was almost identical across ages. In fact, no developmental differences were found in their ability to produce requests across the ages.

The majority of the above studies on the L1 (Garvey, 1975; Ervin-Tripp, 1977; Read & Cherry, 1978) have claimed that children at age 3 are able to produce different request strategies using several linguistic forms. Common to most of the studies is children's shift from direct strategies towards the use of more indirect strategies (Bates, 1976; Garvey, 1975; Ervin-Tripp, 1977; Ervin-Tripp et al., 1990; Gordon & Ervin-Tripp, 1984; Read & Cherry, 1978; Spekman & Roth, 1985). On that account the level of indirectness tends to increase over the years. Despite the fact that pre-schoolers may use different types of request strategies, the production of more complex requests improves dramatically with age and proficiency, with the exception of the study by Spekman and Roth (1985) which showed no developmental differences in their ability to produce requests across the ages. These aforementioned studies signal that requestive behaviour is acquired from an early age in the following order: direct requests,

conventionally indirect requests and indirect requests. The presence of the latter is limited in child production. As Ninio and Snow (1996, p.140) argued, "during the school years, continued development in control over polite request forms is driven in good part by the maturation of social abilities, in particular the capacity to take the perspective of the request recipient". Pragmatic as well as cognitive development seems to be intrinsically tied to social and maturational factors.

Therefore, we may state that according to previous research on monolingual children, the use of requests reveals different patterns according to the age period. That linear development seems to be determined by children's proficiency level. As argued by Tomasello (2008), children recognize first direct requests including imperatives and later on indirect requests which involve more complex utterances like declaratives. Similarly, Papafragou (2000) has argued that children use more imperative directives more frequently than requests in the form of questions or hints.

Furthermore, previous research suggests that monolingual young learners modify their requests by adding external modifiers, such as "please" (Ervin-Tripp, 1977; Read & Cherry, 1978) and grounders (Gordon & Ervin-Tripp, 1984). Pre-schoolers are often encouraged to use courtesy formulas, such as please, because both parents and teachers are highly concerned with the fact that children must be polite. In fact, it is very common to hear adults asking children "What do you say?" or " What's the magical word?" after something has been requested. Throughout childhood, students increase the use of politeness devices by means of interrogatives (Ervin- Tripp, 1977) and

other modification devices (Gordon & Ervin-Tripp, 1984). Nevertheless, very few L1 studies have taken into account the presence or absence of modification devices (Ervin-Tripp, 1977; Read & Cherry, 1978). So far, we have considered request production on the part of monolingual children. Some attention has also been paid to L2 pragmatic development.

2.3.1.2. Child Production of Requests from a Second Language Acquisition Perspective

This subsection is concerned with child production of requests from a SLA perspective. The following studies to be discussed have been conducted with a focus on L2 requestive production from a cross-sectional perspective (Rose, 2000) and a longitudinal perspective (Achiba, 2003; Cromdal, 1996; Ellis, 1992; Solé, 1990; Solé & Soler, 2005).

From a cross-sectional perspective, Rose (2000) analysed the L2 production of English requests of L1 Cantonese primary students. The participants were 7, 9 and 11 years old. The data were collected by means of a cartoon oral production task containing 10 request scenarios. The results reported evidence of the pragmatic development from direct to more conventionally indirect strategies. The author found that the two higher proficiency groups employed conventionally indirect requests more frequently than the 7-year-old group, with the highest level group using conventionally indirect strategies more frequently. In addition, Rose also examined the use of external modification items in the three groups. She found that learners' linguistic proficiency determined the use of request modification items; with increasing

proficiency, the learners increased the use of external modification items.

From a longitudinal perspective, Achiba (2003) examined the production of English requests by a Japanese girl named Yao, aged 7, over a 17-month period in Australia. The author illustrated the recorded data of the child, mainly in play-time, which showed pragmatic development in four different phases. In general, her requests moved from direct strategies to more indirect and complex ones. In phase I (first 12 weeks), Yao already employed all the requests strategies in very limited proportions, despite her low level of English. The requests used were direct strategies such as "pass me" as well as conventionally indirect strategies such as the permission form "can I?" and the suggestory formula "let's". The participant made use of very few modification items, especially "repetitions". In phase II, a developmental shift from formulaic expressions to non-formulaic forms was observed. This phase was characterized by an increase of conventionally indirect strategies, particularly ability forms and desire expressions, however past-tense modals ("could I"?) were still not present in Yao's repertoire. This form did not appear until phase III. The shift from "Can I?" to "Could I?" was significant in terms of pragmatic development, although the first form was still more frequent than the second one. In this phase, the child's production of requests included more syntactically complex structures and the repertoire of conventionally indirect requests increased with willingness strategies, such as "will I?". Finally, the last phase revealed a wide variety of conventionally indirect strategies accompanied by mitigation devices. Similar to the results reported by Rose (2000), the longitudinal study

by Achiba (2003) reported an increase in syntactic complexity and use of modification devices over time.

Cromdal (1996) observed the production of English requests of English-Swedish bilingual children. The participants were 13 children ranging in age from 5 to 8 attending an English immersion school. The results showed that the children had a wide variety of request strategies in their repertoire. The most frequent requests employed by the participants were direct request strategies in the imperative form, almost twice as frequent as the direct strategies accompanied by mitigation devices, such as "please". The author found that the children addressed adults by using direct requests with the use of "please". In contrast, the participants employed direct requests without modification devices in 92% of the interactions with their peers. In his study, modification devices accompanied 15% of all requests produced by the children. The majority of them were external request modification items of the subtype "please" and internal modifiers of the subtype attention-getters (e.g. "Boggy" –the nickname) and appealers (e.g. "Ok?", "right"). According to Cromdal (1996), the findings obtained in the naturalistic observations revealed that the children had more pragmatic awareness than could be shown in the comprehension test (see those results documented in Section 2.3.2.2).

Ellis (1992) observed two immigrant boys, aged 10 and 11, in an immersion context over a one-year period. These boys were from Portugal and Pakistan, respectively, and they moved to London with a very limited knowledge of the target language, that is, English. This author focused on the pragmatic development of requests in a British English classroom context. Data were collected by means of notes and

audio-taped sessions over a period of 4 school terms. The findings reported that direct requests came first and represented the majority of requests uttered by both children during the whole observation period. Conventionally indirect requests appeared later and they were performed by means of permission forms ("can I?") and desire expressions ("I want"). The use of indirect requests was very limited in the corpus. The subjects hardly used any modification items to mitigate the requests. Internal modifiers were more employed than external ones, expressed almost exclusively by the particle "please" and expanders (repeating or rephrasing the request). In line with previous studies (Achiba, 2003; Rose, 2000), the decrease of direct strategies and the increase of conventionally indirect strategies over time was determined by the L2 learners' proficiency level. Nevertheless, learners' pragmatic development over time was kept to a minimum although they slightly extended their productive repertoire of requests. The author suggested that the context (the classroom setting) played a very important role and more complex and indirect requests would be found outside the classroom where there are more chances for face-work, as was the case in Rose (2000) and Achiba's (2003) studies.

Solé and Soler (2005) examined 48 learners' L2 production of requests in Spanish by means of eight short story completion tasks. These participants were bilinguals (Spanish and Catalan), Spanish monolinguals and Catalan monolinguals. The subjects were divided into three main groups: 4-year-olds, 6-year-olds and 8-year-olds. The findings showed that both direct strategies and conventionally indirect strategies were frequently employed. In fact, no statistical differences were found on the basis of the number of forms produced between

these two categories. However, with reference to conventionally indirect strategies, the authors found an increase in the use of hearer-oriented strategies (e.g. "can you?", "would you") and a decrease of the use of speaker-oriented strategies (e.g. "I want") over the years. Indirect strategies (known as hints) were hardly used at all. The use of different mitigation devices was very limited, although the use of the particle "please" was widely employed. In line with previous research (Achiba, 2003; Rose, 2000), older children showed a greater variety of requestive behaviour. In contrast to Ellis (1992), Solé and Soler (2005) considered that the school context favoured the use of conventional indirect strategies in their cross-sectional study.

In the same region (Catalonia), Solé (1990) examined the production of L2 Spanish requests by 2 Catalan-Spanish bilinguals and 2 Catalan monolinguals between 2 and 3 years old. Data were collected by means of video-recordings of adult-child conversation in Spanish at their homes. The study reported that children were able to produce direct and conventionally indirect requests. However, no instances of indirect requests and modifiers were found.

In the previous studies (Solé, 1990; Solé & Soler, 2005), the absence of modification devices to soften requests could be attributed to the fact that Spanish is a positive-oriented language that may not require mitigation devices. In this vein, the level of directness when making a request is higher. As Pinto and Raschio (2007) reported, peninsular Spanish requests are usually more direct than English requests. As described in section 2.2, Spanish requestive behaviour has a tendency towards positive politeness, while English requestive behaviour uses more negative-politeness strategies.

The review of L2 child studies focusing on the pragmatic production of requests has revealed the following insights. First, child L2 learners mainly use direct strategies and later acquire conventionally indirect strategies. In this sense, the shift from direct to conventionally indirect requests, as occurred in L1 studies, is also noticed in L2 studies (Achiba, 2003; Ellis, 1992; Rose, 2000; Solé & Soler, 2005). Second, the request forms produced by L2 learners increase their syntactic complexity over time (Achiba, 2003; Rose, 2000), except in the case of Ellis (1992) where pragmatic development was kept to a minimum. As stated by Ellis (1992), data in his study were obtained from classroom discourse which diminishes the chances for face work. However, Solé and Soler (2005) consider that the school context favoured the use of conventionally indirect strategies. Third, the use of modification devices in L2 studies also increases over the span of time although they are acquired later on with reference to request strategies. Nevertheless, the use of the external modification item "please" is used relatively early by L2 learners (Achiba, 2003; Ellis, 1992; Rose, 2000; Solé & Soler, 2005). Fourth, Spanish uses more direct forms than English (Solé & Soler, 2005; Solé, 1990).

Concluding this section and taking into account all the above, the linear development observed in L2 studies seems to be conditioned by the proficiency level in the target language. With increasing proficiency, the learners increase the use of conventionally indirect strategies and modification items (Achiba, 2003; Cromdal, 1996; Ellis, 1992; Rose, 2000). In sum, we may state that the results derived from L2 studies have shown similar findings to those of L1 studies.

2.3.1.3. Child Production of Requests from a Third Language Acquisition Perspective

More recent research has accounted for trilingual children, yet currently studies on multilingual pragmatic development are still scarce. The few studies of pragmatic development in early multilingual speakers have focused on simultaneous language acquisition (Barnes, 2008; Montanari, 2009; Quay, 2008) and consecutive multilingual acquisition (Safont, 2011, 2012, 2013b). Nevertheless, not all the studies previously mentioned have specifically addressed the acquisition of requests in early multilingual learners. In fact, the number of studies (Barnes, 2008; Safont, 2011, 2012, 2013b) focused on the production of requests in trilinguals is very limited and for that reason we will also refer to the other two studies (Quay, 2008; Montanari, 2009) as they may help us to gain important insights into our research topic.

Quay (2008) examined the pragmatic development of an English-Japanese-Chinese two-year trilingual child. The findings reported that the child employed the appropriate language according to the interlocutor's proficiency level as well as the language they spoke to her. In addition, language mixing was also evident in her multilingual conversations with their parents. The child was aware of her parents' proficiency in the three languages and their acceptance of using the three of them in their multilingual home environment. However, the researcher observed that the child only spoke Japanese in her daycare centre which was a completely Japanese monolingual environment. These findings showed that pragmatic differentiation is apparent in early trilingual children.

Similarly, Montanari (2009) described the patterns of language choice in early trilingual development through an analysis of spontaneous data produced by a simultaneous trilingual child. The girl, Kathryn, was addressed in Tagalog-Spanish-English by family members from birth. In that regard, the family context was a multilingual environment where the fluidity and interaction of languages did occur. The results showed that Kathrin changed language code according to the language employed by the addressee. The child became aware of how to pragmatically differentiate her language systems before the age of two. Nevertheless, switches to other language systems were common due to lexical gaps. Montanari suggested that the child's language mixing was not a lexical confusion, but a communicative strategy that complied with her multilingual speech family. In other words, her relatives did not reject or sanction their inappropriate language choices, they showed appreciation and comprehension. The author claimed that "one should look beyond the linguistic input itself and explore more in detail the adults' attitudes and expectations concerning appropriate language use" (2009, p.625).

Barnes (2008) analysed the English requestive behaviour of a simultaneous trilingual child in the Basque Country. The girl, Jenny, was exposed to English, Spanish and Basque in equal amounts from birth. Data were collected by means of recordings between the ages of 1.11 and 3.6. Jenny's requests were becoming more sophisticated over the span of time. The author emphasized that her pragmatic ability in English was extremely significant due to the fact that English was only employed at home. She showed evidence of pragmatic awareness in her strategies to express a wide variety of communicative intents. Barnes

(2008, p.65) argued that it is difficult to know if the multicompetence of multilinguals "extends to aspects of pragmatics that may either be specific to each language or which may overlap between two or more of the languages known to the multilingual". The author suggested that Jenny´s high pragmatic flexibility may be due to her multilingual background and pointed out that further research is needed to analyse the possibility of influence and interaction among her three language systems.

Those aforementioned case studies have provided insights into pragmatic flexibility (Barnes, 2008) and pragmatic differentiation (Quay, 2008; Montanari, 2009), yet those studies have only focused on simultaneous multilingual speakers. For that reason, Safont (2011, 2012, 2013b) has analysed the peculiarities of consecutive multilingual acquisition since no previous research has accounted for the pragmatic development of a consecutive trilingual preliterate child. Her studies describe the pragmatic development, in terms of the requestive speech act, in a consecutive trilingual child (named *Pau*) from ages 2.6 to 5.6. The author focuses on the participant's production of Catalan (L1), Spanish (L2) and English (L3). Pau's Catalan and Spanish proficiency is advanced, although his language systems are still developing because he is a preliterate child. These studies have been conducted in the same context as our study where Spanish is the dominant language and many children are Spanish-monolingual speakers. Despite the fact that Pau is a Catalan-speaker, the exposure to Spanish in his everyday life is significant. The introduction of English in his linguistic repertoire started at age 2.11 through formal instruction, TV cartoons and occasional playtime with his mother. Data collection involved regular

recordings of mother-child interaction and diary notes. We shall further explore these studies because they can provide us with important new insights into the complexity of pragmatic development in early trilinguals.

In the first study of this longitudinal project, Safont (2011) described the pragmatic development of Pau related to years 2.6 to 3.6. The research hypotheses guiding the study by Safont (2011, pp.264-265) were: (1) direct forms will be present more often in Pau's Spanish and Catalan than in his English production, (2) complexity of English request forms, including conventionally indirect formulas, will increase in line with Pau's higher command of the languages and (3) modification items will not be present in Catalan and Spanish and will be scarcely present in English. As regards the first hypothesis, findings showed that Pau employed more direct requests in Catalan, followed by English and they were least used in Spanish. These results were partially in line with the first hypothesis due to the fact that English was the second language in which more direct requests were produced. According to the author, this finding may be linked to the fact that his mother only employed Catalan and English when interacting with Pau. Despite the fact that the level of proficiency was higher in Spanish rather than in English, Safont believes that the overruling effect of the addressee played a crucial role on the production of direct requests by Pau. Considering the second hypothesis, the results confirmed that the complexity of request forms increased in line with Pau's development of his language systems and coincided with a decrease of direct forms over the year. In line with previous research (Achiba, 2003; Rose, 2000; Solé, 1990), a higher command of the languages means a higher

command of the use of complex requests, such as the presence of conventionally indirect strategies. With regard to the third hypothesis, the findings showed that Pau employed modification items in the three languages of his multilingual system. The introduction of the L3 (English) in Pau's linguistic repertoire had an effect on his pragmatic development. This paper shows how cross-linguistic interaction among languages modified his pragmatic systems, in particular the use of requests and their modifiers. The author suggests that pragmatic interaction among languages calls for further research.

Continuing from the previous study, Safont (2012) investigated Pau's requests mitigation devices in his three languages over the same age period (from 2.6 to 3.6). The author employed the typology of request peripheral modification items carried out by Alcón et al. (1995, see Table 5). The findings derived from this study showed that Pau employed more internal modifiers than external modifiers in the three languages. These results contradicted her first hypothesis grounded in previous monolingual-based research (Achiba, 2003; Ellis, 1992; Rose, 2000) which stated that Pau's production would reveal more external modification items. As regards the second hypothesis, Safont indicated that most of the external modification devices would be expanders and the particle "please". However, her results reported that Pau employed a wide variety of external modifiers, such as preparators and disarmers, which are not found in child monolingual speech. This study suggests that multilingual learners are able to modify requests in their L1, L2 and L3 before age 3.

Finally, Safont (2013b) accounted for Pau's requestive behaviour from ages 3.6 to 5.6 by examining the request strategies employed in

the three language systems. With reference to the first hypothesis, Safont predicted that the amount and type of request forms used will vary for each language according to cross-linguistic differences in politeness orientation. The results confirmed the first hypothesis since Catalan and Spanish which are positive-oriented languages in the politeness theory presented similar results while English, a negative-oriented language, significantly differed from the other language systems. Pau's production of request strategies in Catalan and Spanish revealed an increase of direct forms and a decrease of conventionally indirect strategies over the age range examined. In contrast, his English requests became steadily more indirect with age. The author found a significant decrease of direct forms from ages 4.4 to 5.6. Pau clearly showed a preference for direct request strategies in his L1 and L2 and conventionally indirect forms in his L3. These findings suggest that multilinguals have both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic knowledge from a very early age. As regards the second hypothesis, Safont claimed some variation in the choice of request formulas when addressing the mother or the toy. The results confirmed the hypothesis since statistically significant differences were found between requestee and type of strategies employed. Pau used more direct forms when addressing the toy than when addressing his mother. In line with previous studies (e.g., Quay, 2008), the role of the interlocutor was paramount in child requestive behaviour.

To sum up the findings previously mentioned in relation to the requestive behaviour of multilingual children, we may acknowledge the peculiarities of multilingual pragmatic development in contrast to the findings reported in monolingual and bilingual children. The

introduction of English in Pau's repertoire produced an increase of indirect forms and a decrease of direct forms in Catalan and Spanish from ages 2.6 to 3.6. In addition, the use of modifiers was also affected by the presence of a third language. Nevertheless, Pau started using more conventionally indirect requests in English and more direct forms in Spanish and Catalan from the age of 4.4. These findings suggest that his language pragmatic systems develop in line with their politeness orientation. As previously reported, English is pragmatically referred as a negative-politeness language, while Catalan and Spanish are more positive-face oriented. Finally, Safont also argues that the influence of Pau's language attitudes and sociocultural factors have contributed to the findings obtained.

These studies of multilingual families have reported that early trilinguals show signs of pragmatic flexibility (Quay, 2008; Montanari, 2009) and pragmatic differentiation (Barnes, 2008). Additionally, those studies carried out by Safont (2011, 2012, 2013b) have provided evidence for the dynamics of multilingualism and the peculiarities of child multilingual development of pragmatics. TLA is a process which differs from SLA and FLA both quantitatively and qualitatively. In contrast to the studies conducted with a focus on the L1 and L2, the results found were not predictable and showed variability. This qualitative and quantitative change may be explained by the M-Factor - an inherent characteristic of multilingual speakers explained in Chapter 1.

The present section has extensively described child pragmatic production of requests in studies focused on the L1, L2 and L3. The ability to perform and understand requests is crucial for the appropriate

attainment of pragmatic competence. Not only do language learners need to be able to produce requests in a pragmatically appropriate manner, but they also have to be aware of understanding those requests which are pragmatically appropriate. As a result, production and comprehension are two important aspects of pragmatic research (Kasper & Rose, 2002). Most of the studies in pragmatics are production-oriented (Rose, 2009) and focused on adult learners (Taguchi, 2010). Consequently, pragmatic comprehension has received little attention. In order to provide a complete account of multilingual requestive behaviour, we may turn our attention to the studies dealing with child pragmatic comprehension of requests.

2.3.2. Child Comprehension of Requests

As the participants of this study are young learners, this section is concerned with child comprehension of requests. According to Kasper and Rose (2002, p.118), "comprehension is the least well represented, with only a handful studies to date". Pragmatic comprehension refers to "the comprehension of oral language in terms of pragmatic meaning" (García, 2004, p.1). In the understanding of the speech act of requesting, the hearer must be able to understand what the speaker's intention is (i.e., the illocutionary force) and respond to it. It requires the listener to comprehend not only linguistic information, but also contextual information, such as the power and status of the speaker, and the setting, among others.

Some studies (Bates, 1976; Wilkinson et al., 1984) have reported that young learners' ability to understand requests comes easier and earlier than their ability to produce them. Mabel (1994) has suggested

that request comprehension is a highly predictable process consisting of two stages: (i) understand the action to be accomplished (locutionary form) and (ii) understand the speaker's intentions (illocutionary form). However, other authors (Bernicot & Legros, 1987) have argued that three stages would be necessary for the understanding of indirect requests. The two aforementioned processes plus (iii) the possibility of making another interpretation compatible with the speaker's intention.

As a result, some research (Bernicot & Legros, 1987; Bernicot, Laval & Chaminaud, 2007; Ledbetter & Lend, 1988) in developmental pragmatics has focused on whether children recognise what is said and what is meant and can explain the difference. In this line of research, direct requests appear in a social act that strongly induces a request. There exists semantic congruence between what is said and what is performed. Conventionally indirect requests are not as explicit and transparent as direct requests; however, there is a clear actor, verb and object (Ervin-Tripp, 1977). By contrast, indirect requests are not easy to interpret because they are nonconventional types of request which are not usually employed in child discourse. In addition, the complexity of indirect requests increases because of the incongruity of what is said (i.e., the locutionary form) and what is meant (i.e., the illocutionary form). As Ledbetter and Dent (1988, p.235) claimed, "[indirect requests] exclude surface level information regarding the agent, action and/or object necessary for fulfilling the request". Such requests imply a process of logical inference. In cases where non literal language is involved, the role of the context is paramount in children´s ability to understand pragmatic items, such as indirect requests (Bernicot & Legros, 1987; Bernicot et al., 2007).

Contextual information is a multidimensional concept which includes social, cognitive, linguistic, physical and non-linguistic characteristics (Loukusa, Leinonen & Ryder, 2007, p.280). In the case of indirect requests where what is said and what is meant do not coincide, the hearer may interpret the speaker´s intention by exploiting the context surrounding the interaction. In this vein, young learners may identify and notice appropriateness depending on the contextual factors. As Takakuwa (2000, p.12) argued, "the more decontextualized language becomes, the fewer extralinguistic cues become available from context and, thus, the more difficult it is to understand language". Existing research (Bernicot et al., 2007) on the topic suggests that younger learners mainly rely on the contextual information in the process of understanding requests. However, as children grow in cognition, their choices tend to be based on linguistic information if they do not have contextual information. As Ochs (1979, p.9) observed, the tendency is a "move away from reliance on the immediate situational context towards greater reliance on non-situated knowledge" with increasing age.

After providing a short account of pragmatic comprehension of requests, we will first review studies that focus on the L1 in subsection 2.3.2.1 and later on studies focused on the L2 in subsection 2.3.2.2. No studies on L3 comprehension of requests will be examined since as far as we know there is no evidence of multilingual comprehension of requests.

2.3.2.1. Child Comprehension of Requests from a First Language Acquisition Perspective

This Section provides insights into child comprehension of requests taking into account a FLA perspective. We will particularly refer to the following studies: Ackerman (1978), Axia and Baroni (1985), Baroni and Axia (1989), Bates (1976), Bernicot (1991), Bernicot and Legros (1987), Bernicot et al. (2007), Bucciarelli, Colle and Bara (2003), Carrell (1981), Elrod (1983, 1987), Grosse, Moll and Tomasello (2010), Mabel (1994), Shatz (1978), Spekman and Roth (1985), Wagner, Greene-Havas and Gillespie (2010) and Wilkinson et al. (1984).

In one of the earliest studies focusing on requests, Spekman and Roth (1985) investigated the comprehension of 30 preschool children. The sample was divided into three groups: 3-year-old, 4-year-old and 5-year-old children. The instrument for the pragmatic comprehension task consisted of activities that included different types of requests. The children were supposed to perform the instructions given by the researcher. In summary, the findings reported that pre-schoolers understood a wide variety of request strategies (direct, conventionally indirect and indirect strategies). However, the authors found no developmental differences in their ability to understand requests across the ages. The analyses showed that children appropriately understood the different types of requests. Although the 3-year-olds complied with 75.8% of the requests, the 4-year-olds with 81.7% and the 5-year-olds with 85%, no significant differences were found across ages. In addition, the author found that indirect requests were understood less frequently than conventionally indirect requests. The latter were also

less comprehended than direct requests. These findings suggest that indirect requests strategies may be achieved later than the acquisition of more explicit direct forms.

Elrod (1983) examined the comprehension of requests by 48 children ranging in age from 3.2 to 6.2 years of age. Each child was presented 16 short story completion tasks by means of cartoon drawings that included direct requests (e.g., "Please stay out of the kitchen") and indirect requests (e.g., "I just waxed the floor"). After listening to the stories, children were asked to choose between three small cards that represented the end of the story and explain their choices. The analysis reported that children responded appropriately to both direct and indirect requests. The understanding of direct requests was identical over the age range analysed and the comprehension of indirect requests was slightly higher in the older children. In this sense, the author suggested that the process of comprehension of indirect requests does not differ greatly from direct requests. This author challenged the view that supports the higher complexity of indirect requests.

In line with the previous study (Elrod, 1983), Elrod (1987) employed the same methodology with 78 children. In contrast to her earlier research, the findings showed that the understanding of direct requests was similar in the two age groups analysed (3.2- 4.7 and 4.8-6.4). Nevertheless, the older group did statistically better than the younger group in the comprehension of indirect requests. The author concluded that the discrepancies between her studies call for further research in the topic.

Mabel (1994) examined the understanding of requests of 64 Chinese children aged 2.6 to 4.6 who were divided into four age groups. In the instrumental design, these young learners were expected to manipulate a set of toys after listening to some verbal requests. These requests included direct strategies (e.g., "give me the doll"), conventionally indirect strategies (e.g., "Could you open the door for me") and indirect strategies (e.g., "Someone is knocking at the door"). Statistical differences between age groups were found with respect to the age variable. In fact, older children performed significantly more appropriately in the three types of request strategies than younger children. In addition, the findings showed that the more appropriate responses were given in direct requests (*M*=5.828), followed by conventionally indirect requests (*M*=5.031) and finally, indirect requests (*M*=4.125) were the most difficult ones to be understood. All the age groups under investigation showed this gradual pattern of pragmatic acquisition. The study suggests that the ability to comprehend direct requests is acquired before 3.5 years of age while the greatest increase of indirect request comprehension is found from the age of 4.0 to 4.6. According to Mabel (1994, p.11), "[the] acquisition of request comprehension ability in children is gradual and their performances [are] predictable from age".

With reference to the earlier acquisition of request comprehension, some authors (Shatz, 1978; Grosse et al., 2010) have investigated the comprehension of requests in children below the age of two years. Shatz (1978) analysed child-mother interaction in naturalistic conversations. The author found that children as young as 1.8 years of age responded appropriately to direct requests (e.g., "Give

me the truck") and conventionally indirect requests (e.g., "Can you give me the truck?"). Similarly, Grosse et al. (2010) investigated the comprehension of requests by 48 German-speaking infants of 21 months of age. In their experiment, an adult addressed children to respond to requests for an object and they were expected to manipulate the requested object. The findings showed that children took into account the adult's situation when interpreting a request that was ambiguous. As a result, the authors found that infants acquired early direct requests and understood the cooperative logic of requests from a very early age.

Bucciarelli et al. (2003) employed a story completion task to collect data on participants' comprehension of requests. The sample was composed of 160 Italian children ranging in age from 2.6 to 7. The instrument assessed the understanding of direct request strategies (e.g., "Mum, pick me up"), conventionally indirect strategies (e.g., "Sorry, could you close the window") and indirect request strategies (e.g., "Excuse me, I'm studying"). After listening to the stories containing the requests, children were supposed to choose one picture out of four as the end of the story. The researchers observed that children from 2.6 to 7 years old comprehended direct requests just as well as they did conventionally indirect requests. In fact, conventionally indirect requests were easier to comprehend than direct requests. The authors argued that "conventionality is a shortcut, and comprehending a conventional act does not require any interference". However, the comprehension of indirect requests was difficult for the whole age range, especially the younger ones.

Ledbetter and Lend (1988) focused on ten 3-year-old and ten 5-year-old English speakers. These authors examined child comprehension of requests by means of an instrument that consisted of manipulation of toys in response to some verbal requests. To gather data this instrument included direct requests (e.g., "Put these toys away"), conventionally indirect requests (e.g., "Can you get the baby's high chair?") and indirect requests (e.g., "Someone's at the door"). The findings showed that 5-year-old children understood the three types of request strategies better than 3-year-old children did as they responded appropriately more often. In addition, direct requests were the most effective forms, followed by conventionally indirect requests and the least appropriate responses were given to the indirect requests. These authors concluded that the transparency and conventionality of direct and conventionally indirect requests helped pre-schoolers to comprehend the requests whereas indirect requests were more difficult to understand because of the lack of transparency, conventionality and complexity of declarative forms.

The complexity of indirect requests for younger children was also reported in a cross-sectional study by Carrell (1981). This author examined the comprehension of indirect requests of 100 school children ranging in age from 4 to 7. Carrell (1981) reported that children were able to understand a great variety of indirect requests. However, 4-year-old children understood 7 out of 20 while the 7-year-old comprehended 19 out of 20 test items. Additionally, Carrell (1981) found that pragmatic awareness was determined by the proficiency level. The high-proficiency group understood more syntactically complex requests than the younger group.

Ackerman (1978) also examined children's comprehension of indirect requests. The participants in this study were 6 to 7-year-old and 8 to 9-year-old children. The students were read short stories that included indirect requests, such as "it's ten o'clock". To investigate the understanding of these requests, children were asked to respond "yes" or "no" to some questions related to the stories. The results showed that both groups responded appropriately to indirect requests. In Ackerman's (1978) view, the understanding of indirect requests appears as young as six years of age.

Bates (1976) examined 60 Italian children's comprehension of requests. In the task, children had to decide and award a piece of candy to the frog puppet that asked in the nicest way. At age 4, the participants were able to understand only the most polite requests that the frog made. At 5-6 years old, they started to command the subtleties of politeness. At the age of 7-8, the ability to understand an indirect request was fully gained. Similarly, Wilkinson et al. (1984) examined the pragmatic awareness of 57 school children from age 5 to 8. These authors found that children at the age 5 may judge indirectness by focusing on the use of "please" and later, at the age of 7, by focusing on other mitigation devices. The authors pointed out that "the pattern emerging from [their] data suggests early metapragmatic knowledge of pragmatics that young children possess when they enter school but that is refined and elaborated in the following years".

Bernicot and Legros (1987) examined 48 French children's comprehension of direct and indirect requests. The sample was divided into two groups: 3 to 4-year-olds and 5 to 6-year-olds. The participants performed 12 story completion tasks which included stories containing

direct requests (e.g. "Give me the spade") and indirect requests (e.g. "I can't make a castle with my hands"). Each story was composed of five pictures. Children were shown each story through four pictures in the form of comic strips which they were supposed to finish by choosing one out of three pictures as the end of the story. Each choice was associated with one of the aforementioned requests types. The findings showed that children's comprehension of both direct and indirect requests developed over time. 5 to 6-year-old children did the task better than 3 to 4-year-old participants. In line with previous studies (Buccarielli et al., 2003; Carrell, 1981; Elrod, 1987; Mabel, 1994), the authors reported that children understood direct requests better than indirect requests. The former were more difficult to perceive as requests.

In the story completion task of Bernicot and Legros (1987), the role of the context played a paramount role. In some of the stories presented to the children, the request action was obvious because of the context (i.e., the object of the request appeared in the picture), while in others the contextual information was more ambiguous (the object requested did not appear in the picture). As expected, the stories where the social situation was evident were the ones that children understood better. Both groups performed better in the stories were the speaker's intention was clear. Nevertheless, when the contextual information was ambiguous, the older group relied on the linguistic information of the utterance. In this vein, the older group was able to take into account the locutionary form (the linguistic form) and the illocutionary form (the speaker's intention). In contrast, the younger group only based their choice on the social context and not on the linguistic features. These

authors suggest that children at age 5 and 6 start to distinguish between the locutionary and the illocutionary form of a request.

Wagner et al. (2010) analysed the ability of request comprehension by 56 English-speaking children. The sample was divided into three groups: 3-year-olds, 4-year-olds, and 5-year-olds. The participants were shown a frog puppet which asked for a person's name varying the level of formality in accordance with the addressee. The task consisted of four target addressee pictures related to the following utterances (1) "awwww, I wonder what your name is?" (addressed to a baby), (2) "Hey, what's your name?" (addressed to a child), (3) "Excuse me please, can you tell me your name?" (addressed to a teacher) and (4) "Hola! Como te llamas?" (addressed to a foreign child). Children listened to the frog and then, two pictures were shown (appropriate and inappropriate). The participants had to choose between the two pictures. The findings showed that the 5-year-olds did better than the 4-year-olds. The latter also did better than the 3-year-olds. From this account, pragmatic awareness increased over the years.

In the previous study (Wagner et al., 2010), children were able to recognize the Spanish utterance, despite the fact that Spanish was a language unknown to them. As Hirschfeld and Gelman (1997) reported, children by age 4 are able to link a foreign language with objects from foreign culture. According to Wagner et al. (2010), children's association of the appropriate image and the foreign language was expected. In fact, children did better with the recognition of the Spanish utterance than the other forms. "Excuse me please, can you tell me your name?" was the second utterance with which the participants did better. The authors suggested that polite words, such as "please" and

"excuse me", are often associated with an adult speech style. Likewise, the increase of pragmatic awareness over time was also noticed in the studies carried out by Axia and Baroni (1985), Baroni and Axia (1989), Bernicot (1991) and Bernicot, Laval and Chaminaud (2007).

Axia and Baroni (1985) analysed children aged 5-6, 7-8, and 9-10 who had to attribute polite or impolite requests as a function of the status of the addressee (a person talking to an adult or to a child). The authors reported that children increased politeness in requests depending on the interlocutor's status at the age of seven. Axia and Baroni suggested that the age of seven is critical in the acquisition of sociopragmatic skills. Similarly, Baroni and Axia (1989) analysed how children distinguished between polite and impolite forms when formulating requests. In this study, 32 children divided into two groups (5-year-olds and 7-year-olds) were asked to evaluate whether a request was polite or impolite on the basis of the degree of familiarity between the participants in the interaction. Each pair of requests consisted of a conventionally indirect request (e.g. "Please, could I play on the swing for a bit"? and a direct request (e.g. "I want to play on the swing for a bit"). The scholars found that 7-year-old children showed a greater degree of pragmatic awareness than 5-year-olds. They attributed polite requests to those interlocutors who seemed to be less familiar while impolite requests were attributed to the less familiar ones.

Based on the review of studies in the present subsection, we may summarise the main insights as follows: Firstly, the majority of authors (Bates, 1976; Bernicot & Legros, 1987; Elrod, 1987; Ledbetter & Lend, 1988; Mabel, 1994; Wilkinson et al., 1984) have suggested that the understanding of direct requests comes at a very early age. Children

around the age of three understand direct request strategies. In fact, some studies (Gross et al., 2010; Shatz, 1978) have reported that children as young as two years old are able to respond appropriately to direct requests. The understanding of conventionally indirect requests also appears from a very early age (Mabel, 1994; Shatz, 1978). In fact, the study by Shatz (1978) suggests that children as young as 1.8 years of age can respond appropriately to conventionally indirect requests. However, little consensus has been achieved regarding the age of comprehension of indirect requests. Some authors (Ackerman, 1983; Bernicot & Legros, 1987; Bernicot et al., 2007) have considered that child comprehension of indirect requests appears as young as six years of age. Others (Mabel, 1994) have posited that this pragmatic acquisition is reached by the age of four and a half. While still others (Bates, 1976; Baroni & Axia, 1989; Bernicot, 1991; Wilkinson et al. 1984) have claimed that the age of 7 is critical in the acquisition of indirect requests.

Secondly, wide evidence is provided on the fact that the processing of direct requests appears to be easier and earlier than indirect requests (Baroni & Axia, 1989; Bernicot & Legros, 1987; Buccarielli et al., 2003; Carrell, 1981; Elrod, 1987; Ledbetter & Lend, 1988; Mabel, 1994; Spekman & Roth, 1985), except in the study by Elrod (1983). This author challenged the view that supported the higher complexity of indirect requests. Her study reported that children, ranging in age from 3 to 6, responded appropriately to both direct and indirect requests and claimed that the processes to understand both types of requests did not differ.

Thirdly, despite the discrepancy in the age of acquisition of each type of request, the majority of L1 researchers in this topic have suggested that the order of acquisition of the different types of requests shows a linear development: direct request, conventionally indirect requests and indirect requests (Baroni & Axia, 1989; Bernicot & Legros, 1987; Elrod, 1987; Mabel, 1994; Ledbetter & Lend, 1988). This developmental pattern is highly associated with the proficiency level. Therefore, child L1 comprehension of requests tends to show a similar developmental trajectory to child production of requests (Ervin-Tripp, 1977). As Mabel argues, (1994, p.11), "[the] acquisition of request comprehension ability in children is gradual and their performances [are] predictable from age". Nevertheless, the study by Spekman and Roth (1985) found no developmental differences across ages. In the study by Spekman and Roth (1985), the level of pragmatic awareness slightly increased with age from 3 to 5. In fact, no statistically significant differences were found in children's awareness and understanding of different types of requests across ages.

Finally, the developmental trajectory from children´s dependence on the situational context to more linguistic-based choices is related to the gradual shift from children's comprehension of direct requests to more indirect requests. The studies mentioned above suggest that children's growth in cognition implies a better understanding of the pragmatic aspects of language. Based on the findings from previous studies (Axia & Baroni, 1985; Bates, 1976; Baroni & Axia, 1989; Bernicot, 1991; Wagner et al., 2010; Wilkinson et al., 1984), child pragmatic awareness develops over time and the age of 7 is crucial in the attainment of pragmatic acquisition. So far, we have considered

request comprehension on the part of monolingual children. Some attention has also been paid to L2 pragmatic comprehension of requests.

2.3.2.2. Child Comprehension of Requests from a Second Language Acquisition Perspective

The results derived from the section above raises the question of whether those findings obtained in children´s L1 comprehension of requests could be generalized to multilingual comprehension of requests. To our knowledge, no research to date has examined children´s comprehension of requests in more than two languages. However, some studies with bilingual children have been conducted (Cromdal, 1996; Ervin-Tripp, Starge, Lampert & Bell, 1987; Lee, 2010;Takakuwa, 2000).

Cromdal (1996) analysed the pragmatic awareness of English-Swedish bilingual children. The participants were 13 children ranging in age from 5 to 8 attending an English immersion school. The task consisted of a pragmatic comprehension test that included different types of request strategies accompanied by modification devices. Two versions (in Swedish and English) were administered to the participants. The requests were classified in accordance with the degree of directness proposed by Ervin-Tripp (1977). For example, one of the requests was direct with imperative form (e.g. "Give me that stamp") and the other was a conventionally indirect request in the form of a desire expression (e.g. "I want that stamp"). Eight pairs of requests were presented to the children and they had to decide and explain which particular request was the nicer one of the pair. The findings reported that children were aware of the appropriateness of requests on

the basis of the politeness values of the request forms. However, more than two thirds of the participants did not give any substantial justification for their choices. The few explanations given were concerned with the use of the external modifier "please" accompanying the request head act. The comprehension and awareness of the indirect request, "do you have the key", was the most difficult for children. The author argued that they did not treat this indirect form as a request, but just a nice thing to say. Such requests required more complex inferences. Interestingly enough, the authors claimed that the pragmatic awareness of their language systems (English and Swedish) was asymmetrical, in favour of English.

Ervin-Tripp et al. (1987) analysed the understanding of indirect requests by L1 English children learning French as a L2 in Geneva. Five stories were told to the participants. For example, one of the stories involving a request was "mother is coming home from the store with a bag of groceries. Jack and Kate are playing near the door. The mother says: is the door open?" The children were asked "What did the mother want to say?" According to these authors, L2 children were able to understand and infer French indirect requests, despite the fact that their proficiency level in French was low. In line with L1 literature, these children relied more on the contextual situation (sociopragmatic knowledge) than on the linguistic form (pragmalinguistic knowledge).

Lee (2010) analysed the comprehension of requests by 176 primary school children. The sample was divided into three main groups (7-year-olds, 9-year-olds and 12-year-olds). The participants' mother tongue as well as the language of instruction of the schools was Cantonese. English was introduced as a L2 at the age of four. The L2

pragmatic awareness was measured by means of a multiple-choice comprehension test which included conventionally indirect and indirect requests. The participants were asked to determine the meaning of the request by choosing the most appropriate answer between four options (see example in Figure 8). This study revealed that the 12-year-olds did the task better than the 9-year-olds. The latter group revealed more pragmatic awareness than the 7-year-old group. In this vein, L2 pragmatic comprehension awareness increased with age. Similarly to previous L1 literature (Bernicot & Legros, 1987; Mabel, 1994), all the age groups understood conventionally indirect better than indirect requests, although most of the students had no difficulty in understanding both types of request strategies. According to Lee (2010), L1 literature has shown that children at the age of 7 approximately are able to respond appropriately to indirect requests. In this line of research, seven-year-old participants were able to choose the appropriate answer after listening to an indirect request in their L2.

Context: **Mei Mei is sitting next to the window.**
Mei Mei: Can I shut the window?
Teacher: Sure.

What does Mei Mei mean?
a. Mei Mei is asking the teacher to shut the window.
b. Mei Mei is asking the teacher about the window.
c. Mei Mei wants the teacher to know that the weather is cold.
d. Mei Mei wants the window.

Figure 8. Example of one of the situations in the pragmatic comprehension test of the study by Lee (2010, p.370).

Takakuwa (2000) analysed the pragmatic awareness of requests in 78 learners during a two-year longitudinal study from grade 5 (age 10-11) to grade 6 (age 11-12). The participants were bilingual Canadian children enrolled in a French-immersion school which were divided into two main groups. One group followed 80% French and 20% English in the school curriculum, while the other group was enrolled in a language programme where 50% was French and the other 50% was English. The task consisted of eight short stories that were presented in a computer programme. After listening to each story, children were individually asked questions to probe (i) participants' judgments of the speaker's intention and hearer's interpretation, and (ii) participants' understanding of the judgments they made. In line with the linear development of children's comprehension of requests (Bernicot & Legros, 1987; Mabel, 1994), it was expected that direct requests were the easiest to comprehend, followed by conventionally indirect requests and finally, the indirect ones. Surprisingly, the results confirmed that conventionally indirect requests and indirect requests were understood better than direct requests. The author suggested that the participants relied on those requests which were more polite. Despite the fact that direct requests are commonly easier to comprehend because what is said and what is meant coincide, these participants better understood those requests which were more pragmatically appropriate. In this vein, politeness was the main factor that affected children's comprehension of requests in this study. In line with children's pragmatic development over time, Takakuwa found that both groups increased their understanding of requests from the age of 10 to 12 in terms of total scores. In addition, the 80% group did the task better than the 50% group. The author considered that the learners in

the 80% group were the ones who had more exposure to the French language (80% of the instruction) in comparison to the group who only had 50% French instruction. L2 exposure to the language was positively associated with children's pragmatic awareness.

In line with previous literature (Axia & Baroni, 1985; Baroni & Axia, 1989; Bates, 1976; Wilkinson et al., 1984), more politeness devices were understood with increasing age. To our view, Takakuwa's participants were at the end of primary school and they were aware of the importance of being polite at school. For this reason, participants relied on those requests which were more polite, particularly conventionally indirect requests and indirect requests. In addition, the findings by Takakuwa (2000) showed that higher exposure to L2 revealed more pragmatic awareness. This fact reveals the importance of being exposed to pragmatic input in order to enhance pragmatic awareness. In this study, the language of instruction of the school played a paramount role in the promotion of children´s pragmatic awareness.

To sum up the findings reported above in relation to L2 comprehension of requests, we may acknowledge that the developmental pattern is similar to that of request comprehension in the L1 (Bernicot & Legros, 1987; Mabel, 1994; Elrod, 1983). Lee (2010) and Takakuwa (2000) found that pragmatic awareness of requests was significantly higher with increasing age. Direct requests were understood easier and earlier than indirect ones because of the explicitness between what is said and what is meant (Cromdal, 1996; Lee, 2010).

Furthermore, Takakuwa (2000) found that L2 exposure and intensity in bilingual programmes have a positive relation with pragmatic awareness. These findings suggest the advantages of bilinguals over monolinguals with reference to pragmatic awareness. Despite the fact that their L2 level was low, the subjects were able to understand different types of request strategies and modifiers in the L2. We believe that their prior linguistic experience as language learners helped them in their understanding of L2 requests.

On the whole, this chapter has provided an extensive account of a particular aspect of developmental pragmatics, namely that of child requestive behaviour. The findings derived from the studies reviewed in the present section have discussed that producing and understanding the cooperative logic of requests is a rather complex issue and children's understanding and production of complex requests increases as children grow older in line with their proficiency level of the target language. In addition to the analysis of child requestive behaviour, the affective dimension should not be left aside as proposed in the DMM. In fact, one of the main tenets of DMM is the focus on intra-individual factors, such as attitude, which are also subject to change over time on an individual level (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993). Chapter 3 will be devoted to further analyse the paramount role of affective factors, namely that of language attitudes on multilingual development.

CHAPTER 3

3. LANGUAGE ATTITUDES

The present chapter examines the role of language attitudes in multilingual development. As described in Chapter 2, in order to better understand the process of language acquisition a language system should not be removed from its social context. Similarly, the affective domain of a subject should not be studied in isolation. As previously stated, this study focuses on the DMM which aims to capture the dynamic relationship between the different variables present in multilingual acquisition. Both external and internal factors are responsible for language change over time on an individual level adjusting one's language system to one's communicative needs (Herdina & Jessner, 2002, p.74).

Apart from cognitive, linguistic and pragmatic aspects, the affective domain also plays an important role in the process of language acquisition. Stern (1985, p.386) points out that "the affective component contributes at least as much and often more to language learning than the cognitive skills". In fact, one of the main tenets of DMM is the focus on affective factors, such as language attitudes, which are regarded as the most significant variable in language acquisition (Manolopoulou-Sergi, 2004, p.432).

The analysis of language attitudes in multilingual societies is an important aspect to discuss since it determines the growth or decay of languages. The new linguistic dispensation allows people to show different attitudes towards the languages in contact in a given context. In fact, attitudes towards a language may explain certain behaviours

such as language choice and use. Holmes (1992, p.346) states that "people develop attitudes towards languages which reflect their views about those who speak the languages, and the contexts and functions with which they are associated". In this vein, language attitudes permeate our lives as they are present at all levels of language (Garrett, 2010).

The development of language attitudes during the school stage is worthy of analysis as the attitudinal component has been proven to be a strong influence for effective language learning and teaching (Manolopoulou-Sergi, 2004). However, very scarce research is carried out on language attitudes among very young learners (Mihaljevic-Djigunovic & Letica, 2009; Wu, 2003). Furthermore, the significance of infant and primary education is crucial for the formation of students' language attitudes and their commitment to language learning.

Bearing in mind the purpose of this study, the present chapter opens by exploring the main literature concerning language attitudes moving on to discuss the relevance of analysing children´s language attitudes in multilingual contexts. Subsection 3.1.1 will examine the main approaches employed in language attitude measurement. Section 3.2 will narrow the scope of the study by providing a comprehensive summary of the language attitude studies conducted in the context of our study. Then, section 3.3 is devoted to examine attitudinal studies which are focused on child population and take a multilingual approach. Finally, the last section will provide evidence of the scant research which links pragmatic awareness and language attitudes; an area which this study intends to contribute to.

3.1. General Framework on Language Attitudes

The literature of the role that affective factors have in language acquisition is extensive. Gardner and MacIntyre (1993, p.1) define affective variables as the "emotionally relevant characteristics of the individual that influence how she/he will respond to any situation". The number of affective factors considered in research has steadily increased in order to understand and explain the complex and dynamic process of language acquisition. Affect has to do with the emotional side of human beings. Pavlenko (2006) suggests that the study of multilingualism must include the affective dimension as a key criterion of research. As more languages are involved, the more complex the affective component will be. The way we feel ourselves when learning a language may either facilitate or hinder our learning process. Among the affective factors, language attitudes have been widely investigated as they seem to play a paramount role in the process of language acquisition. Dewaele (2005, p.118) claims that "attitudes are one of the central variables of language learning".

Traditionally, language attitudes have been mainly studied in social psychology. From this perspective, language attitudes deal with group behaviour as well as the behaviour of individuals within groups (Gardner & Lambert, 1962). More recently, language attitude research has become a major point of interest in sociolinguistics (Garrett, Coupland &Williams, 2003, p.2). However, the poststructuralist approach may provide a better explanation as it "views language attitudes and practices in multilingual contexts as being embedded in larger social, political, economic and historical contexts" (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). In line with the DMM, this approach contemplates

the dynamism of language attitudes and their relation to the wider context.

Many definitions of attitude have been proposed over the last couple of decades, although the term attitude is somewhat vague (see Coronel-Molina 2009 for an extended revision). The definition provided by Sarnoff (1970) is the one which has received more consensus. According to this author (1970, p.279), an attitude is "a disposition to react favourably or unfavourably to a class of objects". In this regard, language attitudes would be the favourable or unfavourable feelings attached to a language. Certain words, personal names, accents, dialects or languages may evoke emotional reactions either positive or negative.

An early description of attitudes was provided by Allport (1954 cited in Garrett 2010, p.19). This author defines an attitude as a "learned disposition to think, feel and behave toward a person (or object) in a particular way". This well-cited definition posits that an attitude comprises cognition, affection and behaviour. Similarly, Wenden (1991) claims that attitudes are composed of three main components: cognitive, evaluative and behavioural. The cognitive component refers to the beliefs or perceptions about the objects or situations related to the attitude. The evaluative component means that the objects or situations related to the attitude may provoke like or dislike. Finally, the behavioural component involves the learning behaviours adopted by the learner towards certain attitudes.

For example, in the case of analysing the attitudes of a child towards the Japanese language, we may talk about a cognitive

component (the subject believes that learning Japanese will provide him a better cultural background in order to understand his Manga comics), an evaluative component (the enthusiasm and positivism towards Japanese literature) and behavioural component (the routine of spending two hours reading comics). This example clearly illustrates that an attitude is individual because it represents internal thoughts and feelings, although its origins are in collective behaviour. As pointed out by Choi (2003, p.84), language attitudes may be referred to the "reflection of psychological attitudes about languages that convey the social, cultural and sentimental values of the speakers".

Baker (1992, p.10), one of the most influential authors in the field of language attitudes, provided an extensive account on language attitudes in his seminal publication *Attitudes and Language*. This author defines an attitude as a "hypothetical construct used to explain the direction and persistence of human behaviour". Language is a reproduction of the social reality and the future of any multilingual community depends on the opinions of that community. Attitudes may shape our behaviour. Language attitudes are dynamic and do not develop in a social vacuum, but in a specific political, ideological, and cultural context (Cenoz, 2009). For this reason, Baker (1992, p.16) highlights that "behaviour tends not always to be consistent across contexts". According to this author (1988), the main characteristics of language attitudes are the following:

a) attitudes are not inherited

b) attitudes are learnt

c)   attitudes have a tendency to persist, although they may be modified by experience

d)   attitudes vary in degree of favourability and unfavourability

Therefore, language attitudes are not innate, but acquired early in the lifespan (Garrett, 2010). Attitudes can be learned from the environment where children grow up. Parents' prior experience and knowledge may shape their attitudes to languages (Bartram, 2006). The influence of parents may be a determining factor in their children's formation of language attitudes. For this reason, Sears (1983) posits that language attitudes tend to be more enduring than other attitudes.

Other authors (Giles & Powesland, 1975; Trudgill, 1983) consider that attitudes are rarely static and change over time due to personal experience or exposure to social and political influence. Ajzen (1988, p.45) claims that "every particular instance of human action is, in this way, determined by a unique set of factors. Any change in circumstances, be it ever so slight, might produce a different reaction". This statement coincides with the ideas held by the DMM. In this regard, contextual influences, both at the macro and micro level, may have an effect on language attitudes. According to Mihaljevic-Djigunovic (2009, p.199), the role of language attitudes in the process of language acquisition "needs to be considered not only through interactions with the learning context but also through their internal interactions (among subcomponents) and interactions with each other". As noted above, language attitudes are dynamic and complex in nature.

The motivation of learning a language is closely related to language attitudes. Gardner (1985, p.10) suggests that attitudes are components of motivation; in fact, the author considers that "motivation…refers to the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favourable attitudes towards learning the language". This scholar distinguishes between two types of attitudinal orientations: integrative and instrumental. Integrative attitudes are those which reflect a desire to identify with a language and its culture while instrumental attitudes are those represented by utilitarian motives, for instance, the achievement of social acknowledgement and economic advantages (Lasagabaster, 2002). The latter are also described as "self-oriented" and "individualistic" (Baker, 1992, p.31).

The dichotomy between integrative versus instrumental orientation plays a major role in the study of language attitudes. On the one hand, some authors (Dörnyei, 2001; Gardner & Lambert, 1972) consider that an integrative orientation favours the learning process success while on the other hand, others, such as Lukmani (1972), report that instrumental attitudes may exert a greater influence in some contexts. Zhou (1999) prefers the combination of both orientations in order to favour the L2 learning process.

Whether instrumental or integrative attitudes, there is general agreement that attitudes towards languages have a direct relationship to language achievement. Both negative and positive attitudes may have an influence on the success of language learning. Indeed, the majority of authors consider that positive attitudes lead to a higher achievement

in language learning (Baker, 1992; Gardner, 1985; Genesee, Lambert & Holobow, 1986). In this regard, language achievement will rarely occur if students do not have positive attitudes towards the target language in question and towards language lessons. The higher positive attitudes the better language proficiency will be achieved.

However, as Gardner (1985) reported, there is wide criticism about the issue of the cause-effect pattern when analysing the relationship between attitudes and language proficiency. According to Lasagabaster (2005), the relationship is bidirectional, in the sense that the effect of positive attitudes towards the language may result in higher proficiency level but also that the reverse may occur, that is, the attainment of a high command in a language may account for more positive attitudes (see Figure 9). On that account, we may argue that there is a bidirectional relationship between language attitudes and language proficiency.

Language attitudes ⟵⟶ Language Proficiency

Figure 9. Bidirectional relationship between language attitudes and language proficiency.

3.1.1. Language Attitude Measurement Techniques

This subsection presents us with a description of the various methods used in the study of language attitudes. The complex and dynamic nature of language attitudes has prompted various methodological approaches which aim at measuring language attitudes. Oppenheim (1992, p.175) states that the measurement of language

attitudes means "[to] place a person's attitude on the straight line or linear continuum in such a way that it can be described as mildly positive, strongly negative and so on". Ryan, Giles and Hewstone (1988) identify three approaches in the exploration of language attitudes: direct measures, indirect measures and the analysis of the societal treatment. Each of these techniques has its own strengths and weaknesses. For that reason, they can be complementary since they are not exclusive of one another.

Direct measures require respondents to explicitly articulate what their language attitudes are in reply to a questionnaire or interview questions. The most representative example of the direct method is the questionnaire. However, recorded interviews are preferred when the target group consists of young children (Garrett et al., 2003, p.31). Both questionnaires and interviews may have open or closed questions. Open questions provide more room for gathering data, although they are more difficult to analyse, quantify and codify. In contrast, closed questions are often used by means of Likert scales (i.e., five-response option ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree) which restrict the respondents' answers and thereby, they are faster and easier to interpret than open ones. The combination of both types of questions may lend a better understanding of the target population.

Most of the questionnaires comprise a collection of attitude statements. Careful wording in the statements is paramount in order to avoid misinterpretation (Garrett et al., 2003). One of the most influential questionnaires on language attitudes is the one developed by Baker (1992). This questionnaire is divided into three main parts. The

first section gathers background information, such as age, gender, mother tongue or parents' occupation. In the second section, students are asked to respond questions concerning the use of languages with reference to: (i) their relations (family, friends, classmates, teachers and neighbours) and (ii) the means of communication (television, press music and radio). Respondents are also invited to respond regarding the importance attached to languages in terms of doing activities such as shopping, passing exams, getting a job, talking to teachers, writing or bringing up children. Finally, the third section consists of a five-point Likert-type scale for each of the languages in which subjects are asked to respond as to how strongly they agree or disagree with each item. This instrument has served as the basis for many subsequent studies, such as the ones collected in the comprehensive volume *Multilingualism in European Bilingual Contexts: Language Use and Attitudes* (Lasagabaster & Huguet, 2007).

From the use of interviews we may benefit from a better understanding of the respondents' language attitudes. The interaction among the respondent and the researcher allows for an in-depth interpretation and clarification of findings. However, personal interviews may influence respondents' answers; this is what is known as "observer's paradox" (Lavov, 1972, p.209). Some authors (Gallois, Watson & Brabant, 2007) argue that direct methods do not reveal unconscious attitudes because respondents are unwilling to admit their choices for prestige reasons. Sometimes the participants may base their choices on the expectations of the researchers.

In contrast, indirect techniques allow a higher degree of introspection and reveal more sincere and spontaneous attitudes than direct approaches. The most common indirect technique to collect language attitude data is the 'matched-guise' technique developed by Lambert et al. (1960). This technique consists of a series of recordings carried out by a proficient speaker who reads the same text in the languages or varieties under investigation. The listeners hear the voices and judge the voices on adjective scales or Likert scales. The use of the 'matched-guise' technique may reveal more private and inner feelings than direct approaches because respondents are not aware that their language attitudes are being tested. The recorded speech sample in this technique is from the same speaker in order to control variables, such as age, gender, and voice quality, among others. However, one of the main criticisms of using the matched-guise technique is the artificial nature of using pre-recorded texts (Gallois et al., 2007). In this regard, as Fasold argues (1984, p.153), "the speakers may be judged as performers of readings" instead of speakers of the language.

The third approach, namely that of the analysis of societal treatment, examines language attitudes in society. The main goal is to directly observe and gather information by means of analyses of demography, ethnography, census, language policies, mass media, literature, and the linguistic landscape, among others. This observational technique provides valuable data on language use and attitudes. However, it is considered too informal and thereby, not very reliable (Garrett et al., 2003).

More recently, the emergence of poststructuralist approaches have promoted discourse analysis as a technique for measuring language attitudes. The rationale behind this method lies in the analysis and observation of language attitudes as they appear within discourse (Liebscher & Dayley-O'cain, 2009). The authors argue that "they are constructed in interaction through negotiation with interactants, in specific circumstances and with specific interactional situations" (2009, p.217). In this regard, language attitudes are not fixed in our mind, but in constant interaction. The scholars continue by arguing that "individuals construct language attitudes differently depending on which situational context and which communities they see themselves in" (2009, p.217). This approach allows for variability in results and offers real-life situations. It is important to assume that children may vary among themselves and appropriate methodology must be employed. As a result, this approach is closely related to the premises of the DMM.

Despite the fact that the discourse analysis approach is a valuable research method, it would be more reliable and valid to combine this approach with other direct and indirect methods. A multi-method approach to gather quantitative and qualitative data will secure triangulation of data and a better understanding of findings. Data on young learners' attitudes are frequently elicited by means of oral interviews, matched-guise technique and smiley questionnaires. In fact, triangulation of data is now common practice because of the complexity of language attitude research (Enever, 2011).

After providing an account of the main theoretical foundations concerning language attitudes and the approaches employed in their analysis, we shall next move closer to our stated goal by examining language attitude studies carried out in the Valencian Community - the context of our study. In section 3.2, the age under investigation will not be taken into account because no previous research, as far as we know, has focused on early childhood from a multilingual perspective in that context.

3.2. Studies of Language Attitudes in the Valencian Community

The present section will explore the attitudinal studies in the Valencian Community in order to provide the main insights found in this specific area under investigation. Currently, the corpus of language attitudes in the Spanish context is relatively extensive. However, the majority of studies deal with adolescents and university students which are not the focus of our study and, to examine all of them in detail would constitute a research paper in itself.

To highlight some of the language attitude studies in Spain, we can find data on various bilingual communities such as: Catalonia (Huguet, 2007; Huguet & Janés, 2008; Muñoz & Tragant, 2001; Woolard, 2009), the Basque Country (Ibarran, Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2008; Lasagabaster, 2002, 2003, 2005; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2009), Galicia (Loredo, Fernández, Suárez & Casares, 2007), Eastern Aragon (Huguet, 2006; Huguet & Llurda, 2001; González-Riaño & Huguet, 2002; Huguet, Lapresta & Madariaga, 2008) and Asturias (Huguet, 2006; González-Riaño & Huguet, 2002).

As we can clearly see, there exists a consistent and growing corpus of research on language attitudes in the Spanish context, however studies (Siguan, 1992; Turell, 2001) that describe the multilingual communities in Spain have often omitted the Valencian Community. In our research framework, there is little research on multilingualism and specifically on language attitudes from a multilingual perspective (Aparici & Castelló, 2010; Lasagabaster & Safont, 2008; Portolés, 2011; Nightingale, 2012; Safont, 2007).

The majority of language attitude studies have examined language attitudes towards the majority language and the minority language. These studies have been interested in exploring the functional use of both languages, the status, the effect of political and demographical factors, and language policies, among others. The following studies to be discussed (Baldaquí, 2004; Blas-Arroyo, 1996; Casesnoves, 2001; Casesnoves & Sankoff, 2003; Martínez, 2011) deal with language attitudes towards Catalan and Spanish in the Valencian Community.

Blas-Arroyo (1996) analysed the language attitudes of students from Valencia towards two dialects in Spain (the Northern dialect and the Canary Island's dialect) and towards two Catalan dialects, the one used in Barcelona (the Eastern variety) and the one used in Valencia (the Western variety). The author used the matched-guised technique to measure language attitudes and divided the sample into two main groups: bilingual students (Catalan and Spanish) and monolingual students (only Spanish). The results showed that both monolingual and bilingual speakers had more unfavourable attitudes towards Catalan than towards Spanish. In addition, participants preferred the Catalan

variety employed in Catalonia rather than the Catalan dialect used in Valencia. According to Blas-Arroyo, these findings may be connected to political and ideological reasons. Similarly, the study carried out by Casesnoves (2001) was quite similar to the one undertaken by Blas-Arroyo, however her participants held neutral attitudes towards Catalan and they did not relate a higher prestige status to the variety used in Catalonia.

Casesnoves and Sankoff (2003) investigated the effect of the linguistic attitudes of 180 secondary students on their language choice. The participants were chosen from three schools of the city of Valencia and one from the city of Xativa. The data were collected by means of a matched-guise technique and a sociolinguistic questionnaire. In carrying out their analysis, some sociodemographic and ideological factors were put forward, particularly geographic origin, social class, political orientation, status and prestige. The results showed that immigrants and politically right-leaning students had more favourable attitudes towards Spanish than Catalan whereas politically left-leaning students identified more with the Catalan language. These findings reported that the geographic origin and the political orientation exerted some influence on students' attitudes. In contrast, social class and language status appeared to have small effect on students' language choice.

Baldaquí (2004) analysed the language attitudes of secondary students from different schools in Alacant. As expected, their language attitudes were much more favourable towards the majority language than towards the minority language, regardless of the linguistic model the subjects were enrolled or their mother tongues. These findings

confirmed the high impact of the sociolinguistic context on their language attitudes due to the fact that Spanish is the dominant language in all contexts. Nevertheless, the author also found that those students with Valencian as L1 and who were enrolled in immersion programmes (PIL programme) were more favourable towards Valencian than those with Spanish as L1, enrolled in Spanish-based programmes (PIP programme). In this way, the effect of the mother tongue and the linguistic model were found to be statistically significant in determining attitudes towards the minority language.

In the province of Alacant, Martínez (2011) analysed language attitudes towards Catalan and Spanish in Elx (a southern city in the Valencian Community). The author explored the effect of some variables on language attitudes, such as age, gender, place of origin and neighbourhood. The data were collected by means of 14 interviews and 188 questionnaires. The findings showed very favourable attitudes to Spanish and that it was considered the dominant language in all contexts of interaction. In contrast, language attitudes towards Catalan were rather negative and its use was limited to the private sphere, such as the home. The negative attitudes to Catalan were given because respondents argued that Catalan was useless, an imposition and associated with Catalonia. The author proposed strengthening the status and visibility of Catalan in Elx.

The studies above have discussed language attitudes towards the majority language and the minority language in the Valencian Community. However, none of the previous studies have included language attitudes towards the foreign language. The next studies to be discussed (Aparici & Castelló, 2010; Lasagabaster & Safont, 2008;

Nightingale, 2012; Portolés, 2011; Safont, 2007) to be discussed have adopted a multilingual perspective in the analysis of language attitudes in this context.

Safont (2007) increased and improved the corpus of language attitudes in the Valencian community by adding the analysis of language attitudes towards the foreign language (English). The sample consisted of 200 students from the University of Castelló and the instrument employed was a questionnaire. The overall results showed very positive attitudes towards Spanish, favourable and neutral attitudes towards Catalan and neutral attitudes towards English. Safont also included in her study the analysis of some variables in order to know to what extent these variables had an effect on participants' attitudes. Regarding Catalan and Spanish, variables such as region of origin, mother tongue and linguistic model had a powerful impact on their attitudes. These variables did not affect attitudes towards English. However, other factors, such as a stay abroad period and language competence had a high influence on determining language attitudes towards the foreign language.

Lasagabaster and Safont (2008) made a comparative analysis in two different bilingual communities (the Basque Country and the Valencian Community) on Teacher Training students' language attitudes. The main goal was to analyse language attitudes about the introduction of the minority, the majority and the foreign language in the school curriculum from the would-be teachers' point of view. Two main variables were put forward in this study: mother tongue and linguistic model. The findings showed that both communities were open to multilingualism in schools and that the variables analysed had

an impact on students' choice. In the Valencian Community, those students with L1= Catalan showed a preference for the introduction of bilingual and multilingual patterns of education, whereas Spanish speakers indicated a preference for the introduction of monolingual educational pattern (Spanish before any other language). With reference to the linguistic model, those students who attended the Catalan-based model at school preferred the bilingual and multilingual patterns of language introduction.

Furthermore, the same authors with the same participants analysed these students' language attitudes from a holistic perspective; i.e., considering all languages in contact in a global way instead of focusing on each language individually. Two hypotheses were put forward in this study: (i) language attitudes towards the three languages will be highly favourable in both bilingual communities and (ii) no significant differences on language attitudes will be found depending on the mother tongue because of the use of a holistic questionnaire. The results showed very favourable attitudes towards the three languages in contact, and no differences in language attitudes were found depending on the participants' mother tongues. As a result, both hypotheses were confirmed. Some authors consider that future studies on language acquisition in multilingual communities should be studied from a holistic perspective (Edwards & Dewaele, 2007). Lasagabaster & Safont's (2008) important study has shown that, from a holistic perspective, linguistic friction among contact languages is reduced.

Aparici and Castelló (2010) analysed students' attitudes towards the Catalan language in five public universities in the Valencian Community. This study demonstrated asymmetric bilingualism in the

community and strong differences among language policies in these public universities. The results showed that language use, competences and attitudes towards Catalan are clearly determined by the region of origin. In this way, students coming from Alcoi-Gandia-Denia, the villages surrounding Valencia and the province of Castelló reported more positive language attitudes, higher language use and better proficiency level than students from the metropolitan area of Valencia and the province of Alacant. The language policies of these universities may be conditioned by the region of origin and the sociolinguistic context of the society. Language attitudes, use and competence towards English were also analysed. The findings showed that 67.4 % of the participants considered that English should be the language of instruction in some subjects. Here, students from the University of Castelló showed less favourable attitudes towards English teaching and students from the public universities of Valencia held the most positive attitudes towards the foreign language. In the following table (see Table 7), we can see the students' attitudes with reference to the introduction of English as a language of instruction in public universities.

Table 7. Students' opinions on the introduction of English as a language of instruction.

	UAL (Alacant)	UJI (Castelló)	UMH (Alacant)	UPV (València)	UV (València)	GENERAL
In favour	60.1	56.9	62.3	76.6	67.9	67.4
Against	36.9	43.1	37.7	23.4	32.1	32.6
N	394	380	385	393	399	1955

Portolés (2011) investigated the language attitudes of teacher training students and examined those factors which may determine language attitudes. The author particularly focused on the sociolinguistic context, the linguistic model, the mother tongue, a stay abroad period and the proficiency level. In so doing, 75 students from two different universities with quite a dissimilar context were analysed by means of an adapted version of Lasagabaster and Huguet's (2007) questionnaire. The participants showed overall favourable attitudes towards the three languages (Catalan, Spanish and English), although the most positive attitudes were linked to English. The variables examined turned out to be significant in most cases.

The sociolinguistic context had an effect on the language attitudes towards the majority and the foreign language, but not towards the minority language. The students enrolled in the public university in Castelló held the most positive attitudes towards the minority language whereas students from the private university in Valencia showed the most favourable attitudes towards both international languages (Spanish and English). Portolés (2011, p.43) argued that "public schools and universities tend to protect more minority or endangered languages than private schools which prefer the use of international languages". The linguistic model in which the participants were enrolled during the preuniversity studies influenced their language attitudes towards the three languages analysed. Those participants enrolled in the Catalan-based model (PEV) were the most favourable towards the minority language whereas those enrolled in the mainly Spanish-based model (PIP) exhibited more positive attitudes towards both Spanish and English. Similarly, the students' mother

tongue exerted an effect towards the majority, the minority and the foreign language. In fact, the subjects tended to denote more favourable attitudes towards a certain language according to their familiarity with it. The L1 Catalan speakers' attitudes towards English were less favourable than their Spanish counterparts. In fact, the author (2011, p.100) posited that "Catalan-speakers may feel threatened by the dominance presence of both international languages and they build attitudinal fences to overcome this supremacy". The stay abroad period had an impact on determining language attitudes towards the foreign language and the majority language. As Portolés (2011) reported this finding may be linked to Truchot's 'linguistic market' (1997). This concept explains that languages are related to international status and prestige. In this sense, English and Spanish are international and dominant languages whereas Catalan is excluded from this linguistic market for some demographical, economic, social and political reasons. Finally, the close relationship between language proficiency and language attitudes was also supported in her study.

Nightingale (2012) examined the influence of the sociocultural status, a stay abroad period and the "out-of-school" incidental learning factor on the language attitudes of multilingual students in Castelló. The sample consisted of 29 students aged between 12 and 16 years and data were analysed by means of a questionnaire. The attitudes towards the three languages under investigation were positive. The sample reported the most positive attitudes towards the minority language, then the foreign language and finally, the majority language. In addition, the results indicated that the external factors had a significant effect on language attitudes to English.

In line with the research findings previously mentioned on language attitude studies in the Valencian Community, some conclusions are put forward. First and foremost, there are great differences in our community on the basis of the language attitudes found depending on the province. Due to historical, political, and social reasons, the asymmetric bilingualism which characterises the Valencian Community determines the language attitudes of the inhabitants. The studies have shown that language attitudes towards the minority language are more positive in the province of Castelló and less favourable in the province of Alacant, with the Valencian province being in between. The reverse pattern is found with reference to the majority language. Alacant is the province where more positive attitudes are found towards the majority language, Valencia is in the middle and Castelló the province which shows the least favourable attitudes. Regarding the foreign language, the latest studies reported that students at University of Castelló showed the least favourable attitudes towards the foreign language (Aparici & Castelló, 2010; Portolés, 2011). The analysis of specific variables, as appears in the study undertaken by Safont (2007), may shed light on the understanding of the asymmetric bilingualism which characterises the Valencian community.

As the current study is based on child population, the next section will be devoted to provide a comprehensive summary of the studies which are focused on language attitudes in children. Taking into account the aims of the present study, we believe that the development of language attitudes during the school stage is paramount in order to better understand the complexity of language acquisition in a

multilingual context. Learning a L3 in the school may have a potential effect on the attitudes towards the different languages of one´s linguistic repertoire. We will examine those studies dealing with similar age range to that of the present investigation; that is, from the age of 3 to 12.

3.3. Studies of Language Attitudes in Multilingual Children

This section explores the main language attitude studies of child populations in instructional contexts. Currently, the majority of empirical studies are focused on adolescents and adults, leaving children's language attitudes aside (Lasagabaster, 2003; Wu, 2003). The study of language attitudes in young learners is of utmost importance as they are the language transmitters to the next generations and their feelings towards languages will shed light to the future of multilingualism.

As reported in Chapter 1, the European Council is concerned with the importance of protecting and maintaining other languages rather than English. Indeed, it has claimed that "steps should be taken to sensitise children to other European languages and cultures" (1997, p. 63). According to the Action plan for Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity:

> It is a priority for Member States to ensure that language learning in kindergarten and primary school is effective, for it is here that key attitudes towards other languages and cultures are formed, and the foundations for later language learning are laid [...]Early learners become aware of their own cultural values and influences and appreciate other cultures, becoming more open towards and interested in others (2004, p.16).

Some authors (Baker, 1992; Nikolov, 1999) have reported that the biggest benefits in early language learning are the attitudinal benefits. The early introduction of English as a foreign language in the school curriculum is supposed to "help overcome [the] attitudinal and learning difficulties older learners face" (Nikolov, 2009, p.7). In this regard, the role of pre-school and primary school years in the formation of children's language attitudes is pivotal in the process of language acquisition. For this reason, further research is needed to investigate the emotional side of languages in order to obtain a complete picture of language acquisition.

In pre-school and primary education, "attitudes towards other languages and cultures are formed, and the foundations for later language learning are laid" (Commission of the European Communities, 2004, p.16). For that reason, the study of language attitudes in the school context is crucial to broaden our knowledge of multilingualism. Schooling plays a major role in the formation of students' attitudes. With reference to this, Baker (1992, p.43) states:

> Schools, can in themselves, affect attitudes to a language, be it a majority or a minority language. Through the formal or hidden curriculum and through extra curricula activities, a school may produce more or less favourable attitudes and may change attitudes.

Language planning is paramount for attitude formation. When a multilingual programme is developed under appropriate conditions, students tend to consolidate their approval and to show more favourable attitudes towards the people and culture represented by the target language. Young learners' attitudes are shaped by the classroom and the teacher plays a paramount role in their formation. This is what

is called the Pygmalion effect. According to Dooly (2005), teachers' attitudes, perceptions and expectations have a strong impact on the development of students' attitudes and identity. We may expect that if teachers have positive attitudes towards languages their future pupils may have them too.

Over the last few decades, studies that analyse language attitudes have steadily grown in countries such as: Canada (Peal & Lambert, 1962), Ireland (Sharp, Thomas, Price, Francies & Davies, 1973; Baker 1992; Harry & O'Leary, 2009), Hungary (Nikolov, 1999, 2009), Iceland (Lefever, 2009); and Singapore (Bokhorst-Heng & Caleon, 2009), among others. However, the majority of these studies have only focused on exploring attitudes to the minority language and have not taken multilingualism into account.

In Wales, Sharp et al. (1973) analysed school-age children's attitudes towards the minority language (Welsh) and the majority language (English). The sample involved 12,000 children. These scholars found that the higher the number of Welsh speakers in a neighbourhood, the more favourable the attitude towards the minority language. The sociolinguistic context played a pivotal role in the formation of attitudes. In addition, Sharp et al. (1973) noted that while positive attitudes towards English increased with age, they became more negative towards Welsh. In this sense, Welsh students indicated a preference for the majority language rather than towards the minority language.

Similarly, Baker (1992) examined students' attitudes to Welsh by using a questionnaire. The sample consisted of 797 school children

and the variables under analysis were: age, gender, mother tongue, language proficiency and type of school. The results showed general favourable attitudes towards Welsh but a decline of positive attitudes over the age range. Older students showed less favourable attitudes towards the minority language than younger students.

According to Baker (1992, pp.41-44), the three main influential variables in determining children's language attitudes were the educational context, home language and age. Several studies have taken into consideration the influence of these factors on language attitudes. Baker (1992, p.25) highlighted the need to explore "interactions and total relationships". Baker was aware of the importance of contextual variables and the interaction existing among them.

Hoare (2000) investigated the language attitudes of young people (aged 8-18) towards French and Breton in Brittany. The author employed both a questionnaire survey and interviews. Younger schoolchildren showed more favourable attitudes towards Breton than older students, although the latter had much greater exposure to the language through schooling as well as a higher level of language proficiency.

The aforementioned studies (Baker, 1992; Hoare, 2000; Sharp et al., 1973) suggest that positive language attitudes toward the minority language diminish with increasing age. This attitudinal shift has also been observed in studies concerning the introduction of a foreign language as a L2 or L3. The early introduction of a foreign language in the school curriculum has necessitated the investigation of young

learners, specifically those in infant and primary education. Jones and Coffey (2006, p.3) claimed that "young learners bring motivational capital to language learning...this has to be maintained throughout the entire primary phase and into the secondary phase" as positive attitudes lead towards successful language acquisition. The following studies (Cenoz, 2002, 2003; Heining-Boynton & Haitema, 2007; Henry & Apelgren, 2008; Lefever, 2009; Muñoz & Tragant, 2001; Nikolov, 1999) have included students' language attitudes towards foreign languages and all of them have agreed with the statement that language attitudes wane over time.

Lefever (2009) investigated approximately 800 students, with ages varying from 10 to 16 years old, in eight schools in Iceland. In general, very positive attitudes towards the foreign language (English) were reported, although young learners were more favourable than older learners. The attitudinal tendency showed a decline of positive attitudes over the grades, in the sense that students in grade 5 were much more interested and motivated in the English classroom than students in grade 9 or 10.

The study by Henry and Apelgren (2008) in Sweden investigated and compared 532 pupils' language attitudes towards English as a L2 and an additional foreign language as a L3 before and after a year of instruction in school. The students were enrolled in grades 4, 5 and 6 in primary education. The questionnaire used consisted of 23 items in which the respondents had the option to express their agreement on a 6 point Likert scale. The results showed a general decline of language attitudes to the L2 and L3 year by year. The first data analysis which

took place before the children started learning the third language (either Italian, French, German or Russian) revealed that attitudes towards the L3 were more positive than attitudes towards the L2. The second data analysis of the study showed that attitudes to the L3 slightly declined, although they were still higher than towards the L2. Henry and Apelgren (2008) suggest that students may perceive English as a boring subject while the L3 is a new subject that stimulates their interest and motivation.

In the United States, Heining-Boynton and Haitema (2007) conducted research over a 10-year period in which early foreign language learners' attitudes towards French and Spanish were examined from elementary to secondary education. This research was divided into two main studies, quantitative and qualitative. The first study analysed thousands of children's attitudes during four consecutive years (from the age of 7 to 11) by means of a questionnaire adapted from Heining and Boynton (1990). This instrument consisted of prompts which elicited either "yes" or "no" responses and varied in each grade level. The results indicated a steadily significant decline of attitudes and enthusiasm towards the foreign language as students became older, though overall responses were still positive. In the second data collection, the same authors investigated 13 students from the previous study when they were between the ages of 16 and 18. Instead of written questionnaires, the participants were surveyed by means of an open-ended interview which consisted of 8 questions. The participants indicated the positive contribution of the foreign language classroom on their attitudes towards other languages and cultures during their school education.

In Hungary, Nikolov (1999) also found a decrease of positive attitudes and motivation in an eight-year study of English foreign language learners between the ages of 6 and 14; age 11 was when attitudes towards learning English started to become less favourable. Apart from the decline of positive attitudes, Nikolov has suggested that there is a change of attitudinal pattern, from an intrinsic to a more individualistic and extrinsic pattern. 6-8-year-old children's responses were often related to teacher aspects whereas from the age of 8 children were more based on a utilitarian type, especially from the age range 11 to 14. Similarly, McDonough (1981, p.153) also found in his study that students' attitudes changed in favour of instrumental attitudes after the age of 11.

The study carried out by Cenoz (2002) examined language attitudes towards the majority language (Spanish), the minority language (Basque) and the foreign language (English) of three different age groups of students following model D (Basque-based linguistic model) in the Basque Country. The first group involved students in the fourth year of primary education (9-10 year olds); the second group consisted of secondary education students (13-14 year olds) and the third was made of students who were 16-17 year olds. The results indicated statistical differences between the age-group variable and language attitudes; attitudes corresponding to primary education were much more positive than those in secondary education. In addition, the findings showed that students had more favourable attitudes towards Basque than towards Basque and English.

Another study by Cenoz (2003) analysed 135 primary and secondary school children enrolled in model D in Gipuzkoa. The sample was divided into three main groups: primary 5, secondary 2 and secondary 5. These groups started learning English at infant 2, primary 3 and primary 6 respectively. All groups received the same amount of instruction (600 hours), but started learning English at different stages. The author investigated their attitudes taking into account the starting age factor by means of a questionnaire. The findings reported statistically significant differences between primary and secondary education students. Younger learners declared more positive attitudes than both groups of older students. Interestingly enough, there were no strong differences between the two secondary groups.

The study by Muñoz and Tragant (2001) included 923 students from 7 different schools in Barcelona. The sample was divided into two main groups: 8 to 9-year-olds and 11 to 12-year-olds. One of the goals was to determine whether the initial positive attitudes towards English held by young learners diminished or increased over time. The authors found no difference in attitudes between 3rd grade (8 to 9-year-old) and 6th grade (11 to 12-year-old) participants. Another aim of the study was to determine whether those students with more favourable attitudes towards the foreign language achieved a higher level in English and then, to know to what extent the learning outcomes were the cause or the effect of determining language attitudes. The results indicated that those students with positive learning outcomes showed more favourable attitudes towards English. According to the authors, learning outcomes could be responsible for students' attitudes towards the foreign language. In this sense, language proficiency will be the

cause of the formation of students' attitudes. Nevertheless, the authors suggest that more longitudinal studies are needed in order to examine the question of causality in depth.

Other studies have discussed that language attitudes are maintained over time. In accordance with Mihaljevic-Djigunovic (1995), positive attitudes towards language learning frequently remain stable, although there is a change of perception in the foreign language classroom as learners become older. The author analysed language attitudes towards four foreign languages (English, French, German and Italian) from a longitudinal perspective. In his study, children at the age of 6 were enthusiastic and positive in the classroom because of the songs and games which were associated with the language classroom. When participants were 9 they were still positive and motivated, though in a more extrinsic way. The author suggested that there was not a decline of positive attitudes, but a developmental change of language attitudes as suggested by Nikolov (1999).

A three-year longitudinal project (2007- 2010) was developed by using the same research approach in several countries of Europe in order to diminish differences across contexts and obtain more exhaustive results (see Enever, 2011). This well-known transnational study, known as *Early Language Learning in Europe* (henceforth ELLiE), examined the development of young foreign language learners focusing on those factors which may influence the learning process and outcomes. One of the main objectives of this comparative study was to analyse the role of language attitudes in the learning process.

Seven European countries (Croatia, England, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Spain and Sweden) were participating in this comprehensive project where English (except in England) is mainly introduced as a L2 or L3 in primary education. In each country, a selection of six to eight schools was chosen on the basis of a convenience and representative sample. The participants were approximately 1400 children. A multi-method approach to gather quantitative and qualitative data during three years secured triangulation of data and allowed for an in-depth interpretation of findings. The data were gathered by means of smiley questionnaires, oral interviews and classroom observations. Students' attitudes were elicited at the end of grade one (6 to 7-year-olds), grade two (7 to 8-year-olds) and grade three (8 to 9-year-olds).

Generally speaking, the key findings in this study demonstrated that the language attitudes of the sample (a total of 845 learners answered the questionnaire) were high, despite the fact that significant differences were found across countries. Spanish, Swedish and Italian children indicated similar levels of favourable attitudes towards the foreign language and those attitudes were higher than those of the Polish children. Young learners of English in Croatia indicated more favourable attitudes towards the foreign language while students from England showed the least positive attitudes towards the foreign languages included in their school curriculum (namely those of French and Spanish).

In the ELLiE project, as reported in Mihaljevic-Djigunovic and Lopriore (2011), most of the students showed very positive attitudes towards the L2 and L3 at the beginning of the project when they were

in grade 1. In fact, 71.01% expressed very favourable attitudes, 25.7% declared neutral attitudes, while only 3.92% had unfavourable attitudes. In contrast, at the end of the three-year study, the respondents expressed different language attitudes. 68.1% showed very positive attitudes, 20.2 % had a neutral reaction, whilst 11.7% denoted less favourable attitudes. This attitudinal shift showed an increase of negative attitudes with fewer learners showing neutral attitudes. However, the vast majority still had positive attitudes towards the foreign language. The next Figure shows participants' language attitudes at grade 1 and grade 3 (see Figure 10).
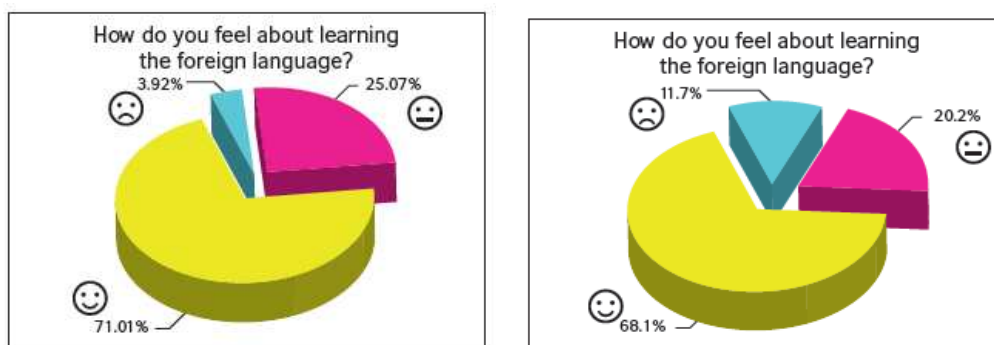
Figure 10. Participants' language attitudes at grade 1 and 3 in the ELLiE project.

In line with earlier research, this comprehensive project also showed both the initial positive attitudes of foreign language instruction and the decline of those favourable attitudes over time. The following studies to be discussed (Enever, 2009; Mihaljevic-Djigunovic & Letica, 2009) correspond to the countries which reported the most favourable attitudes (Croatia) and the least favourable attitudes (England) in this transnational project.

Mihaljevic-Djigunovic and Letica (2009) examined 172 Croatian young learners of English as a L2 from a longitudinal perspective during three years. The authors analysed pupils' language attitudes

towards different aspects of learning English, such as attitudes to English as a school subject, attitudes to using English or attitudes to classroom activities. These students' attitudes were measured at the end of grade one (6 to 7-year-olds), grade two (7 to 8-year-olds) and grade three (8 to 9-year-olds). The results showed the steady decrease of positive attitudes towards English over the three years. At the age of 6-7, the students felt very enthusiastic, self-confident and eager to learn during the English class whereas the students at the age of 8-9 were more reluctant, insecure and argumentative regarding English activities and teacher management.

In England, Enever (2009) analysed language attitudes towards foreign languages among 108 students (7 to 10 years old) from a longitudinal perspective in four different phases over two academic years. In phase one, the children were interviewed and they appeared to be positive and receptive towards foreign language learning. Data collection in phase two, at the end of the year, indicated that attitudes remained positive with a few exceptions amongst boys. The responses in phase three did not reveal any attitudinal questions and the respondents in phase four showed less favourable attitudes and enthusiasm towards the foreign classroom than in the previous year. The attitudinal pattern in this study also displayed a decrease over time, from more to less favourable attitudes.

We believe that English-speaking societies, such as England in the previous study, are still not concerned with the importance of foreign language learning as their official language is the current lingua franca. Enever (2009) considers that society might nurture the emergence of positive attitudes towards foreign languages among

young children. There is often a monolingual bias in these societies in which no place is given to other languages as English is the international language. Some studies, such as Harry and O'Leary (2009) in Ireland, have analysed the impact of introducing a foreign language on children's language attitudes in English speaking societies.

Ireland is the only country from 30 European countries where foreign-language learning at primary level is not compulsory, although Kellaghan et al.'s study (2004) indicated that Irish parents considered the teaching of a foreign language "very important". In 1998, "the Modern Language Initiative" was established in primary school With this initiative, children study Irish as a L2 and a foreign language as a L3. Harry and O'Leary (2009) analysed the impact of the introduction of a foreign language on the language attitudes of primary students enrolled in schools implementing the Modern Language Initiative. The attitudes were analysed by means of a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire. The results showed that students had positive attitudes towards learning a foreign language and they made significant progress in language learning. The authors concluded that the best challenge is to extend this initiative nationally and receive political support.

Likewise, the spread of English may also debilitate migrant languages in contexts where English is already the dominant language. Several studies in English-speaking societies, namely that of The United States, Canada, The United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand have analysed immigrant children's language attitudes and outcomes towards their home languages (see Potowski & Rothman, 2011 for an extended account). The authors highlight the importance of

maintaining and protecting migrant languages in order to preserve cultural, ethnic and national identities in a setting where the migrant language is generally undermined. Language policies implemented in the educational context, the maintenance of the mother tongue at home and the preservation of minority-speakers communities are the key to the transmission of migrant languages from generation to generation.

Oliver and Purdie (1998) investigated the language attitudes of primary school children from different language backgrounds (Chinese, Greek, Arabic and Vietnamese) towards their L1 and L2 (English) in Australia. Data were collected using a questionnaire which comprised 42 items answered with a 5-point Likert scale. The scale was represented both numerically (from 1 to 5) and pictorially (from sad to happy faces). In sum, the findings reported that students' attitudes towards the L2 were statistically more positive than towards their mother tongue. Interestingly, students also considered that their teachers, parents and peers preferred the use of English at school, whilst the preference for mother tongue was reduced to the private sphere. These findings demonstrated that these languages show functional separation.

Similar to the overwhelming impact of English on migrant languages, other studies suggest that ethnic languages in English-majority contexts may undergo the same phenomenon. Diglossic communities, where languages show functional separation, seem to have an effect on the inhabitants' attitudes towards the languages in contact; the high prestige language being preferred by parents, teachers and peers as they are moved by instrumental attitudes. Their language

attitudes highly determine younger students' attitudes. Several studies in different countries all over the world have examined children's language attitudes in multilingual contexts where diglossic situations occur, such as Fiji (Shameem, 2004) and Singapore (Bokhorst-Heng & Caleon, 2009).

Shameem (2004) analysed 48 Indio-Fijian primary school students: a third of the participants were 6 to 7-year-olds, another third were 8 to 9-year-olds and the last one were 11 to 12-year-olds. The attitudes towards English (dominant language), Fiji Hindi (L1 - unstandardized ethnic language) and Standard Hindi (standardized ethnic language) were examined by means of a closed structured interview. A five-point Likert scale was employed to gauge participants' attitudes. Overall, positive attitudes were shown towards the three languages under investigation. However, each of the languages was given a functional use depending on the purpose of communication. The majority of respondents considered that English was the most appropriate language for instruction at school, over half of the respondents declared that they would like to be taught in Standard Hindi and just under half, in Fiji Hindi. Both ethnic languages received support for their use in the playground. Shameem (2004) posited that those attitudes were influenced by political and economic needs and concluded that there is limited knowledge of alternative multilingual educational models.

Bokhorst-Heng and Caleon (2009) carried out a comprehensive study on language attitudes in the context of Singapore. This country offers a rich multilingual context because three main ethnic groups

coexist: Chinese, Malay and Indian. Language policies at school include English as a requirement for all children plus their mother tongue (Mandarin for Chinese, Malay for Malays and Tamil for Indians). The language attitudes of 443 primary school children were investigated by means of a matched-guise technique and a questionnaire. The research questions under investigation examined (i) whether statistical differences were found between participants' language attitudes towards a speaker using their L1, a speaker using English and a speaker code-switching between the two, and (ii) the influence of ethnicity and socioeconomic status on their language attitudes. The findings reported that Chinese and Indian students declared more positive attitudes towards their mother tongue and code-switching than towards English, while Malay children expressed similar attitudes towards the three speech samples. The authors reported that 81% of Malay children use both English and the L1 at home and this was the reason they showed favourable attitudes towards both. In addition, code-switching was seen very positively among Singaporean youth. According to the authors (2009, p.249), "the interaction between English and the other languages in a society and an individual's speech repertoire suggests the need for a pedagogy that recognises these complex and fluid ways in which languages are used". Bokhorst-Heng and Caleon (2009) suggest that the coordination between language departments is pivotal for framing the complex interaction among language systems.

The results in these studies have shown a preference for majority languages rather than towards ethnic languages. As Lethsolo (2009, p.590) claims, "as long as indigenous language speakers suffer from a

sense of insecurity and inferiority, the tendency to shift to more prestigious languages will continue to prevail". The society in these countries should have a sense of value of its ethnic languages and a responsibility to spread these languages from generation to generation. As the family is a close-knit institution, it is responsible for transmitting norms, values, sense of attachment, and consequently the sustenance of a language.

Additionally, those children have the advantage of knowing more than one language and this fact may have an effect on their attitudes towards other languages. In fact, there is strong support which claims that multilingual students show more emotional benefits than their monolingual counterparts (Baker, 1992). The following studies to be discussed (Bamford & Mizokawa, 1989; Merisuo-Storm, 2007; Peal & Lambert, 1962; Riestra & Johnson, 1964) have reported that bilinguals show more positive attitudes than monolinguals.

One of the pioneering pieces of research on language attitudes in children was carried out in the Canadian context by Peal and Lambert (1962). The participants were 164 10-year-old children attending French bilingual schools. These authors analysed language attitudes towards English by means of a matched-guise technique which compared French monolinguals and English/French bilinguals. The findings showed that bilingual students attending French school in Montreal had more positive attitudes towards English than the monolingual group.

Bamford and Mizokawa (1989) and Riestra and Johnson (1964) compared the attitudes of language learners enrolled in an additive-bilingual programme with those children from a monolingual classroom setting. The results indicated that students learning a foreign language had more favourable attitudes towards the target language than those students who did not learn any other language in the classroom.

In Finland, Merisuo-Storm (2007) examined 145 participants (aged 10 and 11) from three different schools which were divided into two main groups: the experimental group consisted of 70 students enrolled in CLIL bilingual classes from the first grade and the control group was made of 75 pupils enrolled in Finish monolingual classes where English was merely introduced as a foreign language. The instrument to gather data was based on a 4-point scale questionnaire which measured attitudes towards reading, writing and the studying of a foreign language. Below each statement, there were four teddy bears representing their opinions in order to be more understandable for children. The following figure shows the four alternative responses and the teddy bear pictures related to them (Figure 11).
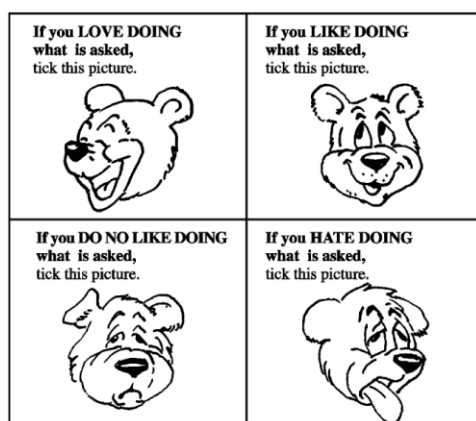
Figure 11. Possible responses to the questionnaire developed by Merisuo-Storm (2007) on language attitudes.

The results showed that the students in bilingual classes held significantly more positive attitudes towards foreign-language acquisition than the students in monolingual classes. The author claimed that using the foreign language in a meaningful context and integrating language teaching with the teaching of other subjects may raise learners' motivation and learning outcomes.

To sum up this section, the studies presented on child language attitudes have showed the following three main trends which we point out as follows:

First, younger learners have more positive attitudes towards the minority and the foreign language than older children. Some studies (Baker, 1992; Hoare, 2000; Sharp et al., 1973) have suggested that favourable language attitudes towards the minority language and consequently towards bilingualism decrease with age. This attitudinal shift has also been observed in contexts where a foreign language is introduced either as a L2 or L3. Existing studies (Lefever, 2009; Henry & Apelgren, 2008; Heining-Boyntom & Haitema, 2007; Nikolov, 1999; Cenoz, 2002, 2003) have reported that initial favourable attitudes to a language seem to wane over time. Furthermore, there exists a gradual shift towards more instrumental attitudes: attitudes which are not salient in younger learners. On that account, we may state that students' language attitudes are dynamic as learners develop "cognitively, affectively and linguistically" (Mihaljevic-Djigunovic & Letica, 2009, p.151) during their academic stage. This development may be linked to the socialization process that affects school children.

Second, children in diglossic contexts declare more favourable attitudes toward the language which enjoys a higher socioeconomic status rather than towards migrant or ethnic languages. (Bokhorst-Heng & Caleon, 2009; Shameem, 2004). Last but not least, some studies (Bamford & Mizokawa, 1989; Merisuo-Storm, 2007; Peal & Lambert, 1962; Riestra & Johnson, 1964) have proven that monolingual children have less favourable attitudes towards learning other languages than children whose language repertoire is at least bilingual. These studies suggest the emotional benefits of multilingualism.

Individual variability, as argued in the DMM, may provide us with further insights into multilingual pragmatic development. Therefore, next section narrows down our focus in an attempt to lay out the principal basis of the current study by examining the relationship between language attitudes and pragmatic awareness.

3.4. Language Attitudes and Pragmatic Awareness

This section moves us closer to the goal of the study by examining the link between language attitudes and pragmatic awareness. As explained in Chapter 2, knowing the rules of how to use language appropriately is as important as knowing the rules that concern grammar aspects. For this reason, the present section will explore the existing studies of language attitudes that are linked to the study of pragmatics.

Bearing in mind the paramount role of language attitudes in the process of language acquisition, we wonder whether positive language attitudes may foster pragmatic awareness. Choices at all levels of language are influenced by language attitudes. The available evidence is the relationship between language attitudes and language proficiency (Baker, 1992; Gardner &Lambert, 1972; Muñoz & Tragant, 2001). Harris and Conway (2002) found that young Irish children whose language attitudes were higher were the most successful in the foreign language learning. However, little research has been devoted to examine the role of language attitudes in the development of pragmatics, an essential component in successful language learning (Jessner, 2008). As a result, Alcón (2012), Kasper and Schmidt (1996) and Safont (2013a) have claimed that there is a need to explore the impact of language attitudes on pragmatic awareness. The study of language attitudes may provide us with further insights into multilingual pragmatic development.

Traditional research has reported that the disparity between pragmatic behaviours across cultures is bound to influence how members of a community may view one another's politeness-related behaviours. Cross-cultural differences among languages may develop certain attitudes towards them. As Gardner and Lambert (1972, p.3) has reported, "the successful learner of a second language must be psychologically prepared to adopt various aspects of behaviour which characterize members of another linguistic-cultural group". However, Adamson (1988, p.32) stated that L2 learners may not desire to follow L2 pragmatic behaviours in spite of living in the target community for an extended period of time. In this regard, the transfer of pragmatic

forms from L1 to L2 is commonly seen in cross-cultural studies. According to Blum-Kulka (1983), being pragmatically different helps to preserve their L1 identity. Up to now, very few studies have accounted for the plausible existing link between language attitudes and pragmatics (Hinkel, 1996; Lo Castro, 2001; Pablos-Ortega, 2010).

Hinkel (1996) examined 240 non-native English speakers (i.e., Chinese, Indonesian, Korean, Japanese and Arabic) studying their degrees in the USA. The goal was to investigate their willingness and attitudes to accommodate to L2 norms. The findings reported that the subjects were aware of the realization of specific L2 pragmatic behaviours. However, the participants failed to behave according to L2 politeness principles because they felt the use of their L1 norms was more appropriate. According to the author (1996, p.67), "learners transferred L1 rules of appropriateness to L2 environments and were aware of the transfer" and "may become aware of the L2 socio-cultural norms and linguistic politeness by virtue of their exposure to L2 interactional and pragmatic framework, rather than because of a desire to follow them".

Similarly, Lo Castro (2001) analysed Japanese undergraduates learning English as a L2 in an intensive programme where pragmatic aspects were taught. The aim was to analyse their language attitudes in relation to their readiness to accommodate to the target language's pragmatic norms. Data collection comprised a matched guise technique, a questionnaire, personal accounts and group discussions. According to the author, the findings from the matched guise technique revealed that students wanted to be proficient in the target language.

However this fact does not mean that their goal was to be pragmatically proficient. The questionnaire provided evidence of their positive attitudes towards English for their future careers, living abroad and travel. The author suggests that these attitudes were totally instrumental-driven and they did not feel that they would lose their Japanese identity by having a high English proficiency. The accounts reported both positive and negative reactions towards the L2. Interestingly, one of the respondents said: "There are more than one set of pragmatic norms for English speakers, because those who use English as mother tongue have different backgrounds". In fact, one of the most recurrent themes mentioned was the fact that it is impossible to operate with just one norm. The various data sources provided evidence of the participants' favourable and instrumental attitudes towards their L2. Despite the fact the subjects were extremely eager to improve their L2, their integrative attitudes towards their L1 constrained them to adopt L2 pragmatic norms. The author (2001, p.83) declared that "many favour retaining their own identities as Japanese, suggesting it as inappropriate for them to accommodate to the L2 pragmatic norms".

Pablos-Ortega (2010) investigated 200 English-speaking university students learning Spanish as a L2 and 100 Spanish speakers. The instrument employed a questionnaire in which the subjects could show their attitude when faced with specific situations where the speech act of thanking was lacking. Participants were presented with 12 scenarios each of which was followed by questions that measured their language attitudes. The results confirmed that L1 English speakers perceived the absence of the speech act of thanking as very rude and

impolite and consequently their attitudes were very negative. The L1 Spanish speakers considered that this absence of thanking is frequent in Spain and an integral part of the way of interacting in the Spanish culture. The author reported the need to explore the effect of language attitudes on other speech acts, such as requests.

On the whole, the results which have arisen from these studies have pointed out the following insights. First, pragmatic behaviours across cultures have a considerable effect on language attitudes (Pablos-Ortega, 2010). Second, participants do not accommodate to L2 pragmatic norms in order to preserve their L1 identity (Hinkel, 1996; Lo Castro, 2001). Third, language attitudes play a very important role in determining pragmatic choices (Hinkel, 1996; Lo Castro, 2001; Pablos-Ortega, 2010). As a result, we may infer that there exists a strong relationship between language attitudes and pragmatic awareness. However, these studies have adopted a monolingual perspective and the focus of attention has been on an adult population.

The studies previously explained ignore the background of multilingual learners and multilingualism since these authors assume that there are no coexisting languages in the contexts under investigation. Overgeneralization of politeness rules in a specific country might promote the use of stereotypes (Mühleisen, 2011, p.15). Furthermore, the idealization of a homogenous group of speakers in terms of verbal behaviour suppresses the variability and dynamism of language systems. However, the majority of studies in pragmatic variation across languages still operate with the premise that one country means one language and one culture.

For this reason, there is an urgent need to provide empirical data on language attitudes and pragmatic awareness in multilingual contexts by taking into consideration the DMM. Are language attitudes facilitative of pragmatic awareness? More particularly, we wonder whether positive language attitudes are linked to appropriateness in the comprehension of requests. In fact, the interaction of language attitudes and pragmatic awareness may shed light on the understanding of early language acquisition processes.

After reviewing the background described so far and by examining the studies concerned with child requestive behaviour and language attitudes, the next chapter presents the actual study by presenting its research questions and hypotheses which will then be followed by a description of the participants, the instrument and the procedure.

PART II

THE STUDY

CHAPTER 4

4. MOTIVATION FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

The present study is undertaken in the Valencian Community, a Spanish multilingual community where two official languages coexist: Spanish is the majority language (i.e., the dominant language used in public life), while Catalan is the minority language (i.e., the language spoken by a reduced number of speakers in comparison with the majority language). In addition to the official languages, the early introduction of English as a L3 in the school curriculum has promoted the rise of multilingual educational programmes. The presence of more than two languages in the school curriculum is a common practice in multilingual societies in Spain. Nevertheless, the study of multilingualism has frequently omitted the existing sociolinguistic situation in our context of investigation. For that reason, the present study intends to contribute to widening our understanding of multilingual communities and in particular, the Valencian community, of which, despite offering an attractive context to investigate, there has still been little research carried out.

Additionally, Franceschini (2009, p.50) claims that there is a need to investigate multilingual development at the ages which have received least research attention, specifically, from the age of four to approximately fourteen. This age period is considered of utmost importance in the process of language acquisition because brain plasticity and flexibility is high (Mechelli et al., 2004). Several studies have put in evidence that the age of the participants seems to have a strong effect on language acquisition studies. For this reason, the present study focuses on pre-schoolers and primary students in order to

provide further insights into multilingual development. In order to do that, we will take into account two different age groups: pre-literate and post-literate children. The analysis of both groups may provide us a clear developmental pattern of multilingual acquisition throughout childhood.

After reviewing the background of the present study and summing up from previous research, we may state that multilingual development can only be fully researched by applying a multilingual norm (Cook, 2002). This fact implies that a multilingual speaker is not the sum of two or more languages, but a complex dynamic system with its own parameters which are not found in monolinguals (Jessner, 2008). This complex dynamic system is also in constant interaction with the environment and determined by affordances provided at the social and individual level (Jessner, 2013). Some studies (Chevalier, 2011; de Houwer, 2009) on multilingual development in trilingual children have analysed and reported that external factors, such as the sociolinguistic status, roles and uses of languages are key for language development in line with other studies (see Otwinowska & de Angelis, 2012) which have claimed the influence of individual factors, such as language attitudes and emotions, on the process of language acquisition.

For the purpose of our study, the Dynamic Model of Multilingualism, inspired by the Theory of Dynamic Systems, will provide us with a more comprehensive framework for analysing the interplay of several factors of learners' multilingual development in their three languages. As argued in the DMM, the effects of knowing

more than two languages may provide learners with a high level of awareness towards the three languages because of their prior linguistic experience (Cenoz & Jessner, 2009; Herdina & Jessner, 2002; Jessner, 2008a) and skills as language learners, irrespective of their proficiency level in each language. As we have seen in Chapter 1, previous findings point to the peculiarities of third language acquisition that further confirm the inherent complexity of multilingualism (Aronin & Hufeisen, 2009). In fact, we believe in line with previous research (Safont, 2011, 2012, 2013b), that our participants may be able to identify appropriate requestive behaviour in their L3, even though they may not be able to communicate as fluently as they would in the other two languages. This issue related to identifying appropriate requestive behaviour in their languages may be an exemplification of the M-factor, and thus, of the multilingual proficiency as defined by Herdina & Jessner. In fact, the M-factor (i.e. linguistic and cognitive skills that multilingual users possess in comparison to monolingual speakers) may contribute to the catalytic effects of additional language learning and may have an effect on multilingual pragmatic awareness. Existing studies have reported that the development of multilingual pragmatic awareness seems to reach a higher degree in multilingual speakers (Jessner, 2008a; Safont, 2011, 2012, 2013b).

The developmental patterns of requests have been a major area of interest. Nevertheless, research on pragmatic awareness with a focus on request production and comprehension has only been examined from a FLA and a SLA perspective. On the one hand, a FLA perspective has focused on the exploration of children's pragmatic ability in their L1. On the other hand, SLA pragmatics research has

focused on the comparison of young learners' performance of speech acts with that of the ideal native speaker. These studies have accounted for the acquisition of pragmatic items in early language learners. Nevertheless, SLA studies do not reflect the interaction between more than two languages and the approaches adopted have been monolingual. In any case, earlier research (Achiba, 2003; Ellis, 1992; Ervin-Tripp, 1977) of child pragmatics in their L1 and L2 has provided valuable insights into pragmatic awareness along the way. The majority of studies on production and comprehension in the L1 and L2 have suggested that pragmatic acquisition shows a linear, static and homogenous development.

Results deriving from previous studies on child L1 comprehension of requests (Baroni & Axia, 1989; Bernicot & Legros, 1987; Elrod, 1987; Mabel, 1994; Ledbetter & Lend, 1988) have shown a similar developmental trajectory to child production of requests (Ervin-Tripp, 1977). The comprehension of direct request forms comes easier and earlier than the understanding of indirect request forms. As Mabel (1994, p.11) argues, "[the] acquisition of request comprehension ability in children is gradual and their performances [are] predictable from age". The use of more complex strategies and modifiers increases with age. Similarly, L2 comprehension of requests is similar to that of request comprehension in the L1 (Bernicot & Legros, 1987; Elrod, 1983; Mabel, 1994). Lee (2010) and Takakuwa (2000) found that the comprehension ability of requests was significantly better with increasing age and was determined by the proficiency level in the target language.

Furthermore, Takakuwa (2000) found that L2 exposure and intensity in bilingual programmes has a positive relation with pragmatic awareness. These findings suggest the advantages of bilinguals over monolinguals in reference to pragmatic awareness. Despite the fact that their level of the L2 was low, the subjects were able to understand different types of request strategies and modifiers in the L2. We believe that their prior linguistic experience as language learners helped them in their understanding of L2 requests. Nevertheless, all the aforementioned studies have fully ignored the linguistic background of the subjects and have only considered pragmatic awareness in one language, thus, giving a partial account of their pragmatic awareness.

The field of interlanguage pragmatics, child language development and multilingualism has been largely under investigated (Safont, 2013a). As Safont (2011, p.56) argues, the linguistic background of learners has been ignored in pragmatic research. Very few studies have accounted for the pragmatic development of trilinguals in early childhood (Barnes, 2008; Montanari, 2009; Quay, 2008; Safont, 2011, 2012, 2013b). These case studies conducted in the family context have reported that children show signs of pragmatic differentiation (Barnes, 2008), pragmatic flexibility (Montanari, 2009; Quay, 2008) and pragmatic interaction among their language systems (Safont, 2011, 2012, 2013b).

Multilingual children's repertoire of requests remains little explored and documented, despite the studies accomplished by Barnes (2008) and Safont (2011, 2012, 2013b). Barnes (2008) found that the

participant in her case study showed a high level of pragmatic awareness in L3 English despite her low proficiency level. Similarly, the studies conducted by Safont (2011, 2012, 2013b) have highlighted the wide requestive repertoire that her consecutive multilingual participant displayed from a very early age, even though his three different language systems were not fully developed. The introduction of the L3 (English) in his linguistic repertoire had an effect on the L1 (Catalan) and L2 (Spanish) pragmatic systems. The findings from these studies have pointed out the interaction among language systems and the enhanced pragmatic awareness of multilinguals. In addition, the participant's language pragmatic systems developed over time in line with politeness theory. Pau employed more direct forms in Catalan and Spanish (positive-oriented languages) and indirect strategies in English (negative-oriented language). Safont (2013b) highlights the influence of language attitudes and sociocultural factors on child requestive behaviour.

Taking into account these findings, we believe that further research is needed on child pragmatic awareness in multilingual contexts. Therefore, the present paper will examine the pragmatic awareness of multilingual consecutive children on the basis of their multilingual background in order to cover the existing research gap in this field. To our knowledge, no previous research has addressed the pragmatic comprehension of multilingual learners in instructional contexts. On that account, the present study will contribute to broadening our knowledge of the pragmatic awareness of emergent trilinguals. In addition, the DMM will provide us with a more comprehensive framework to analyse the interplay of several factors on

young learners' multilingual development in three languages. As previously mentioned in Chapter 1, multilingual acquisition is a dynamic phenomenon where several variables influence each other. Bara (2010, p.63) pointed out that the analysis of pragmatic items in isolation is somewhat reductionist in the sense that it ignores the ways in which speech acts are situated within dynamic conversational contexts.

Individual variability, as argued in the DMM, may provide us with further insights into multilingual pragmatic development. Among individual factors, language attitudes have been widely investigated as they seem to play a paramount role in the process of language acquisition. Dewaele (2005, p.118) claims that "attitudes are one of the central affective variables of language learning". For that reason, the present study will also take into account the language attitudes held by our young participants in order to better understand the processes that take place in a developing multilingual mind. In the context of our study, very little research has adopted a multilingual perspective (Aparici & Castelló, 2010; Lasagabaster & Safont, 2008; Nightingale, 2012; Portolés, 2011; Safont, 2007) and the focus has been on adolescents and university students.

The results arising from earlier literature on language attitudes in other multilingual contexts have shown that younger learners hold more positive attitudes towards the minority and the foreign language than older children. In addition, existing research (Baker, 1992; Hoare, 2000; Sharp et al., 1973) has found that favourable language attitudes towards the minority language and consequently towards bilingualism

decrease with age. We believe that young children lack awareness of the low status and vitality of a minority language, whilst older children show apathy towards using the minority language because of its lower prestige; they prefer to be part of the majority culture. This attitudinal shift has also been observed in contexts where a foreign language is introduced either as a L2 or L3. Existing studies (Cenoz, 2002, 2003; Heining-Boynton & Haitema, 2007; Henry & Apelgren, 2008; Lefever, 2009; Nikolov, 1999) have reported that initial favourable attitudes to a foreign language seem to wane over time as well as the existence of a gradual shift towards more instrumental attitudes: attitudes which are not salient in younger learners. On that account, we may state that students' language attitudes are dynamic as learners develop "cognitively, affectively and linguistically" (Mihaljevic-Djigunovic & Letica, 2009, p.151) during their academic stage.

Taking this into consideration, we firmly believe that the affective dimension of multilingual young learners is paramount in order to understand their language choices, as argued by Safont (2013b). We wonder whether children's pragmatic awareness may be related to their language attitudes. As far as we know, no studies have investigated the relationship of child pragmatic awareness and language attitudes. There is a research gap that needs to be further developed and the present study hopes to contribute to the growing corpus of work on child multilingual development. Furthermore, language attitudes are fundamental for understanding the uses, functions and status of a language. Considering the above research gaps and examining the main issues of the current investigation, the present study addresses the following aims:

1. To examine the pragmatic awareness of young learners in the three languages under investigation (Catalan, English and Spanish) in a multilingual context.

2. To analyse the language attitudes of young learners in the three languages under investigation (Catalan, English and Spanish) in a multilingual context.

3. To investigate the relationship between language attitudes and pragmatic awareness.

4. To explore factors in the wider context that may influence multilingual development.

4.1. Research Questions

Considering the above aims and taking into account previous research involving L1, L2 and L3 learners' pragmatic awareness and language attitudes, we have formulated the following research questions as follows:

First research question (henceforth RQ1): To what extent do our participants have a reasonable degree of pragmatic awareness in their L1, L2 and L3? Furthermore, does pragmatic awareness increase with age?

Second research question (henceforth RQ2): Which request modification items are more easily identified as appropriate devices? Is there any difference between pre-schoolers and primary education learners regarding the identification of request modifying devices?

Third research question (henceforth RQ3): Are all language systems equally valued? Do participants' language attitudes towards

their languages systems significantly differ according to the age variable?

Fourth research question (henceforth RQ4): Does the linguistic model that the participants are enrolled in affect pragmatic awareness and language attitudes towards L3 English?

Fifth research question (henceforth RQ5): Do the results of pragmatic awareness and language attitudes show variability across school samples? Are students' language attitudes related to the degree of pragmatic awareness?

4.2. Research Hypotheses

Taking into consideration the above research questions and a multilingual perspective, we present our hypotheses which derive from previous research and guide the present study as follows:

Hypothesis I: Participants will differentiate their language systems and display a high level of pragmatic awareness in Catalan, English and Spanish (Barnes, 2008; Jessner, 2008; Safont, 2011, 2012 2013a, b). Furthermore, primary education students will show a higher degree of pragmatic awareness than pre-schoolers (Elrod, 1983; Mabel, 1994; Lee, 2010; Takakuwa, 2000).

Hypothesis II: Those requests including the particle please will be understood better than those requests including grounders as modification devices (Cromdal, 1996; Ellis, 1992; Achiba 2003; Rose, 2000). Furthermore, both grounders and please modifiers will be significantly understood better by primary education students than pre-

schoolers (Axia & Baroni, 1985; Baroni & Axia, 1986; Takakuwa, 2000; Wilkinson et al., 1984).

Hypothesis III: Language attitudes towards Catalan, Spanish and English will vary (Nightingale, 2012; Portolés, 2011; Safont, 2007). Pre-schoolers will display more favourable language attitudes towards the minority and foreign language than primary education students. The latter will show a preference for the majority language (Baker, 1992; Cenoz, 2002, 2003; Hoare, 2000; Lefever, 2009; Nikolov, 1999; Sharp et al., 1973).

Hypothesis IV: The linguistic model will have an effect on the language attitudes and pragmatic awareness (Cenoz, 2002, 2003; Portolés & Safont, in press; Safont, 2005).

Hypothesis V: The different school samples will show variability in their results of pragmatic awareness and language attitudes (Jessner, 2008). Additionally, the degree of pragmatic awareness will be related to learners' language attitudes (Safont, 2013b.)

4.3. Method

This section provides a description of the methodology employed in the present study in order to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses formulated above. Section 4.3.1 introduces the participants that took part in the investigation and the key characteristics of the schools. Section 4.3.2 explains the data collection instruments employed in this study. Due to the dual focus on the analysis of child pragmatic awareness and language attitudes, the methodology consists of a combination of several instruments. Finally,

section 4.3.3 describes the coding system employed and the statistical analyses chosen from the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (henceforth SPSS) for Windows.

4.3.1. Participants

The sample consisted of 402 participants. Although there were initially 407 participants, the data of five students were excluded from the analyses due to its incompleteness. 53.5% of the participants (*n*=214) were female students while 46.5% were male (*n*=187). We divided the sample into two age groups: second-year pre-school education students who were 4-5 years old and third-year primary education students whose age was 8-9. In Spain, children begin their formal education at around three years old, and spend three years in pre-school classes. At age six, they move to primary education and complete six years of compulsory primary education.

According to Nicholas and Lightbown (2008), child language acquisition can be divided into two main stages: younger child period (from 3 to 7 years old) and older child period (from 7 to the onset of puberty). For that reason, we will take into account two different age groups: pre-literacy and post-literacy. The analysis of both groups may provide us a clear developmental pattern of multilingual acquisition throughout childhood. There is a need to provide further insights into young students who are in the process of acquiring a L3 in a multilingual context. In addition, the presence of pre-schoolers and primary students will cover both educational stages.

Now, we will introduce the main traits of the subjects participating in this investigation, according to their age, language background, place of origin and the linguistic model followed at school. The younger group included 206 learners (51.2% of the sample) and the older group consisted of 196 learners (48.8%). As illustrated in Figure 12, the language background of the participants was, to some extent, varied. Spanish L1 represents the largest group (*n*= 199, 49.5%), followed by native speakers of Catalan (*n*=107, 26.6%), Spanish and Catalan (*n*= 47, 11.7%), Romanian (*n*=27, 6.7%), Arabic (*n*=17, 4.2%), French (*n*=2, 0.5%), Russian (*n*=2, 0.5%) and English (*n*=1, 0.2%). As a result, most of the participants come from Spanish-speaking homes, followed by Catalan-speaking homes and bilingual Spanish-Catalan homes. The latter subgroup typically occurs when each parent speaks one language to the child from birth.
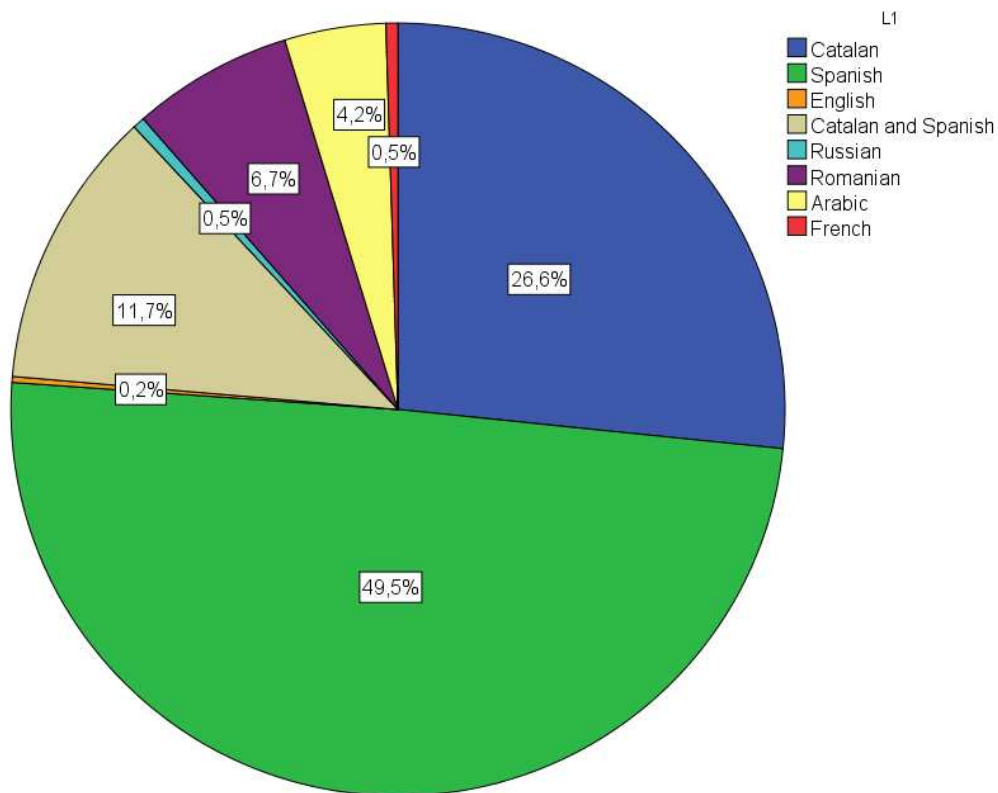

Figure 12. Students' L1s

The students in the primary education group had received formal instruction in English over three years while preschool students were exposed to English for the first time when this study was conducted. In both groups, the level of English was supposed to be 'beginner', especially with the younger students. However, it is important to highlight the increasing presence and sociocultural status that English enjoys in our contemporary society. The exposure to English outside the school context is becoming increasingly more prominent.

The participants were drawn from 10 different pre-school and primary schools, all of them located in the province of Castelló de la Plana. The name of the schools will be omitted in order to protect the right of privacy. Instead of the names, number will be assigned to each school. The schools were selected using a stratified random sample with the aim of having a consistent representation across variables. The main language of instruction of the school was determined by the linguistic model followed. Taking into consideration this variable, the sample was comprised of 6 public schools which followed the Catalan-based model (PEV) and 4 private schools which implemented the Spanish-based model (PIP). Interestingly enough, schools that included PIP model in their language policies were private. On the whole, 49 % (*n*=197) of the sample were enrolled in PEV linguistic programmes while 51% (*n*=205) in PIP models.

The location of the school differed from those schools located in the city of Castelló and those schools located in different towns nearby, such as Borriol, la Pobla, Sant Joan de Moró, Vila-Real and Burriana. 52.2% (*n*=210) of the participants went to schools located in the

aforementioned towns and 47.8% (*n*=192) of them were enrolled in schools found in Castelló city. The next table shows the characteristics of the sample as follows.

Table 8. Characteristics of the sample

TYPE OF SCHOOL	SCHOOL SAMPLE	PRIMARY SS (*n*)	INFANT SS (*n*)
Public Schools **PEV (i.e. Catalan-based schools)** **(*n*=197)**	1	6	13
	2	26	21
	3	22	20
	4		22
	5	23	16
	6	17	11
	TOTAL	**94**	**103**
Private school **PIP (i.e. Spanish-based schools** **(*n*=205)**	7	23	24
	8	27	29
	9	25	23
	10	27	27
	TOTAL	**102**	**103**
OVERALL TOTAL		**196** (48.8%)	**206** (51.2%)
		N= 402	

4.3.2. Instruments

We reviewed the relevant literature in the creation and design of materials aiming at measuring students' pragmatic awareness and language attitudes. The results of the pilot study helped us in the modification and revision of items. The pilot study was carried out in May 2010. We tried out the validity of the instruments in a pilot study in two different schools and the reliability of our analysis was checked by an external senior researcher. The students who took part in the pilot studies were excluded from the final group of participants in the present study.

A multi-method approach consisting of several data collection instruments was employed in order to gather quantitative and qualitative data since the current study aims to analyse both (i) language attitudes and (ii) pragmatic awareness from a multilingual perspective. In so doing, this section is divided into two subsections: subsection 4.3.2.1 describes the instrument employed for the analysis of child pragmatic awareness and the subsection 4.3.2.2 displays the instruments used to examine participants' language attitudes.

4.3.2.1. Instrument for the Analysis of Pragmatic Awareness

The present study used a pragmatic comprehension test (i.e. discourse evaluation test) that included direct and conventionally indirect request forms (see Appendix 1). This test consisted of 2 main situations that involved requesting for actions or objects. These two situations were represented by means of each correspondent scenario where the object or the action requested was visible. The first scenario

dealt with a request for a pencil and the second scenario was about a request to open a window. The presence of the pencil and window may have helped the children to understand the requests.

Each main situation was acted out in the three languages analysed in this study (Catalan, English and Spanish). Thus, there were 2 Catalan, 2 English and 2 Spanish sequences. In total, six sequences were performed. Each sequence consisted of a request move between a mouse puppet and a sheep puppet which was appropriate and another request move between a donkey puppet and the same sheep puppet which was inappropriate. In all, there were 12 request moves (six of them were appropriate and the other half were inappropriate).

The requests moves were selected on the basis of Alcón-Soler et al.'s (2005) classification of requests and their peripheral elements. The inappropriate ones in the six situations were direct requests. While the 6 appropriate requests used conventional indirect strategies. Three of them used *grounders* as mitigators and the other three used the particle *please* as modification items. Grounders are those request modifying devices which may provide a justification or explanation while please is one of the most conventional modifiers to soften the impositive nature of requests. The next table shows the request moves employed in this study as follows:

Table 9. Request moves employed in the present study.

Situations		Requests strategies/modifiers	Utterances
Situation 1 (pencil)	1.Catalan	R1 Direct request	Disa'm el llapis
		R2 Grounder indirect request	Em deixes el llapis per a posar el nom?
	2.English	R3 Grounder indirect request	Could I borrow your pencil? I need it to write my name.
		R4 Direct request	Lend me your pencil
	3.Spanish	R5 Grounder indirect request	¿Me dejas el lápiz para escribir el nombre?
		R6 Direct request	Déjame el lapiz
Situation 2 (window)	4.Catalan	R7 Direct request	Obri la finestra ara mateix.
		R8 Please indirect request	Pots obrir la finestra per favor?
	5.English	R9 Direct request	Open the window right now.
		R10 Please indirect request	Can you open the window please?
	6.Spanish	R11 Please indirect request	¿Puedes abrir la ventana por favor?
		R12 Direct request	Abre la ventana ahora mismo.

The pragmatic comprehension test featured a series of 6 video-recorded situations produced by the researcher with the assistance of other colleagues. The researchers acted with the puppets to perform the dialogues that they had previously created for the corresponding scenarios. The puppets were preselected by the researchers. They were animal puppets of ambiguous gender whose colours were not very lively so as to avoid children´s preferences. The recording was computerised on Microsoft Windows Media Player to create a computer-based audio-visual pragmatic task. Children were shown a pragmatic comprehension test on a laptop to find out their multilingual comprehension of requests. We shall next examine the instruments that we designed and implemented in the present study for the analysis of language attitudes.

4.3.2.2. Instrument for the Analysis of Language Attitudes

The instruments for the analysis of language attitudes were intended to measure attitudes towards the minority language (Catalan), the majority language (Spanish) and the foreign language (English). A combination of direct methods (i.e. oral interview) and indirect methods (i.e. matched-guise technique) was employed.

One of the instruments used to assess language attitudes was a variation of the matched-guised technique (see Appendix 2). Instead of a semantic differential scale, a Likert scale that consisted of a three-point scale represented by means of stickers was employed. Unfamiliar words based on numbers could be very complex to understand for pre-schoolers. Some studies (Lefever, 2009; Merisuo-Storm, 2007) have

employed the smiley-face scale where children are presented with different faces ranging from sad to happy. In this study, we employed an innovative scale by means of stickers. The green, yellow and red colours were chosen as their function could be easily linked with that of traffic lights. The green sticker was associated with positive while the red sticker was related to opposite. The yellow sticker stood for neutral choices.

As can be seen in Figure 13, the script was based on the *Three little pigs'* story. Respondents' familiarity with this tale was the key criterion in the selection of the script. In addition, our participants were used to be told children stories during school time. The script was translated into the three languages (Catalan, English and Spanish) that resulted in three different guises which were almost identical, except for the language used.

Els tres porquets

En el cor del bosc hi vivien tres porquets que eren germans. El llop sempre els perseguia per menjar-se'ls. Per poder escapar del llop, els tres porquets decidiren fer-se una casa.

The Three Little Pigs

In the heart of the forest lived three little pigs who were brothers. The wolf always was chasing them to eat them. In order to escape from the wolf, the pigs decided to make a house each.

Los Tres Cerditos

En el corazón del bosque vivían tres cerditos que eran hermanos. El lobo siempre andaba persiguiéndolos para comérselos. Para escapar del lobo, cada cerdito decidió hacerse una casa.

Figure 13. Script of the matched-guise technique in each language.

The scripts were represented by a male English native speaker living in the context of our study. In line with the premises of the matched-guise technique, the same speaker was used in the three speech samples. He is proficient in the three languages under investigation as he employs Catalan and Spanish in his everyday life. The speaker was trained in reading each guise very carefully and naturally- just as a teacher would tell a story in the classroom. The final scripts were recorded and computerised on Microsoft Windows Media Player in order to create an audio file.

In order to gather qualitative data, the researcher included very short face-to-face interviews in the research method (see Appendix 3). The oral interview allowed the researcher a better understanding of the children's language attitudes. The attitudes questions were very simple in order to be easier and more understandable for the younger children. They were asked about what language they preferred, Spanish, Catalan or English, and the reason behind their choice. These open-ended questions provided further information for a better clarification and interpretation of findings. The following section details the data collection procedure followed throughout the whole study.

4.4. Data Collection Procedure

The present study took place in regular classrooms. The time allotted was 60 minutes approximately. The task was administered to the participants in May 2011. Prior to administration, the headmaster, parents, and teachers were informed about the purpose of the study in order to receive their consent.

The task consisted of a small booklet that the researchers prepared beforehand (see Appendix 4). There were two versions: the one used in primary education and the one employed in preschool. Both versions are identical in terms of content; the only difference is the organization of pages in order to be more age-appropriate. The version for primary education students contains three pages whereas the preschool version includes ten pages. The latter was designed in order to have each item occupy a whole page. The aim was to avoid confusion among pre-schoolers.

Data were collected with the help of another researcher working on multilingualism. The teachers gave us information on children's mother tongue, linguistic development and academic records. More information about other variables, such as the school, type of school (public or private), location of the school (city or village), linguistic model followed (PEV or PIP), teacher and children's age was also obtained.

We employed a laptop with a big screen which was visible in all parts of the classroom. Each of the items that the students had to answer was converted into a flashcard page in order to help the children to follow the task. For instance, the first item they responded to was the one shown below. One of the researchers showed the item on a big flashcard while the others made sure that respondents were in the correct page and were listening and watching the audio-video task.
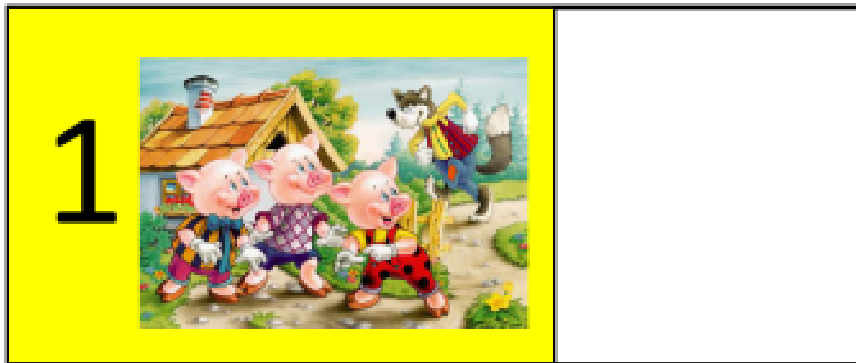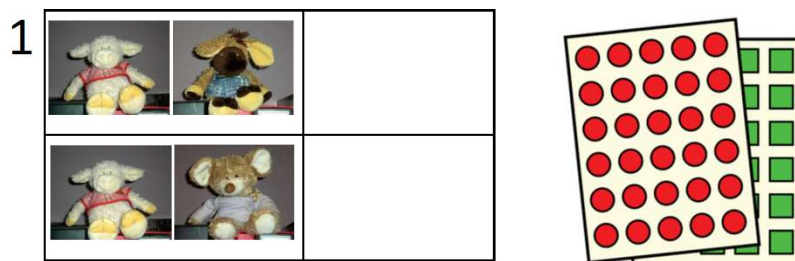
Figure 14. Example of the illustration in the matched-guised technique

The first part of the booklet collected data on the language attitudes of the respondents by means of the matched-guise technique as described in Section 4.3.2.2. Students were asked to listen to three recorded speech samples corresponding to the three different languages evaluated (Catalan, Spanish and English). Before listening to the speech sample, the researcher very carefully explained the instructions to them. A set of stickers were included inside each book. There were three different colours: red, yellow and green. Respondents were supposed to put the sticker that they considered appropriate according to their impressions. The green, yellow and red colours were chosen as their function could be easily linked with that of traffic lights (see Appendix 5).

The second part of the booklet corresponded to the pragmatic comprehension test. It consisted of six sheets of paper representing each sequence in the order in which it appeared in the audio-visual programme. The children were introduced to the teddies and instructed to put green stickers to the requests they considered appropriate and red stickers for the inappropriate ones. In this task, they were asked to

identify the scenes in which teddies were doing well by putting a green sticker next to the pair of puppets.

Figure 15. Example of the illustration in the pragmatic comprehension test

After finishing the audio-visual task, children's pragmatic comprehension tests were collected by the researcher and we continued the research method by interviewing the participants. Two interviewers were responsible of conducting very short interviews with each participant. Total interview time did not exceed 3 minutes per child. The language used by the researchers in the interviews could be Spanish, Catalan or English. After each oral interview, participants were rewarded with a bracelet.

To sum up the data collection procedure, the following table offers a summary of the instruments and the time employed in each activity.

Table 10. Instruments employed and timing of each activity.

Instruments employed	Duration
1.Matched-guise technique	10'
2. Pragmatic Comprehension test	20'
3. Oral Interview	20'
	60'

4.5. Coding and Data Analysis

The answers obtained from the data collection instruments were codified for analysis with the SPSS programme. In analysing our data, we took into account only the comprehension of appropriate request forms and favourable attitudes. The computerised analysis of statistical data included the use of non-parametric tests as the values for pragmatic awareness (Z=.137) and language attitudes (Z=.219) were not normally distributed according to the Kolmogorov-Smirnoff test (all significant at p=0.000). This type of test indicates that our distribution differed significantly from the normal curve. For that reason, we decided to resort to non-parametric tests, such as Friedman test, Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks test, Kruskal-Wallis Test and Spearman Correlation. Significance was always considered at the level of 0.05, even though the vast majority of significant p-values which were found in the analysis of the data for the present study were less than 0.001. Those results were rounded to two decimal places.

In addition to that, descriptive statistics were employed in order to perform a qualitative analysis of the participants' language attitudes towards the three languages under study. These responses, elicited by means of oral interviews, have a purely illustrative value in the present study. The results obtained from the application of these statistical analyses are presented and discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The primary concern of this research is to gain insights into early multilingual development since very few studies have taken into account the multilingual background of the learners from a truly multilingual perspective. More specifically, we have four main objectives, as previously mentioned in the research method: (1) to examine the pragmatic awareness of our participants, (2) to analyse their language attitudes, (3) to investigate the relationship between language attitudes and pragmatic awareness and (4) to explore factors in the wider context that may influence multilingual development. For the purpose of our study, the Dynamic Model of Multilingualism proposed by Herdina and Jessner (2002), will provide us with a more comprehensive framework for analysing the interplay of several factors on learners' multilingual development**.**

In so doing, this chapter presents the research outcomes derived from the research questions and related hypotheses formulated in Chapter 4 and discusses their implications. To that end, Section 5.1 shows the results and discussion related to Hypothesis I, Section 5.2 focuses on the results and discussion derived from Hypothesis II, Section 5.3 presents us with the results and discussion concerned with Hypothesis III, Section 5.4 examines the results and discussion related to Hypothesis IV and finally, Section 5.5 explores the results and discussion concerned with Hypothesis V.

5.1. Results and Discussion related to Hypothesis I

The first Hypothesis suggested that our participants would differentiate among their language systems and display high levels of pragmatic awareness in Catalan, English and Spanish (Barnes, 2008; Jessner, 2008; Safont, 2011, 2012, 2013a, b). In addition, we also formulated that primary education students would show a higher degree of pragmatic awareness than pre-schoolers (Elrod, 1983; Mabel, 1994; Lee, 2010; Takakuwa, 2000). In order to test that Hypothesis, we have taken into account the extent to which children noticed the appropriateness of request forms in their three language systems.

With reference to Hypothesis 1, we first analysed the overall comprehension of pragmatically appropriate request forms by all the participants in order to obtain a general picture of their pragmatic awareness. Second, we examined whether learners' pragmatic awareness in Catalan, English and Spanish show significant differences among language systems. Third, we also compared the level of pragmatic awareness displayed by primary education students and pre-schoolers. Finally, we summarised the results deriving from the current hypothesis.

To start this analysis, we examined the global degree of pragmatic awareness of the total number of participants. As can be shown in Figure 16 below, more than half of the respondents recognised appropriate requests forms. More specifically, 12.2% of the participants (n=49) identified all appropriate requests forms proposed in the pragmatic comprehension test, 18.4% (n=74) identified five and 24.1 % (n=97) recognized four. As a result of the high percentage of

participants that identified more than three appropriate request forms, we may state that our young multilingual population (*N*=402) displayed a high degree of pragmatic awareness (*M*=3.67, *SD*=1.453).
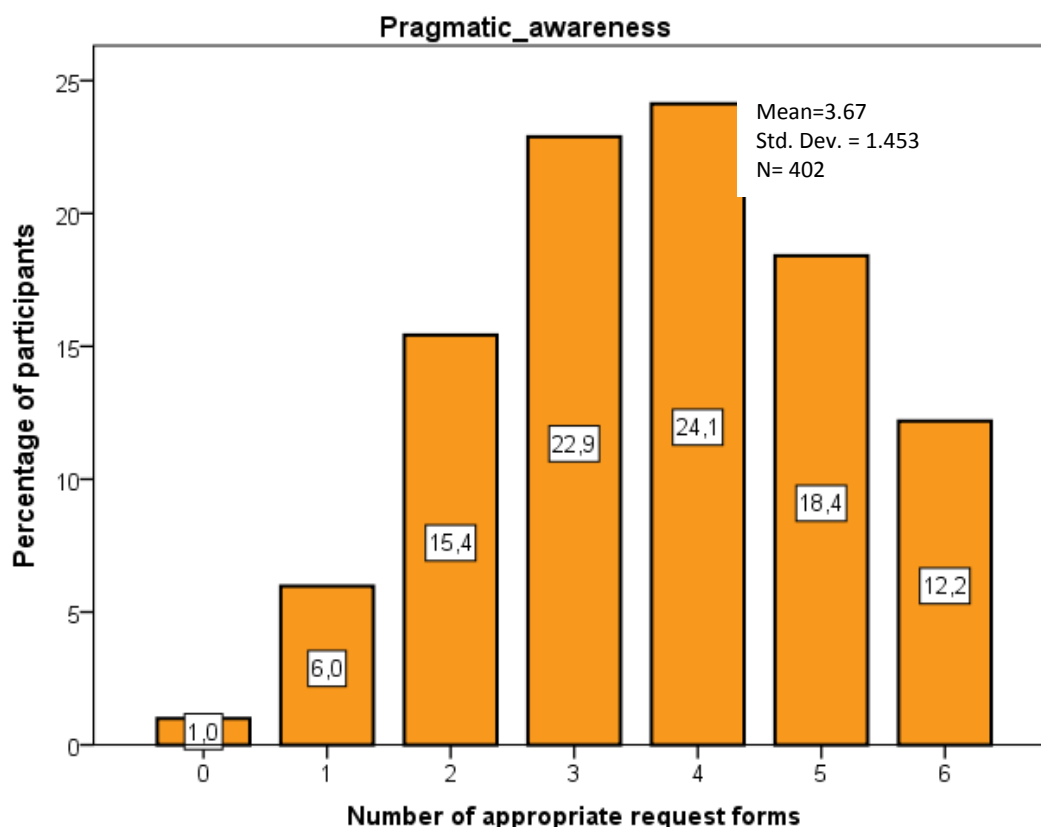
Figure 16. Overall pragmatic awareness displayed by the whole sample (*N*=402)

Taking into account a holistic perspective on the analysis, findings have confirmed that a high degree of pragmatic awareness is displayed by our participants. As shown in Figure 16, the mean score (*M*=3.67) obtained from applying statistical analysis illustrates the ability of children to identify pragmatically appropriate requests. These results suggest that young multilingual learners understand the intentions of others and the rules of politeness on the basis of contextual factors where the interaction is taking place. We may argue that multilingual learners acquire a reasonable degree of

pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competence from a very early age since they recognise what is socially appropriate in a specific situation.

This holistic view to approach multilingualism also suggests the analysis of the relationships established between the languages involved (Cook, 1991; Grosjean, 1985). Studies, such as those of Safont (2011) and Barnes (2008), have already pointed out that further research is needed to analyse the possibility of influence and interaction among language systems. This point is particularly relevant since this view differs from the monolingual perspective adopted in previous research in which the multilingual speaker is examined as several monolingual speakers in one person. Picture 1 below exemplifies the SLA perspective. As we can clearly see, the L1, L2 and L3 are located in different isolated boxes around the brain and there seems to be no connection between them. In contrast, the second picture shows three languages located in boxes which are overlapped in a continuum. Thus, interaction may appear between the L1, L2 and L3.
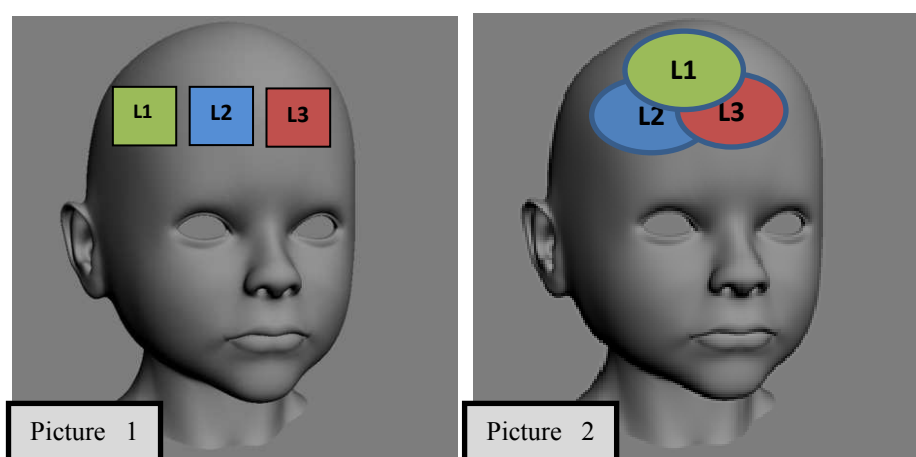

Figure 17. Picture 1.Language systems in separated boxes. Picture 2. Language systems in a continuum. Image Child head retrieved from http://www.turbosquid.com/3d-models/3d-child-head/482966

Taking into account the second perspective, namely the one illustrated in Picture 2, the present study has employed the DMM which may allow us to analyse multilingualism from a holistic perspective by taking into account multiple angles. As languages are not isolated from each other but, instead, dynamically interrelated, we also analysed the pragmatic awareness for each language system in order to examine the interaction and relationships between them.

To that end, we compared learners' pragmatic awareness of requests across language systems. Figure 18 below gives an overall view of the level of pragmatic awareness in the three language systems displayed by the participants (*N*=402), presenting the mean scores and standard deviations for each language system. As depicted in Figure 18, participants showed more pragmatic awareness in Spanish (*M*=1.32, *SD*=0.720) than in the other language systems, that is, Catalan (*M*=1.20, *SD*=0.725) and English (*M*=1.15, *SD*=0.663). Looking at the Figure, differences between languages seem to appear, on the surface, at least. In order to identify whether the differences between language systems were statistically significant, a Friedman test was applied to our data.
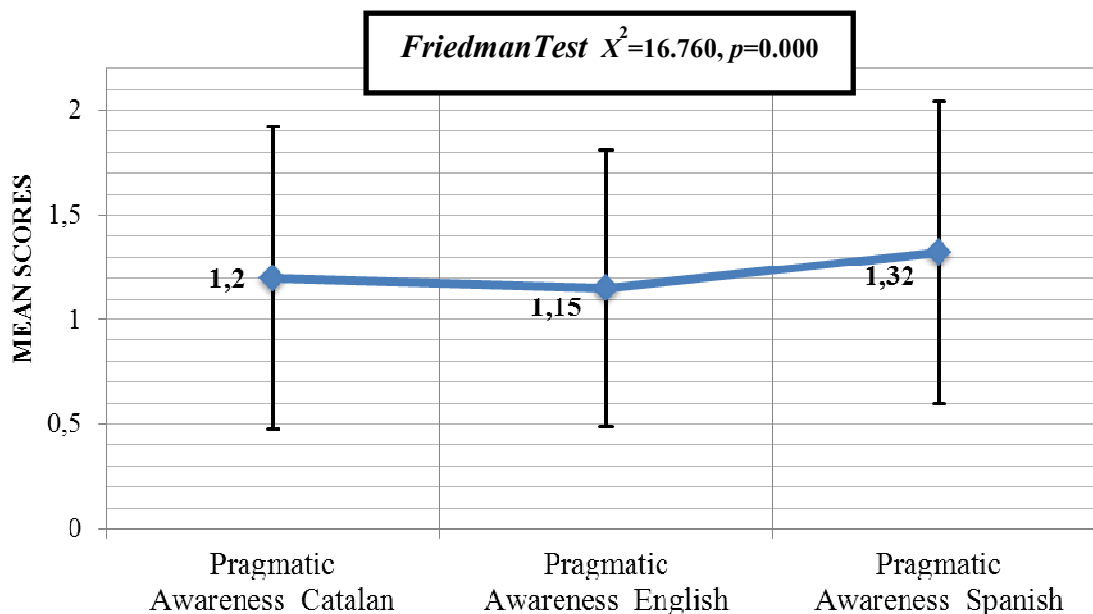
Figure 18. Mean scores of pragmatic awareness degree for each language. Vertical bars represent the standard deviations of means. Friedman Test results of pragmatic awareness.

As illustrated in Figure 18 above, results from the Friedman test reported statistically significant differences in the degree of pragmatic awareness depending on the language system (χ^2=16.760, p=0.000). As expected, our young participants differentiated among their languages and displayed high levels of pragmatic awareness in each language system. In light of these outcomes, the first statement of Hypothesis I is, thus, confirmed. In our view, these results have provided evidence for the peculiarities and inherent characteristics of multilingual speakers in terms of pragmatic awareness.

In the present study, our young participants achieved high degrees of awareness for each language system in the pragmatic comprehension test, even though the sample consisted of four-year-old and nine-year-old learners. This point is particularly relevant to the extent to which we suggest their multilingual linguistic profile allowed

them to identify appropriate requestive behaviour despite the fact that their language systems were not fully developed, especially children in the pre-literacy stage. In this study, we assumed that their overall proficiency level was lower in English than in the speech community languages (Catalan and Spanish). However, participants showed a keen level of pragmatic awareness in their L3 (English) even though they were not able to communicate as fluently as they would in their L1 and L2. These findings are consistent with those previously reported by Safont (2011, 2012, 2013b) and Barnes (2008). Such studies suggest that their trilingual participants developed a greater pragmatic awareness in all their languages due to their multilingual background.

We believe that the condition of multilingual learners may provide our respondents with enhanced pragmatic awareness toward languages due to the interactions that take place in their multilingual minds. As Hoffman (2001, p.14) reported, "the experience of three different languages also results in further enhanced awareness of the analysis and control components of processing to enable the speakers to make the right choices and respond in linguistically and communicatively adequate ways". In fact, some authors (Cenoz & Jessner, 2009; Gass & Selinker, 2008; Jessner, 2008; Safont, 2013a) have argued that the advantages that multilingual users may exhibit are the result of their extensive repertoire of skills, capacities and techniques as language learners. In line with the premises of the DMM, these findings suggest that our participants may take advantage of their prior linguistic experience irrespective of their age and consequently their proficiency level in each language.

Taking into account all the above, the identification of appropriate request forms in the L1, L2 and L3 may be an exemplification of the multilingual proficiency proposed by Herdina & Jessner (2002). This multilingual proficiency differs from the proficiency level employed in traditional research which is a monolingual-biased term and only referred to the linguistic competence in a language. We may argue that our respondents' pragmatic awareness was not determined by the proficiency level in each language, but by a multilingual proficiency that consisted of interaction among language systems and the M-factor. The findings obtained suggest that the pragmatic linguistic systems of our subjects interacted among themselves since transfer phenomena are recognized as significant features in multilingual systems (Jessner, 2003). In addition, those linguistic and cognitive abilities that multilingual learners possess in comparison to monolinguals (i.e. M-factor) seem to contribute to the process of multiple language acquisition, as is the case of our participants. From a developmental point of view, these results may shed light on the peculiarities and inherent complexity of multilingual pragmatic development.

Apart from the interactions between the L1, L2 and L3, our participants could differentiate among their language systems and displayed different levels of awareness towards each language. As depicted in Figure 18, statistically significant differences between Catalan, Spanish and English were found in relation to their pragmatic awareness. Multilingual users may not have the same competence in all languages since not all language systems may have the same purposes, functions and uses. All these outcomes provide a number of new and

important insights into pragmatic development since no previous research (as far as we know) has accounted for learners' multilingual pragmatic comprehension of requests.

In the present study, we believe that our participants do acknowledge social prestige. Indeed, Spanish was the language that presented the highest mean score (M=1.32, SD=0.720) for pragmatic awareness. We may argue that Spanish is the dominant and majority language of the context of study. In addition, it enjoys a high status in Spain and the rest of countries in Europe. This social prestige and vitality is present in the linguistic landscape as well as in the mass-media that children are exposed to.

According to the mean values, Catalan (M=1.20, SD=0.725) is the second language that displayed a greater degree of pragmatic awareness. In our context of investigation, the presence of Catalan cannot compete with the presence of Spanish outside the school. Additionally, the hostility of the government in the Valencian Community towards the minority language has been shown in the elimination of the Catalan channel (i.e., *TV3*) and other attacks on the language. In addition, the European Union only recognises it as a minority language and no official status is given. In this way, Catalan does not enjoy as great a degree of social prestige as Spanish or English in the European community.

In the case of English, apart from the interactions that may promote pragmatic awareness in the L3, we also believe that social factors outside the domain of linguistics may play a paramount role. As

stated by some authors (Chevalier, 2011; de Houwer, 2009), the sociolinguistic status of a language may heavily influence our results. The presence of English in society is steadily increasing- through songs and TV programmes, such as *Dora the explorer*. In addition, parental pressure on children to learn English and the business interests which promote this foreign language may have an impact on their linguistic development.

Despite the diversity of environmental factors that may contribute to expanding the differences among languages, children may recognize and differentiate their pragmatic systems from a very early age. This lends weight to the argument that pragmatic differentiation is apparent in early multilingual learners. In this regard, Montanari (2009, p.626) argues that:

> "pragmatic differentiation is a natural step in the course of becoming trilingual; yet, it is not a sufficient condition to develop productive competence in three languages. Only consistent exposure to these languages and a social context that strongly supports trilingualism will allow the child to maintain her multilingual abilities and become a successful member of three language communities."

Support for Montanari's view on the importance of language exposure is provided by Franceschini (2009, p.28) who also states that "the potential [to become multilingually proficient] must be developed and enhanced within and by means of social context, by exposure to real speech". We also agree with these authors since quantity and quality of real input is a necessary condition to foster multilingual

development. Hence, this raises the question on the extent to which the frequency of input for each language may influence the level of pragmatic awareness.

Apart from confirming multilinguals' pragmatic differentiation, we were also interested in further exploring where those differences among languages actually lie. To that end, a post-hoc analysis with Wilcoxon signed-rank tests was conducted with a Bonferroni correction applied, resulting in a significance level set at $p<0.017$. The results derived from this test reported a statistically significant difference between the degree of pragmatic awareness in Spanish and English ($Z=-4.015$, $p=0.000$) as well as between Catalan and Spanish ($Z=-2.653$, $p=0.008$). However, there were no significant differences between pragmatic awareness in English and Catalan ($Z=-1.235$, $p=0.217$). The results of applying this test are displayed in Table 11.

Table 11. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test results of pragmatic awareness across language systems.

Test Statistics: Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test			
	Prag_Eng - Prag_Cat	Prag_Spa - Prag_Eng	Prag_Cat - Prag_Spa
Z	-1.235	-4.015	-2.653
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.217	**0.000**	**0.008**

In our opinion, these outcomes confirm the diglossic situation of the Valencian Community since the statistically significant differences between Spanish and the other language systems may provide evidence to suggest that Spanish has an overruling effect on the other language

systems. We firmly believe that social factors, such as the sociolinguistic status of the language and the frequency of input, may contribute to our participants' enhanced pragmatic awareness in Spanish. Interestingly enough, despite the typological proximity of Catalan and Spanish (i.e. Catalan and Spanish share some similarities because both of them belong to the Romance languages branch) and their condition of official speech communities, our results suggest that the differences between Catalan and English are not as strong as those between Catalan and Spanish. In other words, there is some evidence to suggest that the pace of pragmatic development in Catalan and English is more closely related to that of Spanish and Catalan. One of the main reasons for these results may be the low status and limited presence of Catalan in the wider context. In addition, parents' attitudes towards their children learning English are very high in comparison to the Catalan language. As a result, we may acknowledge that social factors could have an influence on the pragmatic awareness of children.

Apart from analysing their overall degree of pragmatic awareness in each language and differences among their pragmatic systems, Hypothesis I also predicted that primary education students would show a higher level of pragmatic awareness than pre-schoolers. Figure 19 below shows the level of pragmatic awareness displayed by pre-schoolers (*n*=206) and primary education students (*n*=196), presenting the mean scores and standard deviations for each language system.
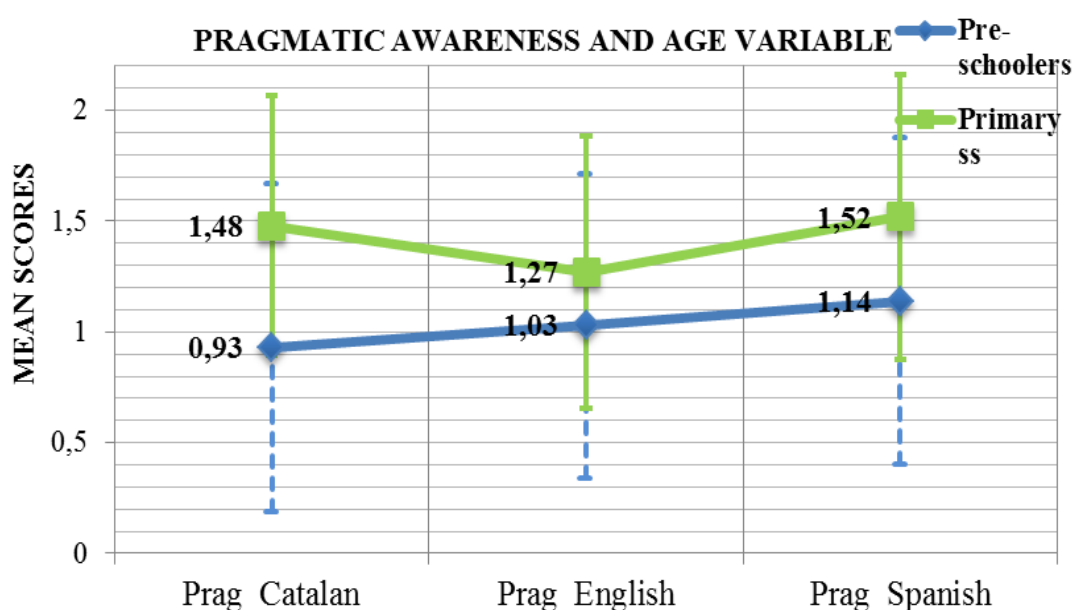
Figure19. Mean scores of pragmatic awareness in each language with respect to age variable. Vertical bars represent the standard deviations of means.

In order to test whether there are statistically significant changes between the younger and older learners, we report the findings obtained from having implemented the Kruskal-Wallis test for every language system. The results illustrated in Table 12 below show statistically significant differences (χ^2=64.954, *p*=0.000) regarding overall pragmatic awareness between pre-school and primary education students. In addition, as can be gathered from the *p*-values coloured in red, we also found significant differences between groups in each language system (Catalan χ^2=55.932, p=0.000; English χ^2=11.545, p=0.001; Spanish χ^2=29.049, p=0.00), according to the Kruskal-Wallis test. Bearing these results in mind, we may confirm that primary education students showed a higher degree of pragmatic awareness than pre-schoolers.

Table 12. Kruskal-Wallis test results on pragmatic awareness in each language system depending on the age variable.

	Age	N	Mean Rank	Test Statistics
Prag_Total	Pre-school	206	156.8	χ^2=64.954
	Primary	196	248.5	df=1 p=0.000
Prag_Cat	Pre-school	206	162.40	χ^2=55.932 df=1
	Primary	196	242.59	p=0.000
Prag_Eng	Pre-school	206	184.20	χ^2=11.545 df=1
	Primary	196	219.68	p=0.001
Prag_Spa	Pre-school	206	173.63	χ^2=29.049 df=1
	Primary	196	230.80	p=0.00

Those results displayed in Table 12 suggest that the level of pragmatic awareness is higher with increasing age. Hence, the present study confirms statistically significant changes between groups in relation to pragmatic awareness. As illustrated in Figure 19, older learners performed significantly more appropriately in Catalan, English and Spanish than younger learners. As expected, pragmatic awareness increases as children grow older in line with their cognitive abilities and processing skills. As argued by Cromdal (1996), their pragmatic systems are under constant development since new social situations require them to respond appropriately and strategically.

These results are in line with previous findings from research on early monolinguals (Ledbetter & Lend, 1988; Bernicot & Legros, 1987; Mabel, 1994; Elrod, 1983) and bilinguals (Lee, 2010; Takakuwa, 2000) which suggest that the comprehension ability of requests is significantly better with increasing age. Pragmatic development, thus, increases during childhood. We cannot omit that school is a period of

rapid linguistic, social, emotional and cognitive development. In line with previous studies grounded on monolingual behaviour (Axia & Baroni, 1985; Baroni & Axia, 1989; Bates, 1976; Mabel, 1994; Takakuwa, 2000; Wilkinson et al., 1984), older students have an easier time identifying pragmatically appropriate requests.

This study confirms that the identification of appropriate requests is higher in primary education students than in pre-schoolers. However, these findings are also relevant to the extent that they have provided evidence for early pragmatic awareness in pre-schoolers. Thus, we cannot support previous studies (Axia & Baroni, 1985; Bates, 1976; Baroni & Axia, 1989; Bernicot, 1991; Lee, 2010; Wagner et al., 2010; Wilkinson et al., 1984) which claimed that pragmatic awareness emerges at the age of 7. Support for this view may come from Nicholas and Lightbown's (2008) division of child language acquisition into two stages: younger child period (from 3 to 7 years old) and older child period (from 7 to the onset of puberty). It is true that there are strong and obvious developmental changes between the two age periods, however it is very much an oversimplification to put strict barriers between both age groups.

This study provides evidence to suggest that differences between primary education and preschool students do exist; however it also shows that very young learners at the age of four achieve an enhanced pragmatic awareness towards all the languages in their repertoire since their rating of appropriateness in the pragmatic comprehension test appears to be very high. These results lend strong support to the pragmatic facilities displayed by multilingual learners.

In light of these outcomes, we may claim that Hypothesis I has been confirmed since our participants (i) displayed high levels of awareness, (ii) showed signs of pragmatic differentiation among their language systems and (iii) their pragmatic awareness increased with age. In our view, these results have provided strong evidence for the pragmatic benefits of multilingual speakers and the pragmatic development from the age of 4 to 9. Additionally, in contrast to previous research on pragmatic awareness, our data have been thoroughly examined by taking into account the wider context.

We believe that L1 and L2 studies have provided valuable insights into child language acquisition; however, the picture that we may obtain from these studies is not realistic. Previous research has considered language acquisition as something systematic and invariable, regardless of the contextual factors involved. As argued by Aronin and Singleton (2012), the complexity of multilingualism not only lays on all the affordances available, but also on the interaction and variations between all these variables. In this sense, we cannot examine language acquisition from an isolationist perspective. The exploration of factors at the macro and micro level might provide us with evidence on the fluidity, variability and complexity of multilingual development.

An exemplification of the dynamism and complexity of multilingualism is the case of Catalan and English with respect to pragmatic awareness. As illustrated in Figure 19, the pre-school group (*n*=206) scored 1.03 in English and 0.93 in Catalan. Interestingly enough, learners at the age of 4-5 showed more pragmatic awareness in

the foreign language than in the minority language. Despite the fact that their linguistic development is supposed to be more accurate in the speech communities, we found that the level of appropriateness in English is higher than in Catalan. It is important to note that pre-schoolers were not exposed to English as much as they were to Catalan, as they had just started learning English that academic year. In addition, as illustrated in Figure 19, we may observe a significant developmental change in relation to pragmatic awareness in primary education learners. To put it in another way, there exists a decrease in the level of awareness toward English and an increase in the degree of pragmatic awareness towards Catalan from age 4 to 8.

These findings have thus shown the fluidity, dynamism and complexity of multilingualism. As argued by Herdina and Jessner (2000, p.87), "according to biological principles language development is seen as a dynamic process with phases of accelerated growth and retardation. The development is dependent on environmental factors and is indeterminate". In the present study, the pragmatic competence of English and Catalan fluctuates over the span of time and space. These findings contradict previous research (Baroni & Axia, 1989; Bernicot & Legros, 1987; Elrod, 1987; Mabel, 1994; Ledbetter & Lend, 1988) which has traditionally been examined through a monolingual lens and has considered language as something linear, static, and independent. Additionally, these findings again contradict the monolingual-biased idea that pragmatic development is determined by the proficiency level (Carrell, 1981; Papafragou, 2000; Tomasello, 2008).

The present study confirms and firmly supports those features proposed by Herdina and Jessner (2002) in their DMM (see Section 1.4). Hence, we may argue from our findings that multilingual acquisition is not a predictable and linear process since many factors, both social and individual, influence and interact in the complex system of a language. As explained in Chapter 1, one's language repertoire in a multilingual mind emerges and develops over time and space cooperating with a variety of learner and learning factors.

These findings also corroborate the importance of adopting a multilingual approach in the analysis of multilinguals in order to obtain a complete account of their multilingual development. We may state from our findings that an exclusive focus on English pragmatic awareness would have provided us with a partial account of their multilingual pragmatic awareness. These outcomes highlight the importance of considering the multilingual background in the analyses of multilingual learners.

These results from Hypothesis I have contributed to answering the RQ1 which stated to what extent our participants have a reasonable degree of pragmatic awareness in their L1, L2 and L3 and whether an increase of pragmatic awareness with age exists. The findings reported above have provided a large number of new insights which can be summarized in the following way:

First and foremost, participants performed appropriately in the pragmatic comprehension test by taking into account the three languages as a whole; that is Catalan, English and Spanish. From a

holistic perspective (Cook, 1991; Grosjean, 1985), the results reported above have confirmed the dynamism of language systems and the existing interaction between languages in a multilingual mind. In line with some studies conducted with early multilinguals (Barnes, 2008; Safont, 2011, 2012, 2013b), our participants showed a high level of pragmatic awareness, even though their pragmatic systems were under development, especially the English system. In contrast to previous research grounded in monolingualism (Carrell, 1981; Lee, 2010; Papafragou, 2000; Tomasello, 2008), our participants' level of pragmatic awareness was not determined by their proficiency level, but by a multilingual proficiency. We may argue that the multilingual background of the participants and their language learning experience in Spanish and Catalan may provide learners with a high level of awareness towards their L3. These results may provide evidence for the multilingual model proposed by Herdina and Jessner (2002); that is, the Dynamic Model of Multilingualism.

Second, this study has also examined the identification of appropriate requestive behaviour in each language system individually and the results have reported that Spanish showed the highest degree of pragmatic awareness, followed by Catalan and finally English. Differences among these language systems were found to be statistically significant. In this sense, we may confirm that pragmatic differentiation is apparent in early multilingual learners. These results are in agreement with Barnes (2008), Montanari (2009) and Safont (2011, 2012, 2013b). Additionally, we have found that Catalan and English awareness fluctuate and change over time. These findings have provided evidence for the dynamism, complexity and variability of the

multilingual mind. We may state that external factors, such as language exposure, sociolinguistic setting, and status of language, as well as internal factors, such as language attitudes, seem to have a strong effect on our participants' pragmatic awareness and consequently, on their overall multilingual development.

Third, we have found that primary education learners performed the pragmatic comprehension test better than pre-schoolers, as reported in other studies (Axia & Baroni, 1985; Baroni & Axia, 1989; Bates, 1976; Takakuwa, 2000; Wilkinson et al., 1984). As expected, pragmatic awareness increases as children grow older in line with their maturation, cognitive ability, and social skills. Nevertheless, here the main insight is that pre-schoolers also showed a high degree of pragmatic awareness despite the fact that they were pre-literate children. In contrast to previous studies (Axia & Baroni, 1985; Bates, 1976; Baroni & Axia, 1989; Bernicot, 1991; Lee, 2010; Wagner et al., 2010; Wilkinson et al., 1984) which stated that 7 is a crucial age in the acquisition of sociopragmatic competence, the present study shows that four-year-old participants are able to recognise those requests which are pragmatically appropriate in their three languages.

Now that we have explored the results derived from the first hypothesis and offered some explanations for their peculiarities, we will continue by looking at Hypothesis II.

5.2. Results and Discussion related to Hypothesis II

With reference to Hypothesis II, we predicted that those requests including the particle *please* would be understood better than those requests including grounders as modification devices (Achiba, 2003; Cromdal, 1996; Ellis, 1992; Rose, 2000). In addition, we also hypothesized that both grounders and *please* modifiers would be significantly understood more easily by primary education students than by pre-schoolers (Axia & Baroni, 1985; Baroni & Axia, 1989; Takawuka, 2000; Wilkinson et al., 1984).

In responding to Hypothesis II, first we paid attention to our participants' awareness on the identification of *please* and grounders as appropriate devices to mitigate requests. We took into account the identification of grounders (see R2, R3 and R5 in Table 9) and those requests which were accompanied by *please* (see R8, R10 and R11 in Table 9). Second, we examined, by means of a Friedman Test, whether those differences between grounders and *please* were statistically significant or not. Then, we compared the identification of appropriate devices between pre-schoolers and primary education students. Finally, we summarised the findings obtained in the present Hypothesis.

Figure 20 below shows the level of pragmatic awareness displayed by the sample (*N*=402) in the identification of *please* and grounders as appropriate devices to soften requests, presenting the mean scores and standard deviations for each type. As illustrated below, grounders (*M*=2.08, *SD*=0.944) were more frequently identified as appropriate requests than the particle *please* (*M*=1.59, *SD*=0.944). In

order to find out whether those differences between the grounders and the particle *please* were statistically significant, a Friedman Test was employed.
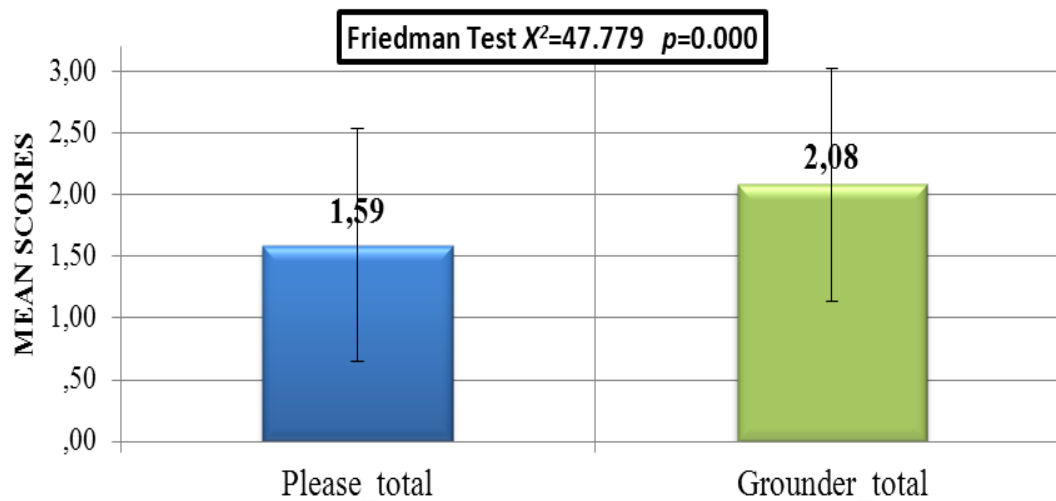
Figure 20. Mean scores of pragmatic awareness for *please* and grounder request modifying devices. Vertical bars represent the standard deviations of means. Friedman Test results of pragmatic awareness on please and grounders.

Interestingly, when comparing both types of modification items, we found statistically significant differences (χ^2=47.779, p=0.000) in the amount of request forms identified including *please* and grounders. Taking into account the findings reported in the Friedman Test above, we may state that the first statement of Hypothesis II is not confirmed, as those requests including grounders as modification devices were more frequently identified appropriate than those requests including the particle *please*.

Interestingly, our learners performed better in those requests that were mitigated by grounders than in the particle *please*. However, our findings, thus, seem to contradict previous research (Bates, 1976; Cromdal, 1996; Wagner et al., 2010; Wilkinson et al., 1984) on L1 and

L2 comprehension of requests that reported that children may first recognise appropriateness by focusing on the use of *please*. According to some authors (Achiba, 2003; Ellis, 1992), the particle *please* and repetitions are the first type of modification devices acquired in the process of child pragmatic acquisition.

Additionally, as previously mentioned in Hypothesis I, the findings derived from this analysis also differ from earlier research that reported the linear development of child pragmatics. Previous studies (Bates, 1976; Cromdal, 1996; Wagner et al., 2010; Wilkinson et al., 1984) found that more elaborated modifiers increased over age in line with the proficiency level. Despite the fact that grounders are more syntactically complex than the modifier *please,* our young sample showed greater pragmatic awareness with the former. We believe that our participants may consider grounders appropriate because those modifying devices give explanations, justifications and reasons for making the request, as in "Could I borrow your pencil? I need it to write my name".

Furthermore, we were also interested in further exploring whether those differences between grounders and the particle *please* were statistically significant in the L1, L2 and L3. As illustrated in Figure 21, according to the Wilcoxon Test, we found statistically significant differences in each language system: Catalan (Z=-4.914a, p=0.000), English (Z=-5.634a, p=0.000) and Spanish (Z=-3.893a, p=0.000). These findings suggest that multilingual learners may understand grounders more frequently as appropriate devices than

those requests with the particle *please* in the three languages under investigation.
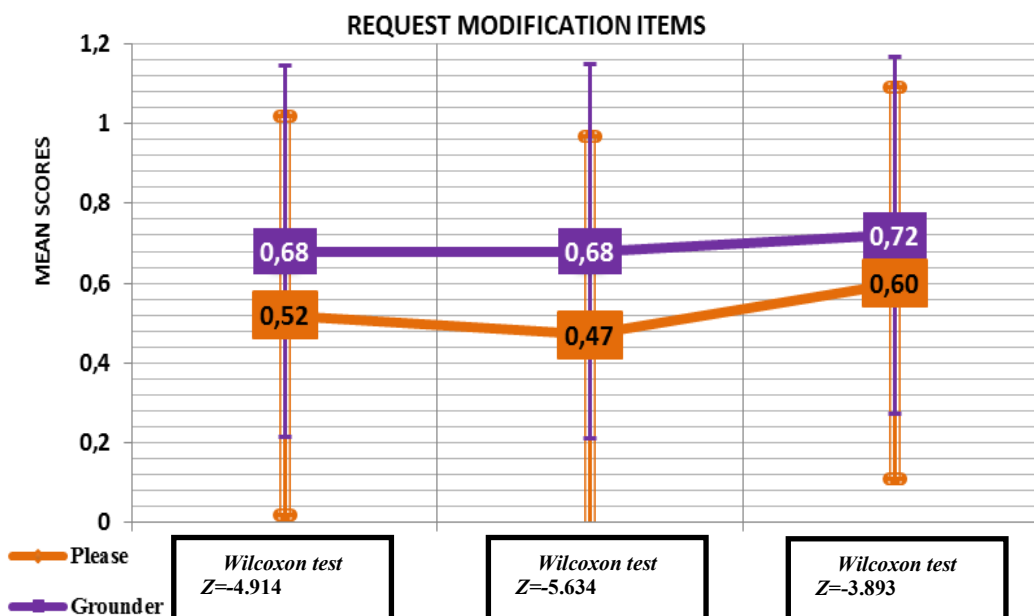

Figure 21. Mean scores of pragmatic awareness on grounders and please in each language. Vertical bars represent the standard deviations of means. Wilcoxon Test results of pragmatic awareness on please and grounders in each language with respect to age variable.

This point is particularly relevant to the extent that the participants in the present study identified more complex modifiers, even in their L3. In fact, as coloured in purple, the score means of grounders in each language are almost identical. In this study, our young bilingual learners were able to identify the L3 grounder, even though their proficiency level in English was still quite limited. In line with the results derived from Hypothesis I, we can state that the degree of pragmatic awareness in multilingual users is high and is not determined by the proficiency level in each language. These results may provide evidence for the existence of the multilingual proficiency proposed by Herdina and Jessner (2002). Thus, multilingual learners may not have the same competence in all the languages in their

repertoire, but a multicompetence that is enhanced by the relationships that are established among the languages involved.

Our findings coincide with those reported by Safont (2012) that focused on the request modification items employed by a consecutive multilingual child. In her study, Safont (2012) hypothesised that most of the modification devices produced by Pau would be the particle *please* and repetitions. However, Pau employed a wide variety of request modifying items other than *please* and repetitions in his L1, L2 and L3 before age 4, despite his condition of pre-literacy. The request modifying items produced by Pau, such as preparators and disarmers, were not found in child monolingual speech in previous studies where the addition of request modifying items was determined by the proficiency level in the language. Therefore, the findings obtained in multilingual production of requests have also contradicted previous research on the production of requests in monolinguals (Ervin-Tripp, 1977; Read & Cherry, 1978) and bilinguals (Achiba, 2003; Ellis, 1992; Rose, 2000; Solé & Soler, 2005) which have argued that the particle *please* is used relatively earlier than other modification devices. The latter seem to be acquired later in time throughout childhood, particularly at the age of 7. Those aforementioned studies have also supported the assumption of linear pragmatic development influenced by the proficiency level.

After analysing and discussing our participants' identification of *please* and grounders as appropriate devices to mitigate the force of requests, we examined whether primary education students performed more appropriately than pre-schoolers. Figure 22 below shows the

mean scores and standard deviations for pragmatic awareness displayed by pre-schoolers (*n*=206) and primary school students (*n*=196) in each type of modifying device examined.

PRAGMATIC AWARENESS ON MODIFIERS AND AGE VARIABLE
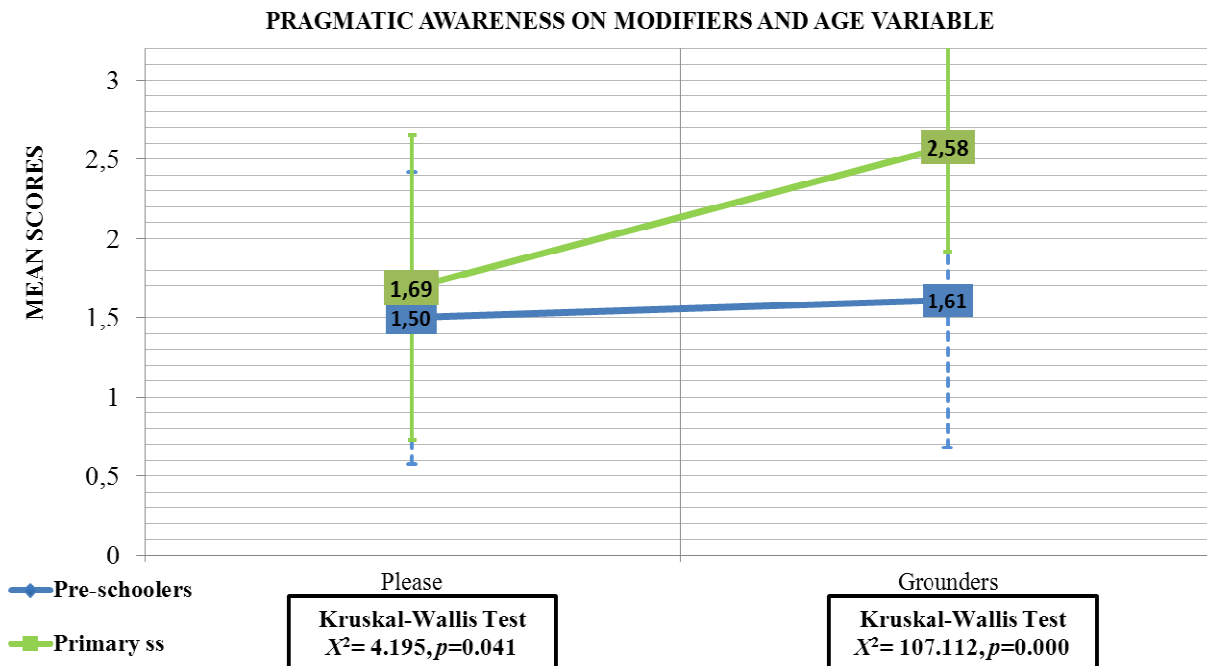
Figure 22. Mean scores of pragmatic awareness for please and grounder modification devices on the basis of the age variable. Vertical bars represent the standard deviations of means. Kruskal-Wallis Test results of pragmatic awareness on please and grounders with respect to age variable.

As we can see in Figure 22, the means for understanding the pragmatic comprehension test on the basis of request modifying devices is higher in the case of primary education students, thus, outperforming the preschool students. As illustrated, primary school students (*M*=2.58, *SD*=0.664) scored significantly higher than pre-schoolers (*M*=1.61, *SD*=0.930). In fact, statistically significant differences between the older and younger multilingual learners were found (*H*=107.112; *p*=0.000). Furthermore, primary education students (*M*=1.69; *SD*=0.960) were able to identify the request forms that included *please* more easily than pre-schoolers (*M*=1.50, *SD*=0.920).

According to the Kruskal-Wallis Test, the differences between both groups were also statistically significant (*H*=4.195, *p*=0.041).

With reference to the second statement proposed in Hypothesis II, we have confirmed that both grounders and *please* modifiers were significantly understood better by primary education students than pre-schoolers. In line with previous research, older children showed greater pragmatic awareness in the identification of please and grounders as appropriate devices, although younger children were also able to recognise pragmatically appropriate requests from the age of four. Here, again, we cannot omit that huge difference in terms of age between both groups. As argued by Mabel (1994, p.21), "the improvement in comprehension ability […] is largely related to children's growth in cognition, world knowledge, social experience, and better understanding of language in general".

Additionally, we compared and examined the identification of (i) grounders and (ii) the particle *please* between age groups in each language under investigation, that is, Catalan, English and Spanish.

As illustrated in Figure 23, we examined the identification of grounders between the two age groups. The mean scores of primary education students were clearly higher in the three languages than those of pre-schoolers. Thus, we carried out a Kruskal-Wallis Test in order to find statistically significant differences between the students in each group. According to the results of the Kruskal-Wallis Test (see Figure 23 below), primary school students scored significantly higher than pre-schoolers regarding the comprehension of pragmatically appropriate requests that included grounders. In fact, a statistically significant difference between the older and younger multilingual

learners was found in Spanish (*H*=37.331, *p*=0.000), Catalan (*H*=51.075, *p*=0.000) and English (*H* =60.084, *p*=0.000).
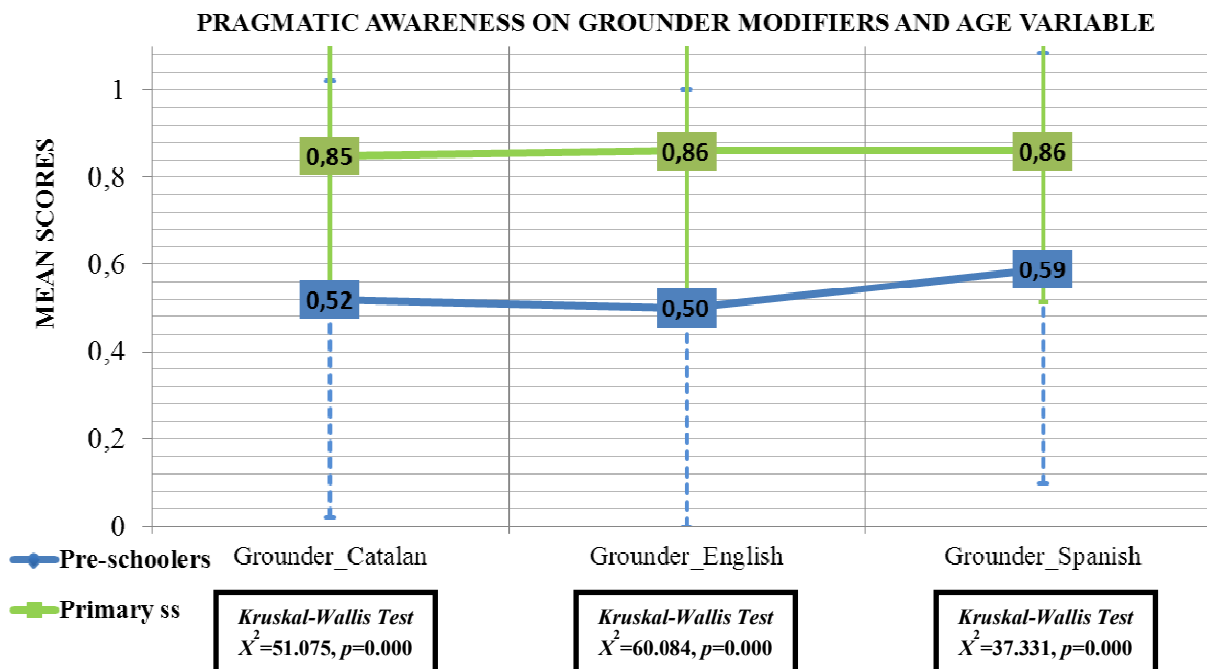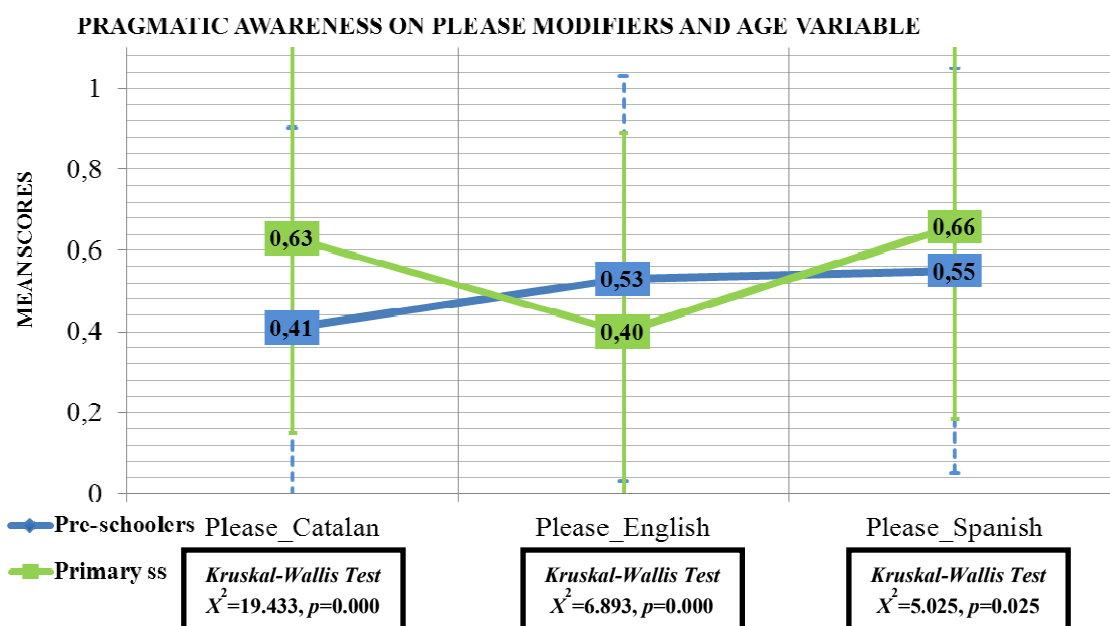

Figure 23. Mean scores of pragmatic awareness on grounders in each language with respect to age variable. Vertical bars represent the standard deviations of means. Kruskal-Wallis Test results of pragmatic awareness on grounders in each language with respect to age variable.

These findings seem to support previous research which reported that more complex request modifying items are recognised by older learners (Axia & Baroni, 1985; Baroni & Axia, 1989; Bates, 1976; Takakuwa, 2000; Wilkinson et al., 1984). In line with Hypothesis I, primary education students showed a higher level of pragmatic awareness and identified grounders as politeness devices in the L1, L2 and L3 more often than their preschool counterparts. We may argue that children at the age of 9 are more used to justifying their actions by means of explanations than four-year-old learners. Learners in the late primary school years may have a tendency towards verbosity, so they

may notice that providing reasons for making requests is considered more appropriate.

In what follows, Figure 24 shows the mean scores and standard deviations of pragmatic awareness on the modifier *please* in each language with respect to age variable.

PRAGMATIC AWARENESS ON PLEASE MODIFIERS AND AGE VARIABLE

| Kruskal-Wallis Test $X^2=19.433, p=0.000$ | Kruskal-Wallis Test $X^2=6.893, p=0.000$ | Kruskal-Wallis Test $X^2=5.025, p=0.025$ |

Figure 24. Mean scores of pragmatic awareness on please modifier in each language with respect to age variable. Vertical bars represent the standard deviations of means. Kruskal-Wallis test results of pragmatic awareness on the particle *please* in each language with respect to age variable.

As we can clearly see, there seems to be variation with respect to Figure 23 and, thus, unexpected findings. From the findings, we may state that the older group outperformed the younger group in terms of pragmatic awareness related to Catalan ($H=19.433$, $p=0.000$) and Spanish ($H=5.025$, $p=0.025$). As regards English, unexpected results were obtained from the Kruskal-Wallis test. In the present study, pre-schoolers understood the English request that included please better than primary school students. In fact, there were statistically significant differences between the two age groups ($H=6.893$, $p=0.000$).

Those findings reported above have provided us with new insights since pre-schoolers understood the English request than included the particle *please* better than older learners. We believe that the main reason for this may be due to the following arguments: First, pre-schoolers are frequently encouraged to use courtesy formulas, such as *please*, since both parents and teachers are highly concerned about their children making requests in a polite and appropriate manner. Second, teaching children to say *please* is one of the first things that the English teacher may do. In fact, adults often say to children, "What do you say?" or "Can you repeat it, please?", as a sign to encourage children to say the magic word. Additionally, young learners are eager to please the teacher and receive praise. They are more dependent learners than primary school students and they tend to repeat common expressions produced by the teacher, such as *please*. Fourth, the use of *please* illustrates group identity since very young learners feel more confident and safe if they take part in the classroom activities. The particle *please* is often employed in the classroom by young learners in order to be noticed and draw the attention of the interlocutors to achieve their goals and needs. Maybe, as children grow older they start losing that feeling of attachment to the group and they tend to avoid generic formulas, such as *please* or thank you. As a result, nine-year-old learners may not perceive the particle *please* as a strongly sophisticated device to get what they want. Last but not least, we may argue that the particle *please* is a key feature of language socialization and acquisition.

The results derived from the comparison of grounders and the particle *please* with reference to the age factor may be related to the social and emotional development of children. The school years are a period of rapid change since learners' perception of the world and their place in it evolves over the years. The construction of one's identity and social relationships is likely to be more complex for nine-year-old than for four-year-old learners. Primary school students are taking more responsibility for their own opinions and they need to justify more frequently their acts (e.g. by means of grounders).

All the findings reported above have provided valuable information about the understanding of grounder and the particle *please* since a large number of young learners participated in the present study. Nevertheless, we should not forget that each individual child has different capacities, skills, and emotions, and a different family background. Several external and internal factors may influence the way children develop socially, emotionally, intellectually, and linguistically. In line with the premises of the DMM, inspired by DST, each and every child is different and unique. Case studies are highly advisable for examining all the details of a particular individual, as in the studies carried out by Safont (2011, 2012, 2013b). However, we consider that the analysis of larger groups may provide us with the general patterns of multilingual pragmatic development.

These findings have also provided the answer to RQ2 that asked which request modification items are more easily identified as appropriate devices and whether there is any difference between pre-schoolers and primary education learners regarding the identification of

request modifying devices. Concluding this section, the current hypothesis contains a number of new and important insights into multilingual comprehension of requests that may be derived from the outcomes.

To sum up, our data suggest that grounders were more frequently understood as appropriate devices than those requests which involved the particle *please*, despite the fact that the former are more syntactically complex than the modifier *please*. This point is particularly relevant to the extent to which participants in the present study identified more complex modifiers, even in their L3. These results are relevant to the extent that they contradict previous findings (Bates, 1976; Cromdal, 1996; Wagner et al., 2010; Wilkinson et al., 1984) grounded in monolingual studies in which pragmatic awareness was determined by the proficiency level. The present study argues that multilingual learners are conditioned by the M-factor, that is to say, a multicompetence that is enhanced by the relationships established among the languages involved in one's repertoire.

Additionally, the present study reports that primary school students recognised those requests that included grounders and the particle *please* more frequently than their preschool counterparts. Such findings coincide with those from previous research. We cannot omit that children's multilingual proficiency increases over time due to the influence of several external and internal factors. Nevertheless, we have also found an interesting exception which is particularly relevant. The youngest participants more frequently identified the English request that included the particle *please*. We have proposed that these

results may be related to the social and emotional development of children since the particle *please* is a key feature of language socialisation and acquisition.

On that account, all these findings have partially confirmed Hypothesis II which proposed that (i) those requests including the particle *please* would be understood better than those requests including grounders as modification devices and (ii) both grounders and *please* modifiers would be significantly better understood better by primary education students than by pre-schoolers. Hence, the first statement of Hypothesis II is discarded and the second statement is confirmed.

We have already explored the results derived from hypothesis I and II in relation to pragmatic awareness, thus, we shall next present Hypothesis III which is concerned with the emotional side of our participants related to languages. Apart from the cognitive, linguistic and pragmatic aspects, the affective domain also plays an important role in the process of language acquisition. Particularly, we will focus on language attitudes, the most significant variable in language acquisition according to Manolopoulou-Sergi (2004, p.432).

5.3. Results and Discussion related to Hypothesis III

The third Hypothesis assumed that language attitudes towards Catalan, Spanish and English would vary (Nightingale, 2012; Portolés, 2011; Safont, 2007). We also predicted that pre-schoolers would display more favourable language attitudes towards the minority and foreign language than primary school students. The latter would show a preference for the majority language (Baker, 1992; Cenoz, 2002, 2003; Hoare, 2000; Lefever, 2009; Nikolov, 1999; Sharp et al., 1973).

In order to test Hypothesis III, we first examined the overall language attitudes held by all the participants in order to obtain a general picture of their affective domain. Second, we examined learners' language attitudes to Catalan, English and Spanish and whether differences across language systems were statistically significant or not. Then, we compared the language attitudes in each language displayed by primary education students and pre-schoolers. Finally, we discussed the results and additionally, we explored language attitudes more thoroughly by exemplifying some responses from the qualitative analysis of the participants. As previously mentioned in the method section, these responses, elicited by means of oral interviews, have a purely illustrative value in the present study.

To start this analysis, we examined the results of a global attitude index taking a holistic perspective of the three languages in contact in order to obtain a general picture of the emotional side related to languages of our participants.

Table 13. Global language attitudes displayed by the whole sample (*N*=402)

	GLOBAL LANGUAGE ATTITUDES				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Att_total	402	0	6	4.34	1.333

As illustrated above in Table 13, the respondents displayed very positive attitudes to all the languages in their speech repertoire. The global attitude index (*M*=4.34, *SD*=1.333) shows that multilingualism is highly valued and accepted by early language learners. We can argue that attitudes towards multilingualism are very positive as has been documented in early childhood studies on linguistic attitudes (Enever, 2009; Nikolov, 1999; Shameem, 2004). In fact, existing research (Baker, 1992; Nikolov, 2000) has reported that the biggest benefits in early language learning are the attitudinal benefits.
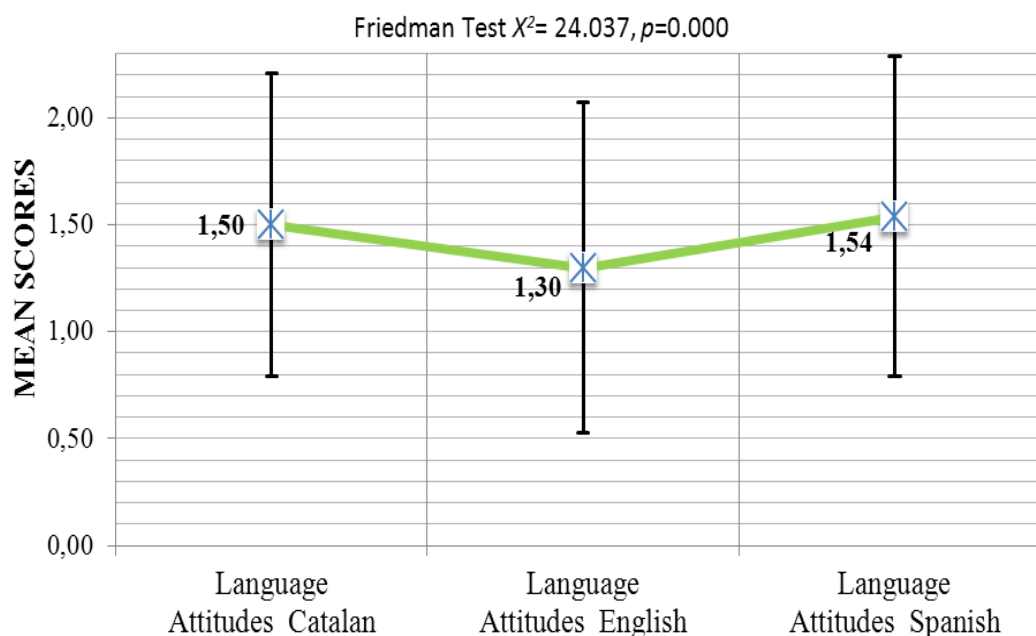
Figure 25.Mean scores of language attitudes in each language system. Vertical bars represent the standard deviations of means. Friedman Test results of language attitudes in each language.

Figure 25 above presents us with the language attitudes held by the sample, presenting the mean scores and standard deviations for each language system. As depicted in Figure 25, participants were more positive to Spanish since their ratings of favourability appeared to be higher (*M*=1.54, *SD*=0.747) than in the other language systems, that is, Catalan (*M*=1.50, *SD*=0.707) and English (*M*=1.30, *SD*=0.775). From these initial results we can state that, on the surface at least, there seems to be variation. In order to determine whether those differences among languages were statistically significant or not, we employed a Friedman Test.

According to the results from the Friedman Test displayed in Figure 25, statistically significant differences (χ^2= 24.037, *p*= 0.000) were observed among Spanish, Catalan, and English in relation to language attitudes. In light of these findings, the first statement of Hypothesis III is supported, since the three language systems scored significantly different language attitudes values.

These outcomes are consistent with those reported previously by Safont (2007). In her study, university students showed the most positive attitudes towards Spanish, followed by Catalan, and the most neutral attitudes referred to English since it was valued neither negatively nor positively. The current study shows a similar affective pattern to that of Safont. Our findings illustrate positive language attitudes towards Catalan and Spanish whereas attitudes towards English are more neutral.

This affective pattern is different from other attitudinal patterns reported for other samples examined in the same province (i.e. Castelló), by Nightingale (2012) and Portolés (2011). In the case of Portolés (2011), her respondents highly valued multilingualism since they were prospective teachers and they were extremely concerned with the importance of promoting languages at school, especially the foreign and the minority language. The study by Nightingale (2012) examined a group of adolescents living in a Catalan-speaking community and the results showed the most positive attitudes to the minority language. We believe that the sociolinguistic context played a paramount role in his findings.

Table 14. Order in languages with respect to attitude studies in the province of Castelló.

Author	Sample	Order in languages with respect to attitudes		
Safont (2007)	University students	1. Spanish	2.Catalan	3.English
Portolés (2011)	Prospective teachers	1.English	2.Catalan	3.Spanish
Nightingale (2012)	Teenagers	1.Catalan	2.English	3.Spanish
Present study	Pre-schoolers and primary school students	1.Spanish	2.Catalan	3.English

Table 14 above shows a summary of the results arising from previous research with respect to language attitudes held by different samples in the province of Castelló. We can see the languages in order from those that obtained the most to the least favourable attitudes. The next argument may sound tentative, but we consider that the most general attitudinal pattern in the Valencian Community, particularly in Castelló, is the one reported in the findings derived from the study by Safont (2007) and the present study. We also believe that this pattern is intensified in the province in València and even more in Alacant where the use of the minority language is very limited, as occurred in the studies of Baldaquí (2004) and Martínez (2011). The main reasons for this argument can be found in social, political, historical and psychological factors.

Generally speaking, we may argue that Spanish is the preferred language by a large number of speakers and the dominant language in all contexts. In other words, it is the language that the majority of citizens feel comfortable using when speaking with other people. Unfortunately, Catalan is a language in which tension and discrepancy frequently emerge between speakers because of several factors. One of the main reasons is the existing ideological debate about the nature of the minority language (i.e. Catalan) which is supported by politicians rather than by linguists. Some politicians and a large part of the Valencian society argue that Valencian (i.e. the popular name employed for Catalan) is a different language from Catalan, instead of acknowledging it as a variety of the Catalan language. Consequently, a large number of people in our community do not perceive Valencian as a variety of Catalan, but as a separate language. This linguistic conflict,

among many others, such as blocking the Catalan-immersion programmes, forbidding Catalan television channels or even removing Catalan history from classroom textbooks, have converted Catalan in the spotlight of public opinion. The attacks and hostility against Catalan normalization and linguistic secessionism have given rise to a diglossic community. Additionally, as Safont (2007) argues, the influence of Franco's dictatorship was a determinant for the supremacy of Spanish over Catalan, even today where some part of the society is still reticent and unmotivated towards learning and using the minority language on a regular basis. As a result, this language situation influences the language attitudes of speakers and their language use.

Taking into account all the above, we suggest that there are three types of speakers in the Valencian Community: (i) speakers that strongly support and promote minority languages and do speak Catalan on the majority of occasions, (ii) speakers that often use the minority language with Catalan-speakers in the private sphere, but change linguistic code to Spanish when talking with strangers, and (iii) speakers that only use Spanish but codeswitch to Catalan to refer to terms which are frequently employed in festivities, traditional customs, regional cuisine, and typical expressions of everyday interaction, such as greetings or weather phrases. The last two types of speakers, especially the last one, do not promote the regular use of Catalan at all and may hold less favourable attitudes since they may consider Catalan a simple, rural and low-prestige language.

Tension between minority languages and internationally dominant languages do exist in a large number of different contexts,

such as Wales (Welsh vs. English), Ireland (Gaelic vs. English), and the Basque Country (Basque vs. Spanish), among many others. Studies of language attitudes where diglossic situations occur, such as Fiji (Shameem, 2004) and Singapore (Bokhorst-Heng & Caleon, 2009), have also reported functional separation of high and low prestige languages.

With reference to English, attitudes are also positive but regarded as less favourable than both official languages. The presence of the foreign language has recently increased in the last decade in educational and social spheres. Currently, a good level of English is required in the majority of jobs, a job requirement which may create a lot of pressure. Consequently, neutral or negative attitudes may arise towards the lingua franca. In the case of very young learners, they usually show very positive attitudes because their parents are eager and excited that their children learn English. We believe that the influence of parents may be a determining factor in children's formation of language attitudes.

Apart from examining the language attitude score in each language individually and all those factors that may influence language attitudes, we also predicted that (i) pre-schoolers would display more positive language attitudes to the minority and foreign language than primary school students and (ii) primary education learners would show a preference for the majority language. To that end, we have first examined the overall language attitudes in each age group.
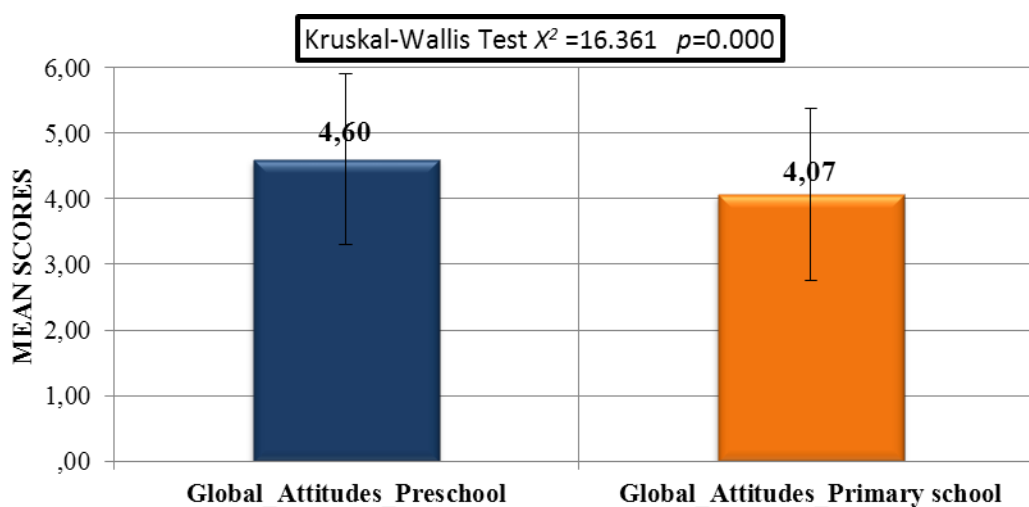
Figure 26. Mean scores of language attitudes in each language with respect to age variable. Vertical bars represent the standard deviations of means. Kruskal-Wallis Test results of language attitudes in each language with respect to age variable.

Figure 26 above reveals that language attitudes displayed by the sample (N=402) were higher in the preschool group (M=4.60, SD=1.305) than the primary school group (M=4.07, SD=1.311). In fact, significant changes were found when comparing both age groups (χ^2=16.361, p=0.000). As expected, preschool students held more favourable attitudes to multilingualism than primary school students. Additionally, we compared the language attitudes for both age groups in each language under examination. Findings from that analysis are best illustrated in Figure 27.

LANGUAGE ATTITUDES AND AGE VARIABLE
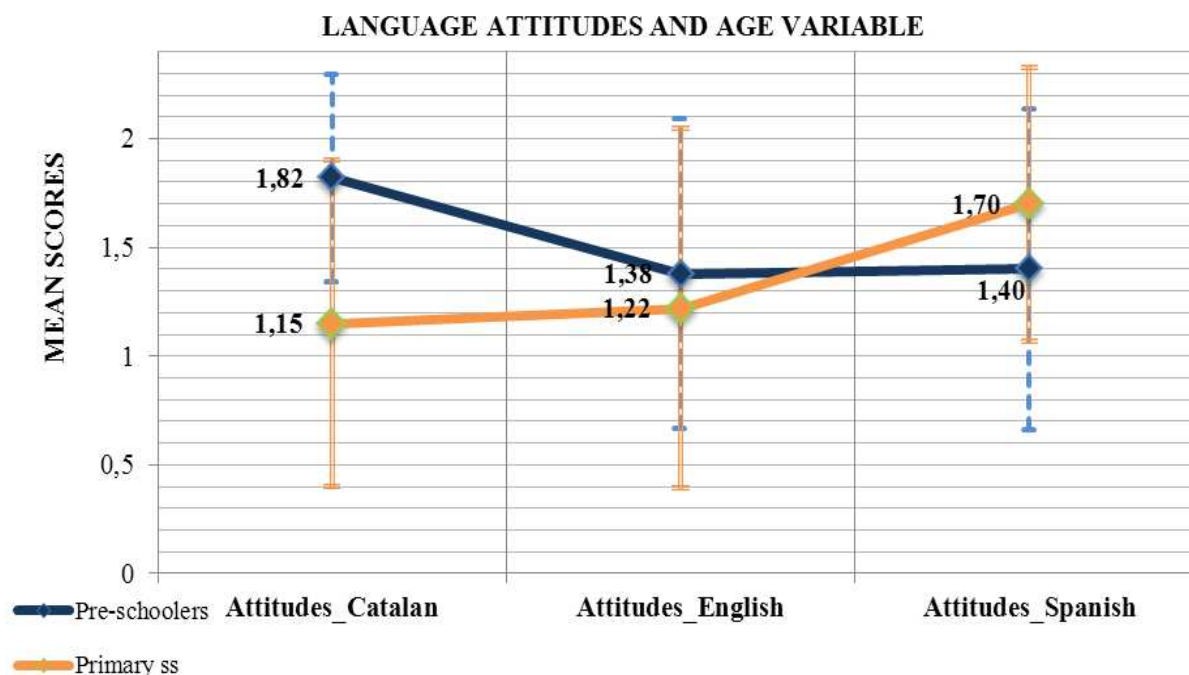
Figure 27. Mean scores of language attitudes in each language with respect to age variable. Vertical bars represent the standard deviations of means. Kruskal-Wallis Test results of language attitudes in each language with respect to age variable.

In light of the results presented above, the preschool group showed more positive attitudes to Catalan (*M*=1.82, *SD*=0.476) and English (*M*=1.38, *SD*=0.715) than the primary school group (Catalan *M*=1.15, *SD*=0.749; English *M*=1.22, *SD*=0.828). Nevertheless, primary education learners held more favourable attitudes towards Spanish (*M*=1.70, *SD*=0.629) than pre-schoolers (*M*=1.40, *SD*=0.819). Additionally, the results obtained from the Kruskal-Wallis test reported strong differences between the attitudes of pre-schoolers and primary education learners with respect to Catalan (χ^2= 100.300, *p*= 0.000) and Spanish (χ^2= 16.334, *p*= 0.000). Despite the fact that there seems to be variation on language attitudes towards English, the difference found between the two age groups was not statistically significant (χ^2= 3.303, *p*= 0.069). The results from applying this test are displayed in Table 15 below.

Table 15. Mean ranks of language attitudes depending on the age variable. Kruskal-Wallis test results on language attitudes in each language depending on the age variable.

	Age	N	Mean Rank	Test Statistics
Cat_att	Pre-school	206	250.25	$\chi^2=100.300$ df=1 **p=0.000**
	Primary	196	150.26	
Eng_att	Pre-school	206	210.92	$\chi^2=3.303$ df=1 **p=0.069**
	Primary	196	191.60	
Spa_att	Pre-school	206	183.06	$\chi^2=16.334$ df=1 **p=0.00**
	Primary	196	220.88	

Therefore, we may claim that second statement of Hypothesis III has also been confirmed by our results as they show that young learners showed more favourable attitudes towards Catalan and English, whereas the older students reported a preference for Spanish. It will be now useful to discuss the attitudinal pattern which has been observed in our study.

As occurred in other studies (Henry & Apelgren, 2008; Heining-Boynton & Haitema, 2007), the attitudinal trend shows a decline of positive attitudes towards multilingualism with increasing age. On that account, we may state that students' language attitudes are dynamic as learners develop "cognitively, affectively and linguistically" (Mihaljevic-Djigunovic & Letica, 2009, p.151) during their academic stage. This development may be linked to the socialization process that affects children in primary education.

In addition, our findings reported that more positive attitudes to the minority and foreign languages in reference to pre-schoolers

whereas more positive attitudes to the majority language corresponded with the primary school group (see Figure 27). Such results are in agreement with those arising from previous studies on language attitudes in other multilingual contexts which have shown that early language learners and older learners display different attitudinal patterns. Some studies (Baker, 1992; Hoare, 2000; Sharp et al., 1973) have already reported that favourable language attitudes towards the minority language decrease with age. The transition from preschool to primary school changes attitudes to languages. We believe that young children lack awareness of the low status and vitality of a minority language, whilst older children show apathy towards using the minority language because of its lower prestige. They prefer to be part of the dominant culture. The same occurs in those studies (Bokhorst-Heng & Caleon, 2009; Shameem, 2004) previously mentioned in Section 3.3 where learners in diglossic contexts declared more favourable attitudes toward the dominant language which enjoyed a higher socioeconomic status.

Other studies (Cenoz, 2002, 2003; Heining-Boynton & Haitema, 2007; Henry & Apelgren, 2008; Lefever, 2009; Nikolov, 1999; Muñoz & Tragant, 2001) have also confirmed that initial favourable attitudes to a foreign language wane over time. The findings derived from those studies have agreed that overall attitudes to the foreign language are positive, although a steadily significant decline of attitudes and enthusiasm is found as students became older. Nikolov (1999) and Mihaljevic-Djigunovic (1995) propose that there is a change of perception in the foreign language classroom, from an intrinsic one towards a more individualistic and extrinsic pattern.

Additionally, as Cenoz (2002, 2003) suggests, educational and psychological factors play a paramount role in this attitudinal change. The educational factors involve a change of the teaching methodology employed in the different school stages. The methodology in the early stages comprises songs, story-telling, plays and other oral activities which draw students' attention and encourage participation. In contrast, as learners become older, the methodology is more teacher-centred and based on grammar and vocabulary. Psychological factors deal with older learners' transition from a family identity to a more individual and peer group identity.

In line with Cenoz (2002, 2003), we believe that the methodology employed in the foreign language classroom is not attractive for the pupils and this demotivation increases in secondary school. Monotonous teaching, use of textbooks, lack of confidence and high levels of anxiety, among many other factors, may contribute to promote a negative attitude and perception of the foreign language. As a result, we may argue that attitudes towards languages have the tendency to change with age. Generally speaking, young language learners react positively to language learning, although there is a general decline in favourable attitudes towards the foreign and minority language as students climb up the educational ladder. In contrast, the attitudes in reference to the majority language increase over time as a sign of group membership attributed to the dominant culture. We believe that language attitudes may change during the university period and they tend to consolidate and remain relatively stable during adulthood.

In order to further examine our results, we would like to add some of the responses taken from short face-to-face interviews conducted after the matched-guise technique. This instrument allowed us access to a better understanding of the children's language attitudes. They were asked what language they preferred and the reason behind their choice. Our results show that the responses given to which language they liked the most were very different between the age groups.

In the case of young learners, most of them based their opinions on the language that their parents or teachers speak, as illustrated in the following examples:

Example 1:

1.   R= *Quina és la llengua que més t'agrade?*
2.   S1=*El castellà i el inglés*
3.   R=*Per què?*
4.   S1= *porque siempre hablo así (.) porque mis iaios hablan en castellà y eh:: y mhmm:: y la la seño Inma inglés.*

Example 2:

1.   R= *Quina és la llengua que més t'agrade?*
2.   S2=*valencià*
3.   R=*Per què?*
4.   S2= *perquè la meua mare parla aixina, la meua mare.*

Extract 1. Examples of oral interview on language attitudes in school number 9.

We can find a large number of responses associated to teachers and family members in all the school samples, as illustrated in Example 1 and 2. As Garrett (2010) and Baker (1992) reported, language attitudes are not innate, but learned from the environment where children grow up. For that reason, the role played by teachers and parents is paramount in children's formation of attitudes. Other responses from the interviews show that languages are associated with things they like, such as songs, animals or colours. As depicted below, the following reasons are examples for this type of justifications:

Example 3:

1. R= ok (.) Alfonso what's your favourite language < English (.) Valencian (.) or Spanish?
2. S3: English
3. R: English? why?
4. Alf: mhmm (*porque por:: dog*)
5. R: eh?
6. S3: *porque digo* dog DOG
7. R:*perque dius* dog:: i:: per que mes?
8. S3= *i tambe:: per* cat: mhmm (.) *per::els* colors (he starts singing the colours song) ♪red yellow pink::, purple and orange and blue:: ♪
9. *per a que et servis l'angles a tu*? (2.0) *tu: per a que vols saber?*
10. S3: (2.0) *per aprendre coses*
11. R: *i que faras en aixo*?
12. S3= *mhmm li ho ensenyare a mon pare i a ma mare*

Example 4:

1. R= *Quina és la llengua que més t'agrade?el castellà, el valencià o l' anglés?*
2. S4: anglés
3. R: per que?
4. S4: pues perqué m' agraden les cançons.

Extract 2. Examples of oral interview on language attitudes in school number 1.

The examples above are very interesting because they show that young learners relate languages to the things they like or enjoy. In example number three, the subject prefers English because he can say animal words, sing songs and interestingly, he is happy because he could teach his parents. The last reason is a response that has been repeated quite frequently across both age groups. For young learners, teaching their own parents is an exciting and challenging experience because they feel like adults and also parents are eager to listen to their children's improvements in English. Parental support and encouragement is crucial in the development of positive attitudes to languages.

As illustrated below, the last example from the preschool samples shows the effects of mass media on preschoolers' language attitudes.

Example 5:

1. R= *Quina és la vostra llengua preferida?*
2. S4=*El castellà*
3. R=*Per qué?*
4. S4: *perque diuen paraules molt boniques, castillo, hada, príncipe*
5. R: *i tu?*
6. S5: *mhmm castellà*
7. R: *Per qué?*
8. S5: *Porque puedo hablar del castillo de rayos:: el castillo princesa de Luigi y Mario*
9. R: *Mario Bros?*
10. S5. *Si, Mario Bros*
11. R: *ellos que hablan?*
12. S5: *castellano*

Extract 3. Example of oral interview on language attitudes in school number 9.

The example above is very illustrative because we can see how cartoon characters, such as Mario Bros, can shape children's language attitudes. S5 prefers Spanish because the Mario Bros speak Spanish and that is the main reason behind his choice. In the case of S4 who is a girl, she just says that prefers Spanish because they say nice words, such as castle, fairy and prince. We suggest that the pronoun "they" refers to television cartoons and books that deal with fantasy stories or fairy tales. Here, we can see how the languages the children are exposed to determine their language attitudes. In both cases, their preferred language is Spanish because their favourite heroes communicate with others in Spanish. These examples clearly illustrate the overriding presence of Spanish in mass-media previously mentioned in Hypothesis I.

As illustrated in those examples above, we can argue that young learners demonstrate integrative attitudes and attachment to languages. Their attitudes reflect a desire to identify with a language and its culture. Primary school students also show that emotional side of languages in reference to their mother tongue and the language that they grow up with in their family environment; nevertheless, very few instances refer to the teacher. Examples 6, 7 and 8 present us with these types of responses.

Example 6:

1. R= *Pablo i a tu quina es la llengua que mes t'agrade?*
2. S6: *ingles*
3. R: *l'angles per que?*
4. S6: *perque es la llengua que mes se parla per el mon*

Example 7:

1. R= *cual es la lengua que mas te gusta? el castellano, el valenciano o el ingles?*
2. S7:*el valenciano y el ingles*
3. R: *porque?*
4. S7: *el valenciano perque sempre el parle a casa i l'angles perque el parlen molt en el mon*

Example 8:

1. R= which language do you like the most, English, Spanish or Valencian?
2. S8:English
3. R: why do you like English?
4. S7: *porque son nuestros vecinos de arriba*

Extract 4. Example of oral interview on language attitudes in school number 5.

Those examples show that older learners start having perceptions of the role of languages in the world and their place in it. The main reason behind their choice is that English is the language of the world and everybody speaks it. Here, we can see a clear example of the effect that the sociolinguistic status has on primary school students. They become aware of the importance of English to communicate with other people from other countries. This sense of language status is not present in preschool students who still have a very different perception of the world.

To sum up the findings reported above in relation to RQIII, we acknowledge that not all the language systems are equally valued. Our respondents have shown overall positive attitudes towards multilingualism and language attitudes individually. However, participants have reported with the most positive attitudes towards

Spanish, followed by Catalan and the least positive attitudes towards English. The main reasons are to be found in political, social and psychological issues. The present study has also demonstrated that language attitudes towards language systems significantly differ according to the age variable. Younger learners held more favourable attitudes towards the minority and the foreign language than older language learners, whilst the latter preferred the majority and dominant languages. In this case, the main reasons are to be found in educational, psychological and social issues.

Last but not least, we may argue that language attitudes are not inherited but learnt through personal experience during childhood. For that reason, parents and teachers may be a determining factor in children's formation of language attitudes, as exemplified in examples 1 and 2. However, in line with the DMM, language attitudes are dynamic and complex in nature and they may be modified due to the influence of other contextual factors, both at the macro and micro level. We have seen how the mass-media and the sociolinguistic status of a language have a strong effect on their attitudes. The present study has confirmed the dynamism of language attitudes since we have noticed statistically significant changes between both age groups.

Apart from all those reasons previously reported, we may argue that a wide range of factors might influence their language attitudes. In this study, we have particularly focused on the effect of the linguistic model on language attitudes. Additionally, we have also examined the influence of the linguistic model on pragmatic awareness, i.e. the other

main focus of this study. Hence, the next Hypothesis will thoroughly explore the effect of the linguistic model on multilingual speakers.

5.4. Results and Discussion related to Hypothesis IV

Hypothesis IV was related to RQ4 concerning the effect of the linguistic model in which the students were enrolled at school (Cenoz, 2002, 2003; Portolés, 2011; Safont, 2007). We hypothesised that the linguistic model would have an effect on pragmatic awareness in English and language attitudes towards English. In order to validate Hypothesis IV, we divided our sample into two main groups: 197 students from the PEV (Catalan-based model) and 205 students from the PIP (Spanish-based model). First, we examined whether the pragmatic awareness in English differed significantly depending on the linguistic model followed at school. Second, we explored the influence of the linguistic programme implemented at school on language attitudes towards English. Finally, we summarised the results deriving from hypothesis IV.

To start the analysis, we examined the mean scores and standard deviations pertaining to the linguistic model with reference to pragmatic awareness. Figure 28 below shows that the degree of pragmatic awareness by the participants that followed the PEV programme (*M*=1.22; *SD*=0.665) is higher than the degree of those students enrolled in the PIP model (*M*=1.07, *SD*=0.664). In order to determine whether or not there are statistically significant differences between PEV and PIP models, we applied a Kruskal-Wallis Test. As illustrated in Figure 28, we found a statistically significant difference

(*H*=5.168, *p*=0.023) between the students from the PIP and PEV programmes with respect to pragmatic awareness in the English language.

Pragmatic awareness in English and linguistic model variable
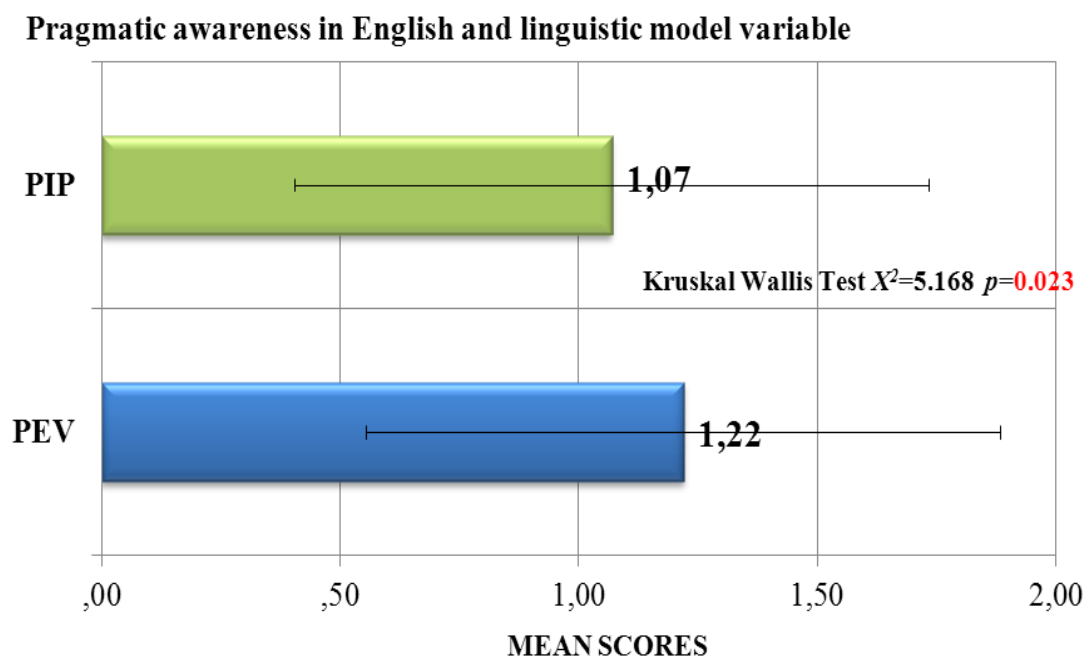
Figure 28. Mean scores of language attitudes in English with respect to linguistic model variable. Vertical bars represent the standard deviations of means. Kruskal-Wallis Test results of language attitudes in English with respect to linguistic model.

Therefore, the present study suggests that pragmatic awareness is enhanced in Catalan-based schools. These results are consistent with those reported for undergraduate students by Safont (2005) in the context of our study. In Safont's study, those students engaged at school in PEV model showed more pragmatic awareness in the L3 than those learners enrolled in PIP programme. The author suggests that multilingual speakers have a higher ability and flexibility in using strategies in pragmatic tasks because of their linguistic repertoire and their experience as language learners. Similarly, Portolés and Safont (in press) have compared the functions of requests in PEV and PIP
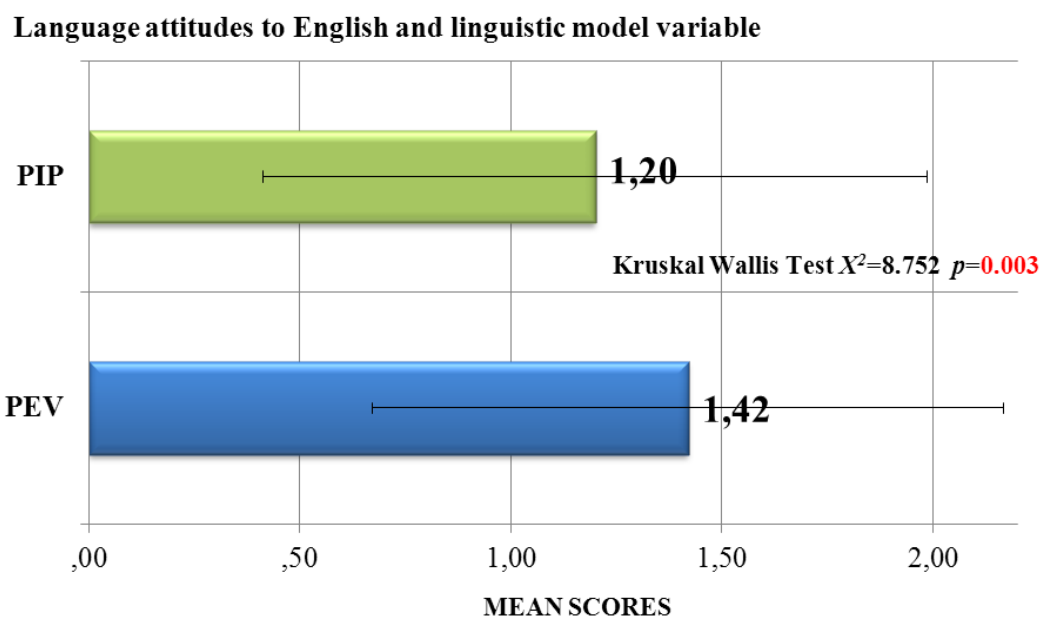
programmes and the results have found that learners in PEV programmes have at their disposal a more extensive repertoire of pragmatic functions in the three languages. In addition, Portolés and Safont (in press) have reported that translanguaging practices in PEV programmes take place frequently in the language classroom and have illustrated the great variety of resources employed by multilinguals in communicative interaction. In contrast, the findings from Spanish-based schools report that the number of functions assigned to languages is limited and classroom discourse is grounded on monolingual behaviour. Therefore, translanguaging practices in Spanish-based models reflect few interactions between language systems. The study carried out by Portolés and Martín (2012) also reported that translanguaging in the L3 classroom occur in Spanish-based schools, but only Spanish and English language systems are activated. In fact, the authors argue that the use of Catalan is almost non-existent.

Takakuwa's (2000) study on L2 pragmatic awareness also suggested that L2 exposure and intensity in bilingual programmes promotes pragmatic awareness. In this study, the language of instruction of the school also played a paramount role in his findings. Those students who had more exposure to the minority language showed greater pragmatic awareness than their counterparts enrolled in another linguistic programme.

Taking into account all those findings, we may argue that productive bilinguals may have an easier time acquiring the L3. Recently, Alcón (2012) has reported the enhanced pragmatic awareness of productive bilinguals. Therefore, we believe that the condition of

being a balanced bilingual may have an advantage in additional language acquisition, as Cummins' threshold hypothesis (1973) argued. However, we also consider that other factors, such as language attitudes, may influence and determine the success in the L3 acquisition.

After examining and discussing the effect of the linguistic model on pragmatic awareness, we examined the impact of this variable on language attitudes. The Kruskal-Wallis test was applied to our data in order to identify whether the language attitudes displayed from those students enrolled in PIP (*n*=197) and PEV (*n*=205) models were statistically significant or not. According to the results illustrated in Figure 29, we found a statistically significant difference between the different linguistic models (H=8.752, *p* =0.003), with a mean score of 1.20 for the Spanish-based model (PIP) and 1.42 for the Catalan-based model (PEV). Therefore, we may argue that those students enrolled in PEV models reported more favourable attitudes than those following a PIP model.

Language attitudes to English and linguistic model variable

Figure with horizontal bars:

- PIP: 1,20
- PEV: 1,42

Kruskal Wallis Test X^2=8.752 p=0.003

X-axis: MEAN SCORES (,00 / ,50 / 1,00 / 1,50 / 2,00)

Figure 29. Mean scores of language attitudes in English with respect to linguistic model variable. Vertical bars represent the standard deviations of means. Kruskal-Wallis Test results of language attitudes in English with respect to linguistic model.

The present study has also proven that PEV programmes promote positive attitudes towards the foreign language. These findings are in line with those reported by Lasagabaster and Safont (2008) which were able to demonstrate that those students in PEV models displayed the most positive attitudes to English. We believe that students enrolled in Catalan-based schools are more aware of language diversity and show positive attitudes towards other cultures. Furthermore, the arrival of migrant students whose languages are different from local students has helped to build positive attitudes towards languages. Le Pichon-Vorstman (2010) also reported that foreign language instruction from a very early age develops students' language awareness and sensitiveness towards other languages.

Other studies (Portolés, 2011; Safont, 2007) quoted in our theoretical framework have demonstrated that students from PEV programmes generally expressed positive attitudes to English, although no differences were reported regarding the effect of the linguistic model on attitudes towards the foreign language. Nevertheless, the focus of those studies was on university students and as we have seen in Hypothesis III, age has an important effect on language attitudes.

The present Hypothesis is supported by the data presented above. Hence, we may confirm that the linguistic model followed at school influences pragmatic awareness and language attitudes in English. Those students enrolled in PEV programmes performed the pragmatic comprehension test significantly better than those enrolled in PIP programmes. Additionally, they also displayed more favourable attitudes than those enrolled in PIP programmes.

In light of the differences illustrated so far, we may argue that Catalan-based schooling enhances L3 pragmatic awareness. Although both types of schools are based in a bilingual (Catalan – Spanish) sociolinguistic setting, we may argue that strong differences may appear between these two types of bilingual schools.

On the one hand, Catalan-based programmes consist of immersion in the minority language. In this sense, most of the courses are taught in Catalan (e.g. Science, Maths, Arts and Crafts), except in the case of Spanish language which is reduced to one course. The promotion of Catalan as a teaching medium may help the promotion and development of balanced bilingualism. As a result, the prevalence

of Catalan over Spanish in the school context may counterbalance the dominant exposure of Spanish in the wider context. As previously mentioned, the input that they received from the minority language is limited in comparison to the majority language. For that reason, language instruction through Catalan may increase the optimal acquisition of the minority language. In addition, Spanish is introduced progressively and children achieve a good command of the majority language. As a result, children acquire a formal proficiency in both Catalan and Spanish at the end of compulsory education.

On the other hand, Spanish-based programmes use Spanish as the language of instruction in all subjects, except for the Catalan subject. Consequently, the exposure to Catalan is very limited and the performance of students following this teaching programme in Catalan is not successful. Some studies (see Doménech, 2008 for a review) have shown that they do not reach the goals of bilingualism and equal knowledge of both languages. This linguistic programme favours dominant bilingualism in which only one language achieves high competence. Therefore, we may argue that both models aim at fostering bilingualism since all students are exposed to Catalan and Spanish, however the extent of the exposure varies depending on the linguistic model followed.

In addition, as we previously explained, English is also introduced in both linguistic models from a very early age. Studies (Safont, 2005; Portolés & Safont, in press; Portolés & Martín, 2012) have shown that students enrolled in Catalan-based schools have more L3 learning facilities than those enrolled in programmes where the

main language of teaching is Spanish. Those findings coincide with previous studies on early childhood in Catalonia (Muñoz, 2000; Sanz, 2000, 2008) or the Basque Country (Cenoz, 2003, 2004, 2008, 2009) in which those students enrolled in schools where the main language of instruction is the minority language showed more solid and balanced competence in the two official languages of the context as well as in the L3.

In the present study, students in Catalan-based schools displayed more positive attitudes than those in a monolingual-biased classroom, i.e. PIP classroom. In line with earlier research (Bamford & Mizokawa, 1989; Merisuo-Storm, 2007; Peal & Lambert, 1962; Riestra & Johnson, 1964), students in bilingual classes frequently report more positive attitudes towards foreign language acquisition than students in monolingual classes. Therefore, we may argue that language planning is paramount for attitude formation and schooling plays a major role in the formation of students' attitudes.

Here, using the Continua of Multilingual Education (Cenoz, 2009) may help us to understand the analysis of multilingual learners since all educational and sociolinguistic variables may have an effect on multilingual educational system. The Continua of Multilingual Education may avoid fixed categorizations and allow us to examine multilingual schools in continua that go from less multilingual to more multilingual by taking into account several factors, such as the sociolinguistic context where the school is located. We have noticed strong differences in multilingual practices in those schools located in the city of Castelló and those located in towns or villages nearby.

However, the focus of the present study is not to analyse each individual variable in depth since that would constitute a paper itself. In the present paper, we may confirm that the linguistic model that the subjects have chosen have an effect on English pragmatic awareness and attitudes to English.

To sum up the findings above related to RQ4, we can confirm that the linguistic model in which participants are enrolled affected pragmatic awareness and language attitudes. Our findings have reported that those students following the Catalan-based model performed the pragmatic comprehension test significantly better than those enrolled in the Spanish-based model. We may argue that Catalan-based schooling enhances the pragmatic awareness of L3 because the exposure to L1 and L2 input is more balanced and, consequently, students achieve some linguistic benefits which Spanish-based schooling does not allow them to. Additionally, we have also found that language attitudes towards English are more favourable in the case of students in PEV models. We believe that young learners enrolled in programmes where the minority language is the main language of instruction display more positive attitudes towards other languages and cultures.

Last but not least, language attitudes are specific to the subject, yet they are highly conditioned by the surrounding environment. Since the DMM tries to cope with the complexity that multilingual acquisition presents, this typology may provide us with a more comprehensive framework for analysing the interplay of language attitudes on learners' pragmatic awareness in three languages. As

Safont (2005) argues, analysing variables in isolation may facilitate the study, but it may provide an unrealistic picture of what actually happens in TLA. In order to meet the third purpose of this study, Hypothesis V will examine the relationship between language attitudes and pragmatic awareness in the three languages.

5.5. Results and Discussion related to Hypothesis V

With reference to Hypothesis V, we predicted that the different school samples would show variability in their results of pragmatic awareness and language attitudes. Additionally, we hypothesised that the degree of pragmatic awareness would be related to learners' language attitudes. In response to Hypothesis V, we first examined and compared whether the degree of pragmatic awareness and the global attitudes of each school showed statistically significant differences across schools. Then, we examined whether the level of pragmatic awareness in each school sample was related to the global language attitudes displayed by the students. In order to test that relationship, Spearman rank analyses were used instead of the Pearson correlation analyses as our data were not normally distributed. Finally, we further explored the relationship between language and pragmatic awareness.

To start this analysis, Figure 30 below shows the language attitude scores and the degree of pragmatic awareness displayed by the students in each school sample. As can be observed coloured in yellow, the highest degree of pragmatic awareness is obtained in the school sample number 9 (*M*=4.17; *SD*=1.602) and the lowest level is displayed in school number 7 (*M*=2.85; *SD*=1.302). With reference to attitudes to languages (coloured in blue), the students that belong to school sample

3 showed the most favourable attitudes (*M*=5.14; *SD*=1.280) and those pertaining to school sample 7 held the least positive attitudes.
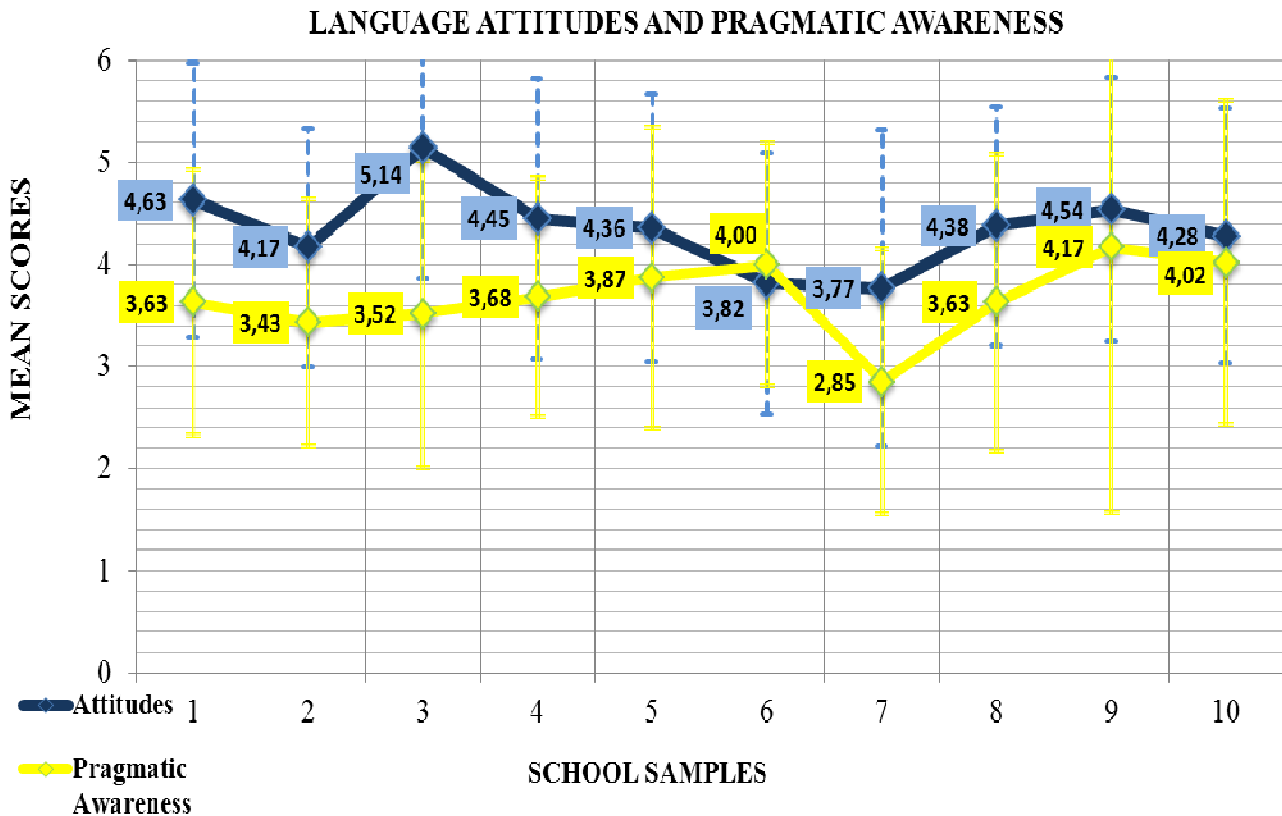
Figure 30. Mean scores of language attitudes and pragmatic awareness in each of the school samples. Vertical bars represent the standard deviations of means.

In order to determine whether those differences among schools were statistically significant or not, we employed a Kruskal-Wallis Test. As depicted in Table 16, the results obtained from the test reported statistically significant differences among school samples with respect to pragmatic awareness (χ^2=28.327, *p*=0.001) and language attitudes (χ^2=32.280, *p*=0.000).

Table 16. Kruskal-Wallis Test results of language attitudes and pragmatic awareness in relation to the school variable.

	Att_total	Prag_total
Chi-Square	**32.280**	**28.327**
Asymp. Sig.	**0.000**	**0.001**

In light of these findings, the first statement of Hypothesis V is confirmed, since the different school samples examined in the present study showed strong variability both in terms of pragmatic awareness and language attitudes. These results coincide with the premises supported by Herdina and Jessner in the DMM, which are mainly based on DST theory. Dynamism, interconnection, uniqueness, self-organization, and emergence are some of the features that characterise multilingual systems.

Our findings contrast with those derived from traditional research in which homogenous groups were examined and linguistic data were isolated from social factors. Indeed, in comparison to earlier research, variability is not viewed as "noise" (bad data) but as "sound" (Thelen & Smith, 1994, p.67). Our study avoids reductionism and tries to provide a more exhaustive account of the factors that may affect multilingual systems and their relationships. Therefore, we claim that variability is an inherent quality of multilingualism.

The Continua of Multilingual Education, proposed by Cenoz (2009), may help us to understand the variability of results from one school to the other. We believe that the variability of results is due to a large number of reasons that could be summarised with just one: the effect of environmental factors at the macro and micro level as well as

the interactions between all those factors. As argued in recent literature (Chevalier, 2011; Davidiak, 2010; Dewaele, 2012), the influence of factors is determinant in the analysis of multilingual learners. As argued by Ecke (2004, p.341), it is "helpful to conceive language development holistically as the interplay of environmental, cognitive, social-affective, and linguistic variables." Thus, the analysis of variables in isolation may facilitate the study, but it may provide an unrealistic picture of what actually happens in TLA (Safont, 2005).

Recent research (Alcón, 2012; Montanari, 2009; Safont, 2013b) on multilingual users suggest the need to explore the relationship between language attitudes and pragmatic awareness. Indeed, Montanari (2009, p.625) claimed in her study of pragmatic awareness that "one should look beyond the linguistic input itself and explore more in detail the attitudes and expectations concerning appropriate language use". On that account, we may argue that the interaction of language attitudes and pragmatic awareness may shed light on the understanding of early language learning processes. Additionally, as far as we know, no previous research has accounted for the relationship between these two variables in multilingual contexts.

In the present study, we will cover this research gap by means of a series of Spearman rank correlation analyses that investigate the link between pragmatic awareness and language attitudes in each school. Such a relationship is analysed by correlating the overall total scores of pragmatic awareness and the global language attitude scores. Table 17 shows the corresponding Spearman's correlation coefficients and the p value.

Table 17. Spearman's correlation coefficients and p-values in each school sample

School sample 1	*r*= -.671 *p*=0.002
School sample 2	*r*= .284 *p*=0.049
School sample 3	*r*= -.312 *p*=0.044
School sample 4	*r*= .239 *p*=0.285
School sample 5	*r*= .137 *p*=0.405
School sample 6	*r*= -.385 *p*=0.043
School sample 7	*r*= .258 *p*=0.080
School sample 8	*r*= .052 *p*=0.750
School sample 9	*r*= -.139 *p*=0.347
School sample 10	*r*= -.037 *p*=0.793

The results given in Table 17 above show that there exists a relationship between the global attitudes and the degree of pragmatic awareness. More specifically, our findings revealed significant correlation between both variables in school sample 1, 2, 3 and 6 (see those the p-values coloured in red). Therefore, the correlation analysis has mainly confirmed the second statement of Hypothesis V since we have found a relationship between pragmatic awareness and language attitudes.

Additionaly, we were also interested in further exploring the relationship between the global scores of the subjects for each language in the pragmatic comprehension test and their overall total scores of language attitudes towards each language. Table 18 below depicts the corresponding Spearman's correlation coefficients and p values for the following relationships:

Table18. Spearman's correlation coefficients and p- values in each language.

	Cat_attitudes	Eng_attitudes	Spa_attitudes
Cat_pragmatic awareness	r=-.179, ***p*=0.000**	r=.006, *p*=0.899	r=.159, ***p*=0.001**
Eng_pragmatic awareness	r=-.116, ***p*=0.020**	r=.008, *p*=0.869	r=.102, ***p*=0.041**
Spa_pragmatic awareness	r=-.084, *p*=0.094	r=-.015, *p*=0.768	r=.107, ***p*=0.033**

The results in Table 18 above show that Catalan pragmatic awareness was correlated with attitudes towards Catalan (r_s(402)= -.179, p =0.000) and Spanish (r_s(402)=.159, p =0.001). We also found a significant relationship between English pragmatic awareness and language attitudes towards Catalan (r_s(402)= -.116, p =0.020) and Spanish (r_s(402)=.102, p =0.041). Last but not least, our results also revealed significant correlations between Spanish pragmatic awareness and language attitudes towards Spanish (r_s(402)=.107, p =0.033). In sum, we have found that some pragmatic systems were significantly linked to specific language attitudes. The following table offers a summary of the group of variables which are significantly related:

Table 19. Relationships established between pragmatic awareness and language attitudes

	RELATIONSHIPS	
1.	Catalan pragmatic awareness	language attitudes towards Catalan
2.	Catalan pragmatic awareness	language attitudes towards Spanish
3.	English pragmatic awareness	language attitudes towards Catalan
4.	English pragmatic awareness	language attitudes towards Spanish
5.	Spanish pragmatic awareness	language attitudes towards Spanish

The results derived from this hypothesis suggest a new avenue for research since we have found that specific language attitudes are linked to pragmatic systems. We firmly believe that choices at all

levels of language are influenced by language attitudes. As argued by the DMM, the affective side of languages is paramount in order to understand language acquisition processes. According to Mihaljevic-Djigunovic (2009, p.199), the role of language attitudes in the process of language acquisition "needs to be considered not only through interactions with the learning context but also through their internal interactions (among subcomponents) and interactions with each other". As reported by Cenoz (2009), language attitudes are dynamic and do not develop in a social vacuum, but in a specific political, ideological, and cultural context. The development of language attitudes during the school stage is worthy of analyse analysis as the attitudinal component has been proven to be a strong influence for effective language learning and teaching.

The existing available evidence for early language learners was the relationship between language attitudes and language proficiency (Baker, 1992; Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Muñoz & Tragant, 2001). Those studies have reported that both negative and positive attitudes are positively related to the proficiency level. In other words, higher positive attitudes mean better language proficiency will be achieved or, in contrast, less favourable attitudes mean a lower level of competence will be gained.

Some studies (Hinkel, 1996; Lo Castro, 2001; Pablos-Ortega, 2010) that have focused on the relationship between pragmatic awareness and language attitudes adopted a SLA perspective. Those studies highlight that language attitudes play a very important role in determining pragmatic choices. Nevertheless, these authors have

ignored the existence of multilingual communities and have overgeneralized politeness rules. We believe that the use of stereotypes suppresses the variability and dynamism of language systems.

Concluding this section, Hypothesis V contains a number of new and important insights into multilingualism that may be derived from the outcomes. First and foremost, multilingualism is highly complex since many variables are interconnected. The findings show the association between language attitudes and pragmatic awareness. Additionally, the relationships between both components are far more complex, as illustrated in Table 19: specific language attitudes are related to certain pragmatic systems. Those results suggest a new avenue for further research.

Such a relationship was found in some of the schools, but not in others. The variability between schools can be explained by the DMM which applied DST theory. In line with DST research, multilingualism is a complex, non-linear, emergent, non-predictable and self-organising system. All the features proposed in that theory can be applied to our results. As described above, the different school samples show strong variability both in terms of pragmatic awareness and language attitudes. The dynamism and heterogeneity of multilingualism give rise to variation across school samples. Therefore, outcomes are not predictable and new forms of emergence and self-organization appear. We have seen that multilingualism phenomena are sensitive and dependent on external and internal factors. According to Vespoor et al. (2008, p.215), all those factors should be treated and analysed in order to understand the variability in language acquisition processes as 'the

environment is not an independent factor that influences the behaviour, but the learner also actively shapes and changes the environment'. The interactional pattern between the social and the cognitive is paramount in the DST approach.

The number of different factors that may affect language acquisition is vast. Just to number a few, Hufeisen (2005, cited in Hufeisen and Marx, 2007) has proposed (a) neurophysiological factors, (b) learners external factors, (c) affective factors, (d) cognitive factors, (e) foreign language specific factors and (f) linguistic factors.

This study may make an important contribution to the field since our results lend strong support to the DMM. This framework has allowed us to analyse the interplay of several factors on young learners' multilingual development in three languages. Taking into account the Factor Model proposed above by Hufeisen (2005, cited in Hufeisen and Marx, 2007), the factors tackled in this study are mainly affective, linguistic and external factors. We have particularly focused on young learners' attitudes and pragmatic awareness in relation to social and environmental factors, such as the linguistic model or the language status. Therefore, that triangulation of data has allowed us to understand early multilingual processes in detail, as illustrated in Figure 31.
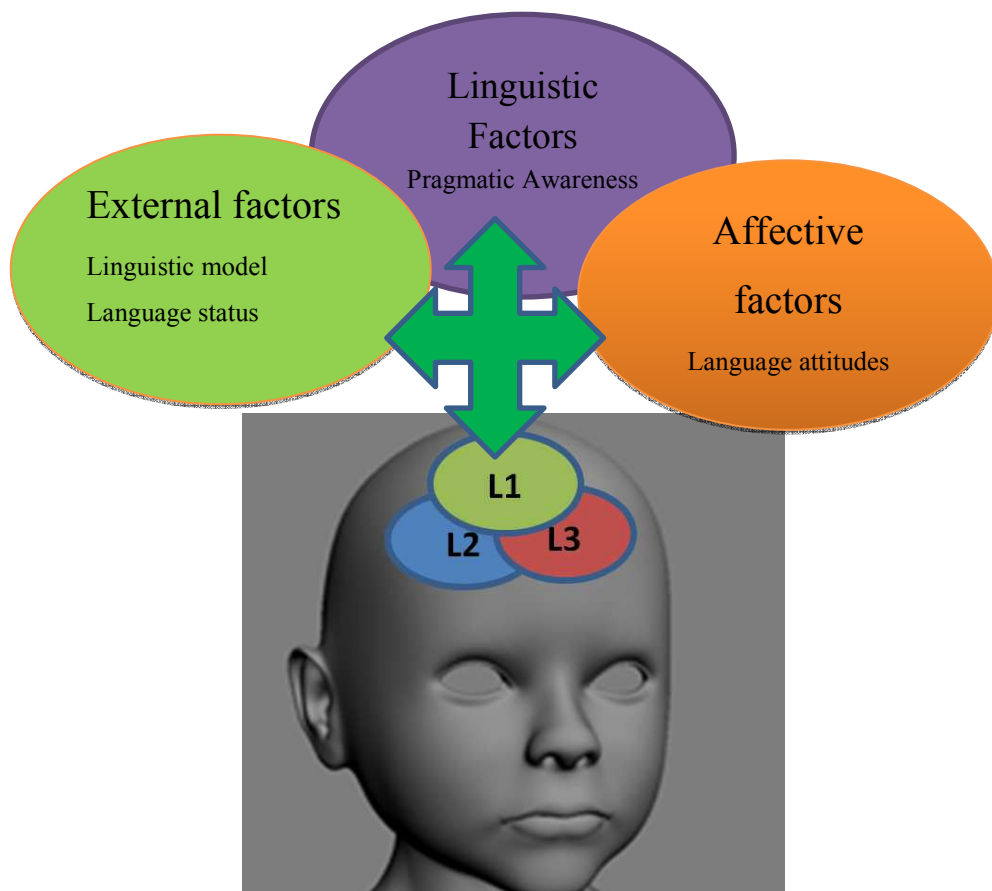
Figure 31. Triangulation of data

Finally, we believe that while these initial results are promising, further research is necessary. The complexities and dynamism of multilingualism related to language attitudes and pragmatic awareness must be further developed and documented. Multilingual development cannot be investigated in isolation without considering social factors. This assumption contrasts with Chomsky's (1965) idea that social factors were outside the domain of linguistics. Therefore, we support the DMM which contemplates the dynamism of language attitudes and pragmatic awareness and their relation to the wider context. Hence, we may argue from our findings that multilingual acquisition is not a predictable and linear process since many factors, both social and

individual, influence and interact in the complex system of a multilingual mind.

In this chapter, we have reported the results derived from the hypotheses and discussed their implications. To finish with, Chapter 6 draws together the main findings and key issues of the present study, and it raises a number of questions and new avenues for further research.

CHAPTER 6

6. CONCLUSION

In this final chapter, we will draw together the main outcomes and comment on the key contributions of this study to the field of multilingualism. Section 6.1 summarises the main results and explains the main implications deriving from the hypotheses proposed. Section 6.2 describes some important pedagogical implications. Finally, Section 6.3 analyses the principal limitations found in the present dissertation and opens new avenues for further research.

6.1. Concluding Remarks

The present study set out to explore multilingualism in the Valencian Community (a multilingual context which has been largely under investigated) by focusing on consecutive multilingual learners. The main objective was to gain insights into early multilingual development. More specifically, we have paid special attention: (1) to examining the pragmatic awareness of our participants, (2) to analysing their language attitudes, (3) to investigating the relationship between language attitudes and pragmatic awareness and (4) to exploring factors in the wider context that influence multilingual development. One of the most noteworthy issues in this study is the fact that the aims have been examined from a truly multilingual and dynamic perspective. We have thus provided important new insights into multilingualism by covering different research gaps existing in the field.

The growth of multilingualism has increased the interest of multilingual acquisition over the last few decades; however the

investigation in this area has been traditionally done through a monolingual lens. We believe that L1 and L2 studies have provided valuable insights into child language acquisition; however, the picture that we may obtain from these studies is not realistic. Previous research has considered language acquisition as something systematic and invariable. The findings from monolingual-biased research have been discussed in isolation without considering other factors. As a result, the existing literature has been inconclusive, and thus, a research gap on this issue must be covered. For that reason, we decided to investigate multilingualism from a truly multilingual perspective (Aronin & Singleton, 2012; Cenoz & Gorter, 2011; Jessner, 2013).

Additionally, previous research (Barnes, 2008; Quay, 2008; Montanari, 2009) on children has considered simultaneous multilingual children and very few studies (Safont, 2011, 2012, 2013b) have considered consecutive multilingual children. For that reason, the population under investigation in the present dissertation has been consecutive multilingual children, that is, children whose additional language acquisition has taken place after the establishment of the L1.

More specifically, we have taken into account two different age periods which have been referred to as crucial for the analysis of language development (Nicholas & Lightbown, 2008). More particularly, the focus has been on pre-literate (4-5) and post-literate (8-9) children. The analysis of both groups has covered preschool and primary educational stages and, thus, has provided a clear developmental pattern of multilingual acquisition throughout

childhood. In our view, the present dissertation provides new and important evidence on child multilingual development.

Therefore, the present study offers a wider perspective, as the learners' multilingual background is taken into consideration in relation to the wider context. Our study avoids reductionism and tries to provide a more exhaustive account of the factors that may affect multilingual systems and their relationships. The underlying theory adopted in this research is the Dynamic Model of Multilingualism proposed by Herdina and Jessner (2002). This framework for the analysis of multilingual learners has been growing in popularity in the last decade, however very few studies have truly applied its premises to their results. Currently, this well-founded theory is largely under-researched. In the present study, the DMM has allowed us to examine the interplay of several factors on learners' multilingual development. We have particularly focused on pragmatic awareness and language attitudes.

On the one hand, existing studies of pragmatic awareness have largely ignored the multilingual background of the learners and have only considered one language, thus, giving a partial account of the subjects. Pragmatic awareness is traditionally linked to the proficiency level (Bates, 1976; Cromdal, 1996; Wagner et al., 2010; Wilkinson et al., 1984). In our view, this is a monolingual-biased term and it only refers to the linguistic competence in a language. Herdina and Jessner (2002) proposed the term multilingual proficiency in the DMM. This multilingual proficiency consists of interaction among language systems and the M-factor. The latter refer to those linguistic and

cognitive skills that multilingual users possess in comparison to monolingual speakers based on prior knowledge and experience.

One particular aspect that needs further research in the understanding of early multilingual speakers is that of pragmatics. However, very few studies have accounted for the pragmatic development of trilinguals in early childhood (Barnes, 2008; Safont, 2011, 2012, 2013b), and those have focused on the production of requests in the family context. As far as we know, no previous research has addressed pragmatic comprehension of requests in instructional contexts. Therefore, the present study contributes to broadening our knowledge of pragmatic awareness by examining multilinguals' comprehension of requests.

On the other hand, several studies have reported the attitudinal benefits of early language learning and the attitudinal patterns that can be found in multilingual contexts. However, the study of young learners' attitudes towards the languages employed in the education system has not been sufficiently researched in the Valencian Community. For that reason, we have examined language attitudes to Catalan, English and Spanish displayed by school students in order to broaden our knowledge of multilingualism and gain insights into the current linguistic situation of the context of our study.

Last but not least, in line with the premises of DMM, the interactional pattern between the emotional side of learners and their pragmatic awareness is paramount in order to better understand multilingual acquisition processes. We firmly believe that language attitudes are linked to pragmatic awareness; however, no previous

research has addressed the relationship between child pragmatic awareness and language attitudes.

Thus, after reviewing all the research gaps mentioned above, this study is intended to contribute to the scant body of research on child multilingual development by (1) examining pragmatic awareness on children's comprehension of requests, (2) analysing language attitudes to Catalan, English and Spanish, (3) studying the possible relationship between pragmatic awareness and language attitudes and (4) exploring factors in the wider context that may influence multilingual development.

The sample for the present dissertation consisted of 402 participants. The younger group included 206 learners (51.2% of the sample) and the older group consisted of 196 learners (48.8%). A multi-method approach was employed in order to gather quantitative and qualitative data as well as secure triangulation and a better understanding of findings. More specifically, our data were collected by means of a pragmatic comprehension test, a matched-guise technique and an oral interview aiming at measuring students' pragmatic awareness and language attitudes. The pragmatic comprehension test includes different scenarios in each language that involve the targeted item (the speech act of requesting). The request forms and the request modifying devices used in the present study were based on the taxonomies proposed by Trosborg (1995) and Alcón et al. (2005). The matched-guised technique and the oral interviews were employed to elicit students' language attitudes. The answers obtained from the data collection instruments were codified for analysis with the SPSS programme. In analysing our data, we took

into account only the comprehension of appropriate request forms and favourable attitudes.

The main findings of this study for each of the hypothesis proposed can be summarised as follows:

The Hypothesis I suggested that our participants would differentiate among their language systems and display high levels of pragmatic awareness in Catalan, English and Spanish (Barnes, 2006; Jessner, 2008; Safont, 2011, 2012, 2013a, b). In addition, we also formulated that primary education students would show a higher degree of pragmatic awareness than pre-schoolers (Elrod, 1983; Mabel, 1994; Lee, 2010; Takakuwa, 2000). Taking into account the outcomes, we may claim that Hypothesis I was confirmed since our subjects (i) displayed a high degree of pragmatic awareness, (ii) showed signs of pragmatic differentiation among their language systems and (iii) their pragmatic awareness increased with age.

In line with some studies conducted with early multilinguals (Barnes, 2008; Safont, 2011, 2012, 2013b), our participants displayed a high degree of pragmatic awareness, even though their pragmatic systems were not fully developed, especially in English. In contrast to previous research grounded in monolingual tenets (Carrell, 1981; Lee, 2010; Papafragou, 2000; Tomasello, 2008), our participants' level of pragmatic awareness was not determined by their proficiency level, but their multilingual proficiency. We may argue that the multilingual background of the participants and their language learning experience in Spanish and Catalan may have provided learners with a high level of awareness towards their L3. The enhanced skills and abilities of our

multilinguals may provide evidence for the M-factor proposed by Herdina and Jessner (2002).

Our results regarding Hypothesis 1 also suggest that Spanish showed the highest degree of pragmatic awareness, followed by Catalan and finally English. Statistically significant differences among these language systems were found in relation to pragmatic awareness. Multilingual users may not have the same competence in all languages since not all the language systems have necessarily the same purposes, functions and uses. In this sense, we may confirm that pragmatic differentiation is apparent in early multilingual learners. These results are in line with Barnes (2008), Montanari (2009) and Safont (2011, 2012, 2013b).

We have also found that primary education learners displayed more pragmatic awareness than pre-schoolers, as reported in other studies (Axia & Baroni, 1985; Baroni & Axia, 1989; Bates, 1976; Takakuwa, 2000; Wilkinson et al., 1984). As expected, pragmatic awareness increases as children grow older in line with their cognitive, social and maturational skills. Nevertheless, here the main insight is that pre-schoolers also showed a high degree of pragmatic awareness despite the fact that they were pre-literate children. In contrast to previous studies (Axia & Baroni, 1985; Bates, 1976; Baroni & Axia, 1989; Bernicot, 1991; Lee, 2010; Wagner et al., 2010; Wilkinson et al., 1984) which stated that 7 is a crucial age in the acquisition of pragmatic competence, the present study shows that four-year-old participants are able to recognise those requests which are pragmatically appropriate in their three languages. Additionally, the comparison of both age groups showed that the degree of

pragmatic awareness in Catalan and English fluctuate and change over time from the age of 4 to 9. These findings have provided evidence for the dynamism, complexity and variability of the multilingual mind as well as evidence for the pragmatic benefits of multilingual speakers.

In Hypothesis II, we predicted that those requests including the particle *please* would be understood better than those requests including grounders as modification devices (Achiba 2003; Cromdal, 1996; Ellis, 1992; Rose, 2000). In addition, we also hypothesized that both grounders and *please* modifiers would be understood significantly easier by primary education students than by pre-schoolers (Axia & Baroni, 1985; Baroni & Axia, 1989; Takawuka, 2000; Wilkinson et al., 1984). Our data suggest that grounders were more frequently understood as appropriate devices than those requests which involved the particle *please*, despite the fact that the former are more syntactically complex. Our findings coincide with those reported by Safont (2012) which focused on the request modification items employed by a consecutive multilingual child. Additionally, this point is particularly relevant because the consecutive multilingual learners in the present study were able to identify the L3 grounder, even though their proficiency level in English was still quite limited. These results are relevant as they contradict previous findings (Bates, 1976; Cromdal, 1996; Wagner et al., 2010; Wilkinson et al., 1984) grounded on monolingual behaviour in which pragmatic awareness was determined by the proficiency level. These results are linked to the multilingual proficiency of our participants, that is to say, a multicompetence that is enhanced by the relationships established among the languages involved in one's repertoire.

The M-factor also helped our preschool children to recognise pragmatically appropriate requests from the age of four. Additionally, in line with previous studies (Axia & Baroni, 1985; Baroni & Axia, 1989; Takakuwa, 2000; Wilkinson et al., 1984), primary school children showed greater pragmatic awareness in the identification of please and grounders as appropriate devices. Nevertheless, interestingly, the youngest participants more frequently identified the English request that included the particle *please*. We have proposed that these results may be related to the social and emotional development of children since the particle *please* is a key feature of language socialization and acquisition. One crucial aspect of multilingual development is the way that children perceive language by taking into account its status and other factors. For that reason, we examined the language attitudes of the sample in the following Hypothesis.

Hypothesis III, which considered that language attitudes towards Catalan, Spanish and English would vary (Nightingale, 2012; Portolés, 2011; Safont, 2007), was also confirmed. We predicted that pre-schoolers would display more favourable language attitudes towards the minority and foreign language than primary school students. The latter would show a preference for the majority language (Baker, 1992; Cenoz, 2002, 2003; Hoare, 2000; Lefever, 2009; Nikolov, 1999; Sharp et al., 1973). This assumption was also supported.

Taking our data into account, we may acknowledge that not all language systems are equally valued. Our respondents have shown positive attitudes towards multilingualism. However, participants have

reported the most positive attitudes towards Spanish, followed by Catalan and the least positive attitudes towards English. The main reasons are to be found in political, social and psychological issues. More specifically, we have found how the sociolinguistic status of a language may heavily influence attitudes to languages.

Age also appears as an influential factor in attitudes towards languages. Younger learners held more favourable attitudes towards the minority and the foreign language than older language learners, whilst the latter preferred the majority and dominant language. We believe that young children lack awareness of the low status and vitality of a minority language, whilst older children show apathy towards using the minority language because of its lower prestige. They prefer to be part of the dominant culture. Attitudes to English also wane over time in line with previous studies (Cenoz, 2002, 2003; Heining-Boynton & Haitema, 2007; Henry & Apelgren, 2008; Lefever, 2009; Muñoz & Tragant, 2001; Nikolov, 1999). In fact, we have found a change of perception in language attitudes by means of the oral interviews conducted after the matched-guise technique. Pre-schoolers preferred those languages which were related to the things they like or enjoy and the languages that their parents or teachers speak. Primary school students also show that the emotional side of languages referred to their mother tongue and the language that they grow up with in their family environment; nevertheless, very few instances refer to the teacher. Older learners start perceiving the role of languages in the world and their place in it. This sense of language status is much less pronounced in the younger children.

Therefore, in line with the DMM, language attitudes are dynamic and complex in nature and they may be modified due to the influence of other contextual factors, both at the macro and micro level. We have seen how the mass-media and the sociolinguistic status of a language have a strong effect on attitudes. In Hypothesis IV, we have particularly focused on the effect of the linguistic model on language attitudes.

Hypothesis IV reported that the linguistic model would have an effect on pragmatic awareness and language attitudes towards English (Cenoz, 2002, 2003; Portolés, 2011; Safont, 2007). Our findings confirmed the hypothesis and reported that those students following the Catalan-based model performed the pragmatic comprehension test significantly better than those enrolled in the Spanish-based model. These results are consistent with those reported for undergraduate students by Safont (2005) in the context of our study. We may argue that Catalan-based schooling enhances L3 pragmatic awareness because the exposure to L1 and L2 input is more balanced and, consequently, students achieve some linguistic benefits that the Spanish-based school does allow them to. Other studies, such as Portolés and Safont (in press) and Portolés and Martín (2012) have also reported a more extensive repertoire of pragmatic functions and translanguaging practices in Catalan-based schools.

Additionally, we have also found that language attitudes towards English are more favourable in the case of students in Catalan-based schools. We believe that young learners enrolled in programmes where the minority language is the main language of instruction display more positive attitudes towards other languages

and cultures. Therefore, we may argue that language planning is paramount for attitude formation and schooling plays a major role in the formation of students' attitudes.

In order to meet the third purpose of this study, Hypothesis V examined the relationship between language attitudes and pragmatic awareness in the three languages. We predicted that the different school samples would show variability in their results of pragmatic awareness and language attitudes. Additionally, we hypothesised whether the degree of pragmatic awareness of the school would be related to learners' language attitudes. Hypothesis V was also confirmed by our findings.

The school samples showed strong variability both in terms of pragmatic awareness and language attitudes. The Continua of Multilingual Education, proposed by Cenoz (2009), may help us understand the variability of our results. In our opinion, the results show the effect of environmental factors at the macro and micro level as well as the interactions between all those factors. As argued by Ecke (2004, p.341), it is "helpful to conceive language development holistically as the interplay of environmental, cognitive, social-affective, and linguistic variables."

Multilingualism is highly complex since many variables are interconnected. The present study also confirmed the association between language attitudes and pragmatic awareness. We firmly believe that choices at all levels of language are influenced by language attitudes. As argued by the DMM, the affective side of languages is paramount in order to understand language acquisition processes. These results open a new avenue for further research.

Relationships between pragmatic awareness and language attitudes were found in some of the schools, but not in others. The variability of schools can be explained by the DMM which applied DST theory. In line with DST, multilingualism is a complex, non-linear, emergent, non-predictable and self-organising system. The dynamism and heterogeneity of multilingualism give rise to the variation across school samples.

To summarise the main findings described above, we can state that this study may make an important contribution to the field since our results lend strong support to the DMM. This framework has allowed us to analyse the interplay of several factors in young learners' multilingual development in three languages. We have particularly focused on young learners' attitudes and pragmatic awareness in relation to social and environmental factors, such as the linguistic model or the language status and that triangulation of data has allowed us to understand early multilingual processes in detail.

In our view, these results have provided strong evidence for the enhanced pragmatic awareness of consecutive multilingual learners. Three main outcomes may highlight the pragmatic benefits of multilingual speakers (1) high level of pragmatic awareness in the L3, (2) high degree of pragmatic awareness of pre-literate children and (3) the recognition of grounders as appropriate devices. Our participants' degree of pragmatic awareness was not determined by their proficiency level, but by a multilingual proficiency. We argue that the multilingual background of the participants and their language learning experience may provide learners with a high level of

pragmatic awareness as along with the relationships established among the languages involved in a multilingual mind.

This study has also contributed to further understanding child pragmatic development from the age of 4 to 9. The main insights have been the fluctuation of English and Catalan over the span of time and space and the fact that pre-schoolers understood the English request that included the particle *please* better than older learners. Here, the importance of children's social and emotional development on pragmatics has been highlighted from our results. This developmental change has also been observed in the case of language attitudes. This study has confirmed that attitudes towards languages have the tendency to change with age. As reported by Cenoz (2009), language attitudes are dynamic and develop in a specific political, ideological, and cultural context.

Finally, the present study confirms and firmly supports those features proposed by Herdina and Jessner (2002) in their DMM. Hence, we may argue from our findings that multilingual acquisition is not a predictable and linear process since many factors, both social and individual, influence and interact in the complex system of a language. Additionally, in contrast to previous research, our data have been thoroughly examined by taking into account the wider context and a multilingual perspective. Therefore, we firmly believe that this dissertation may contribute to furthering our understanding of early multilingual acquisition from a fully dynamic and multilingual perspective. The following section describes some pedagogical implications that can be derived in light of all the findings above.

6.2. Pedagogical Implications

The findings in the present study allow us to draw some pedagogical implications for language teaching practice and language policy planners.

In light of our findings, we have seen the overriding effect of Spanish on our participants' pragmatic awareness as well on their language attitudes. More specifically, the results derived from the analysis have demonstrated that the higher level of pragmatic awareness and the more favourable attitudes are related to Spanish. From this perspective and taking into account theoretical foundations on multilingualism (Bialystok, 2001; Cenoz, 2009; Cummins, 2003; Singleton, 2000; Muñoz, 2008), instruction through the minority and foreign language is a necessary condition to maintain multilingual contexts.

In the Valencian Community, the presence of Catalan cannot compete with the strong presence of Spanish outside the school. As a result, the exposure to the minority language inside the classroom may counterbalance the strong exposure of the majority language in the wider context and both majority and minority language speakers may benefit from formal schooling through Catalan. According to Cummins' threshold hypothesis (1976), the condition of being balanced bilingual seems to have an advantage in L3 acquisition, as has been reported in several studies (Cenoz, 2008; Muñoz, 2000; Safont, 2005; Stafford et al., 2010), although other studies (Bialystok et al., 2003; Le Pichon-Vorstman, 2010) have argued that this is not a determinant condition.

Similarly, formal schooling through English is also desirable since the input received from the foreign language is very limited. According to Singleton (2000) and Muñoz (2008), more quantity and quality of English instruction at the earliest stages will result in better language outcomes in the long run. Therefore, we firmly believe that formal schooling through the minority and the foreign language may increase the benefits of multilingualism.

Hence, language policies are pivotal in the promotion of multilingual education and the basis for future language teaching methodologies. The linguistic landscape also provides valuable information about the sociolinguistic context and the uses of languages in contact in a multilingual region. Hence, another pedagogical implication is to improve the presence of Catalan and English in the school context by means of visible signs and posters. All this may be followed by an increase in status and use of Catalan in society. Similarly, we cannot forget the influence of the mass media on learners. The use of the original versions may develop students' linguistic and intercultural awareness as well as sensitiveness towards other languages. Unfortunately, foreign language films or television programmes are dubbed into Spanish.

Last but not least, in line with García and Sylvan (2011), Cenoz and Gorter (2011) and Ó Duibhir and Cummins (2012, p.36), we should avoid the traditional monolingual behaviour in the language classroom. As derived from our observations, the language classroom is not monolingual, since all the language systems interact with other. A monolingual approach in the classroom does not take into account the complexity and dynamism of several language systems in

multilingual practices. Hence, the integration of languages is crucial in order to develop students' pragmatic awareness and language attitudes.

The following section will provide an account of the main limitations found in the present study and some suggestions for further research.

6.3. Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Further Research

The limitations of the present dissertation and a number of other issues that, in spite of their interest, were beyond the scope of the investigation and deserve further attention are outlined below.

All in all, the present study has presented a serious challenge because of the lack of previous research within the field of L3 pragmatic awareness, language attitudes and multilingualism. More specifically, as far as we know, no previous studies have focused on L3 comprehension of requests as well as on the relationship between language attitudes and pragmatic awareness. This absence of previous literature on those aspects has created difficulties in formulating our hypotheses and also in the interpretation of findings. Previous research on the topic, especially chapter 2, has been mainly based on L1 and L2 studies, although they have provided us with important evidence for the research gaps existing in the area. Maybe, a larger number of studies on L3 child population would have facilitated the theoretical handicaps. However, we also believe that this absence of previous literature on multilingualism makes the present dissertation more exploratory and original in nature.

A second limitation is related to the data collection instrument that elicited pragmatic awareness. It would have been more advantageous for the pragmatic comprehension test to have included more situations involving other types of request forms and request modifying items in each of the languages in order to provide a more exhaustive account of the comprehension of requests by young learners. However, we could only include a limited number of situations in order to keep the length of the instrument relatively short since the population of the present study was very young.

A third limitation is that we have not taken into account the language background of migrant students. As argued by Dewaele (2008), it is important to distinguish between monolinguals and bilinguals, bilinguals and trilinguals, trilinguals and quadrilinguals, and so on, since qualitative and quantitative differences may be found as more languages are involved. Furthermore, in line with the language background of the learners, the mother tongue has also been documented as a determinant factor in language acquisition studies (Baker, 1992; Muñoz, 2001). In the present study, we have not analysed the effect of the L1 on pragmatic awareness and language attitudes. This issue deserves further attention since the mother tongues of our participants were, to some extent, varied. There were eight different subgroups of L1s. Further research is needed at this point to gain insights into the effect of the language background on multilingual development.

The last limitation may refer to the production of requests. In our opinion, the production of requests also needs to be further developed and compared with the findings derived from the

comprehension of requests. The classroom discourse that we collected may allow us to gain a complete account of child requestive behaviour and a large number of new insights into multilingual development. We are especially interested in examining from a longitudinal perspective the requests produced by pre-schoolers and primary school students in the classroom context. In line with the present study, the focus would be on the three language systems and the possible interactions among them. As in the studies by Safont (2011, 2012, 2013b), we wonder whether the L3 would have an effect on the L1 and L2 production of requests. The choice of request formulas in each language can potentially provide us with important evidence for multilingual practices.

Additionally, we wonder whether the politeness orientation would have an effect on learners' production. Some languages, such as Catalan and Spanish, have been pragmatically defined as positive-face oriented languages, while English has a tendency towards negative politeness. Safont (2013b) claimed that Pau's language pragmatic systems developed in line with the politeness theory. In other words, the author found Catalan and Spanish presented similar results while English, a negative politeness-oriented language, significantly differed from the other language systems. Taking into account the findings derived from this study, we have seen that the English and Catalan pragmatic systems fluctuate over time from the age of 4 to 9. We wonder whether the politeness orientation would have an effect on that variation over the age range.

Studies of early multilingual learners in the classroom context also deserve further attention. To our knowledge, the present

dissertation is the first study focused on multilingual pragmatic competence in the classroom setting. Previous studies on this issue (Barnes, 2008; Safont, 2011, 2012, 2013b) have been conducted in the family context. L2 studies of pragmatic awareness, such as the one carried out by Ellis (1992), suggests that the classroom setting conditioned their results on the production of L2 learners and a large variety of request forms would be found outside the classroom where there are more chances for face-work, as was the case of the studies carried out by Rose (2000) and Achiba (2003). Nevertheless, we believe that the rich linguistic repertoire of our participants may provide them with a wide range of requestive repertoire at their disposal, even though the setting is a classroom.

In conclusion, and despite the above limitations, the present study has contributed to further understanding early multilingual development by focusing on consecutive multilingual learners' pragmatic awareness and language attitudes. This study firmly supports the DMM proposed by Herdina and Jessner (2002) since multilingualism is a complex system where several variables interact, as has been seen in the present dissertation. As Jessner (2013) argues, multilingual learners deserve to be analysed from multilingual perspectives. While these initial results are promising, further research is needed at this point in order to investigate in detail all those factors that influence multilingual acquisition. Finally, this study opens up a new avenue of research from a fully multilingual and dynamic perspective.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Pragmatic Comprehension Test

This instrument was employed in order to measure pragmatic awareness in each language. Here, you can find the pragmatic comprehension test with the scripts of each scene.

✚ SITUATION 1

Catalan version

  1. <u>Disa'm el llapis</u> (li dóna el llapis) 2. <u>Hi has!</u>	
  1. <u>Em deixes el llapis per a posar el nom?</u> 2. Hi has!	

English version

  1. <u>Could I borrow your pencil? I need it to write my name.</u> 2. Sure, here you go!	
  1. <u>Lend me your pencil</u> 2. ok	

Spanish version

  1. <u>¿Me dejas el lápiz para escribir el nombre?</u> 2. Toma.	
  1. <u>Déjame el lápiz</u> 2. Toma	

🞥   SITUATION 2

Catalan version

  1. <u>Obri la finestra ara mateix.</u> 2. Val.	
  1. <u>Pots obrir la finestra per favor?</u> 2. Clar! 3. <u>Gràcies!</u> 4. De res.	

English version

 1. <u>Open the window right now.</u> 2. ok.	
 1. <u>Can you open the window please?</u> 2. Sure. 3. <u>Thank you</u> 4. You're welcome	

Spanish version

 1. <u>¿puedes abrir la ventana por favor?</u> 2. <u>¡Claro!</u> 3. <u>Gracias</u> 4. De nada.	
 1. <u>Abre la ventana ahora mismo.</u> 2. Vale.	

APPENDIX 2: Matched-guise Technique

The matched-guised technique was employed in order to elicit students' language attitudes. Here, you can find the script of each language with the corresponding scene shown in the booklet.

Catalan version: Els tres porquets

En el cor del bosc hi vivien tres porquets que eren germans. El llop sempre els perseguia per menjar-se'ls. Per poder escapar del llop, els tres porquets decidiren fer-se una casa.

English version: The Three Little Pigs

In the heart of the forest lived three little pigs who were brothers. The wolf always was chasing them to eat them. In order to escape from the wolf, the pigs decided to make a house each.

Spanish version: Los Tres Cerditos

En el corazón del bosque vivían tres cerditos que eran hermanos. El lobo siempre andaba persiguiéndolos para comérselos. Para escapar del lobo, cada cerdito decidió hacerse una casa.

APPENDIX 3: Oral Interview

Catalan version:

Quin és el teu idioma preferit? Anglès, valencià o castellà?

Quin és el idioma que més t'agrada? Per què?

English version:

What's your favourite language, English, Spanish or Valencian? Why?

Which language you like the most? Why?

Spanish version:

¿Cuál es tu idioma preferido? ¿Inglés, valenciano o castellano? Por qué?

¿Cuál es el idioma que más te gusta?

PS. We employed the term Valencian to refer to Catalan language as it is the popular name of the region.

APPENDIX 4: Booklet

1. CATALAN

2. ENGLISH

3. SPANISH

4. CATALAN

5. ENGLISH

6. SPANISH

APPENDIX 5: Traffic Light

This traffic light was employed in order to explain the function of the stickers. The green, yellow and red stickers were chosen as they could easily link their function with that of the traffic lights. The green sticker was associated to the positive while the red sticker was related to the opposite. The yellow sticker stood for neutral choices.
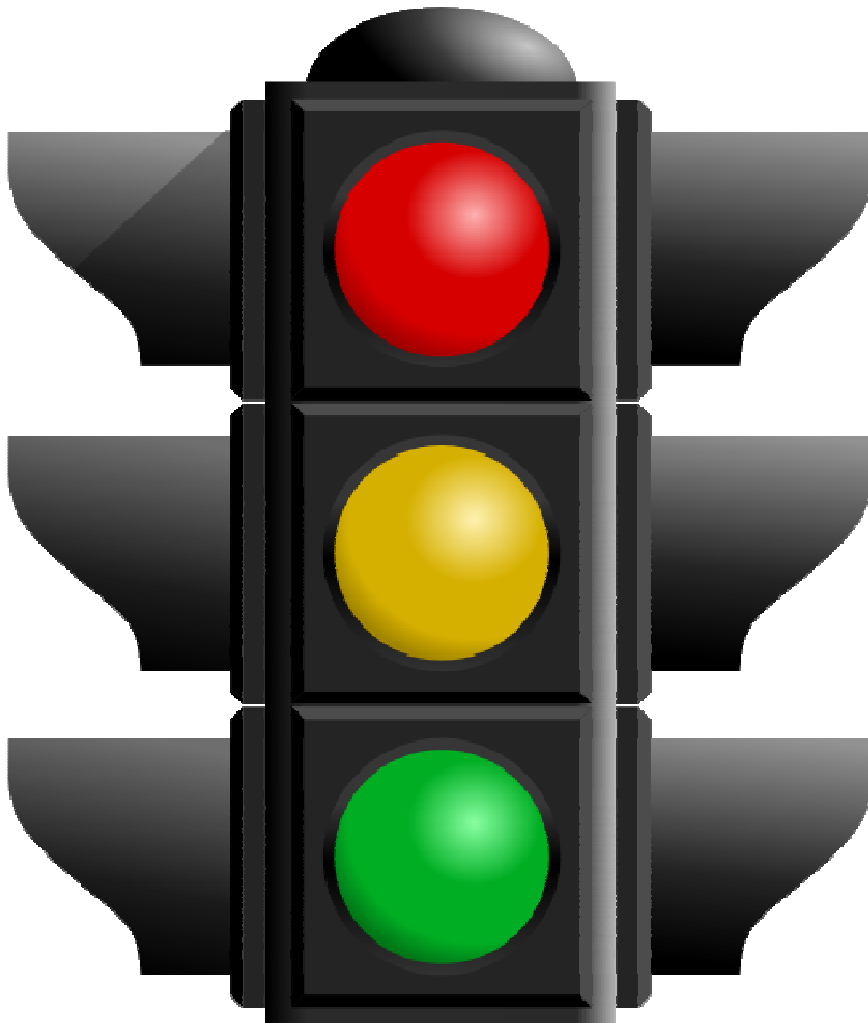
RESUM DE LA TESI EN LA LLENGUA OFICIAL DE LA UNIVERSITAT JAUME I SEGONS ESTABLEIX LA NORMATIVA DEL ESTUDIS DE DOCTORAT PER OBTINDRE EL TÍTOL DE DOCTORA AMB LA MENCIÓ DE DOCTORAT INTERNACIONAL.

MULTILINGÜISME PRECOÇ: ANÀLISI DE LA CONSCIÈNCIA PRAGMÀTICA I ACTITUDS LINGÜÍSTIQUES EN INFANTS CONSECUTIUS MULTILINGÜES

Objecte i objectius de la investigació

La present tesi doctoral, "Multilingüisme Precoç: Anàlisi de la Consciència Pragmàtica i Actituds Lingüístiques en Infants Consecutius Multilingües", té com objectiu fonamental analitzar el desenvolupament multilingüe primerenc. Aquest estudi, com el títol indica, es va centrar en infants consecutius multilingües en la Comunitat Valenciana - un context que ha estat poc investigat malgrat la seua riquesa lingüística (Safont, 2007). Més concretament, els nostres participants son aprenents d'anglès com a tercera llengua (L3) en un sistema d'educació bilingüe on també s'estudia català i castellà com a primera o segona llengua (L1/L2). D'aquesta manera, l'adquisició de cada llengua es produeix de forma consecutiva.

Tradicionalment, la investigació en el camp del multilingüisme s'ha estudiat des d'una perspectiva monolingüe, és a dir, tractant l'adquisició del llenguatge sense tindre en compte el bagatge lingüístic de l'infant i les possibles interaccions entre llengües (Jessner, 2013). Malgrat la importància i rellevància de la recerca portada a terme prèviament en estudis de L1 i L2, nosaltres considerem que els resultats obtinguts no són lo suficientment realistes i no mostren la complexitat del multilingüisme. A més, experts de reconegut prestigi, com Dewaele (2012), han manifestat que l'adquisició del llenguatge s'ha tractat com si fora un procés lineal, estàtic, i independent d'altres factors no lingüístics.

Aquesta tesi pretén contribuir a la recerca sobre el multilingüisme precoç des d'una perspectiva totalment multilingüe i

dinàmica amb la finalitat de cobrir els buits existents en els fonaments teòrics de recerca. Per tant, en les nostres anàlisis tindrem en consideració les llengües prèvies dels participants, les relacions entre elles i el context extern. La teoria subjacent adoptada en la present dissertació és el DMM (Dynamic Model of Multilingualism, Model Dinàmic del multilingüisme) proposat per Herdina i Jessner (2002). Aquesta teoria ben fundada, però poc investigada, ens ha permès examinar la interacció de diversos factors en el desenvolupament multilingüe en edats primerenques. Particularment, ens hem centrat en dos aspectes fonamentals a tindre en compte en l'adquisició del llenguatge: la consciència pragmàtica i les actituds lingüístiques.

D'una banda, la recerca prèvia (Bates, 1976; Cromdal, 1996; Wagner et al., 2010; Wilkinson et al., 1984) ha considerat que el grau de consciència pragmàtica en una determinada llengua està condicionat pel nivell de llengua d'aquesta. Des del nostre punt de vista, aquesta visió és totalment monolingüe ja que no té en compte les altres llengües i les interaccions d'aquestes. Herdina i Jessner (2002) van proposar el terme *Multilingual Proficiency* (Competència Multilingüe) en el DMM. Aquesta competència multilingüe consisteix en unes habilitats lingüístiques i cognitives que no es troben en aprenents monolingües i que està basada en les pròpies experiències i coneixements adquirits prèviament com aprenents de llengua.

Pocs estudis (Barnes, 2008; Safont, 2011, 2012, 2013b) han tractat el desenvolupament pragmàtic en infants trilingües consecutius. Aquests estudis esmentats anteriorment han examinat la producció de l'acte de parla de les peticions en el context familiar i els resultats

d'aquests han assenyalat la interacció existent entre llengües i els nivells alts de consciència pragmàtica mostrada pels subjectes. Tenint en compte estos resultats, vam decidir examinar la comprensió de l'acte de parla de les peticions en la L1, L2 i L3 per tal d'obtindre el grau de consciència pragmàtica de la nostra població infantil. Fins ara, cap recerca anterior havia tractat aquesta àrea.

D'altra banda, la part afectiva també és fonamental per entendre els processos d'adquisició del llenguatge. Uns dels principals aspectes del DMM són els factors afectius, concretament les actituds lingüístiques, considerades la variable afectiva més significativa en adquisició del llenguatge (Manolopoulou-Sergi, 2004:432). La investigació de les actituds lingüístiques en població infantil no ha estat suficientment investigat. Per aquest motiu, vam examinar les actituds cap a la llengua catalana, anglesa i castellana per tal d'ampliar el nostre coneixement de la situació sociolingüística actual del context del nostre estudi.

Les actituds cap a una llengua poden explicar comportaments, com ara l'elecció de llengua, estatus i ús. Ens vam preguntar si la consciència pragmàtica dels infants pot estar relacionada en les seues actituds lingüístiques. Cap estudi ha investigat la relació entre consciència pragmàtica i actituds lingüístiques. Com hem comentat anteriorment, l'adquisició multilingüe és un procés dinàmic on diverses variables estan interrelacionades (Cenoz, 2009; Jessner, 2013; Safont, 2013a). A banda d'examinar la relació entre actituds lingüístiques i consciència pragmàtica, també vam estudiar la influència d'altres factors externs, com ara el factor edat i el model

lingüístic d'escola en les actituds lingüístiques i la consciència pragmàtica.

Considerant el que hem exposat anteriorment, aquesta tesi pretén contribuir a la recerca sobre el multilingüisme precoç mitjançant la investigació dels següents objectius: (1) analitzar el grau de consciència pragmàtica dels nostres participants, (2) examinar les seves actituds lingüístiques, (3) investigar la relació entre actituds lingüístiques i el grau de consciència pragmàtica (4) i explorar possibles factors externs que puguin tindre un efecte en el desenvolupament multilingüe de la nostra població infantil.

Tenint en compte el context on s'ha desenvolupat aquest estudi i el marc teòric, vam formular les següents preguntes d´investigació.

Pregunta d'investigació 1: Fins a quin punt, els nostres participants tenen un grau raonable de consciència pragmàtica en la L1, L2 i L3? Com més edat més grau de consciència pragmàtica?

Pregunta d'investigació 2: Quins mitigadors en l'acte de parla de les peticions són identificats més fàcilment com apropiats? Afecta l'edat en la identificació de estos modificadors?

Pregunta d'investigació 3: Totes les llengües analitzades són igual de valorades pels nostres infants? Afecta l'edat en les actituds lingüístiques dels nostres infants?

Pregunta d'investigació 4: Afecta el model lingüístic de l'escola en el grau de consciència pragmàtica i les actituds lingüístiques en la L3?

Pregunta d'investigació 5: Hi ha variabilitat de resultats pel que fa al grau de consciència pragmàtica i les actituds lingüístiques mostrades pels infants en les diferent escoles? Estan les actituds lingüístiques relacionades en la consciència pragmàtica?

Tenint en consideració les preguntes d' investigació esmentades anteriorment, vam formular les següents hipòtesis.

Hipòtesi I: Els participants diferenciaran els sistemes pragmàtics de cada llengua i mostraran un nivell alt de consciència pragmàtica en català, castellà i anglès (Barnes, 2008; Jessner, 2008; Safont, 2011, 2012 2013a,b). A més, els estudiants de primària mostraran un nivell més alt de consciència pragmàtica que els estudiants de preescolar (Elrod, 1983; Lee, 2010; Mabel, 1994; Takakuwa, 2000).

Hipòtesi II: Aquelles peticions que incloguen la partícula mitigadora *per favor* seran reconegudes com més apropiades que aquelles que incloguen *grounders,* és a dir*,* mitigadors que justifiquen les peticions (Achiba 2003; Cromdal, 1996; Ellis, 1992; Rose, 2000). A més, tant els *grounders* com la particular *per favor* seran reconeguts més fàcilment pels aprenents de primària que pels de preescolar (Axia & Baroni, 1985; Baroni & Axia, 1989; Takakuwa, 2000; Wilkinson et al., 1984).

Hipòtesi III: Les actituds lingüístiques envers el català, castellà i anglès variaran (Nightingale, 2012; Portolés, 2011; Safont, 2007). Els participants de preescolar mostraran actituds més favorables cap a la llengua minoritària (català) i estrangera (anglès) que els estudiants d'educació primària. Aquests últims mostraran preferència per la llengua dominant (castellà) (Baker, 1992; Cenoz, 2002, 2003; Hoare, 2000; Lefever, 2009; Nikolov, 1999; Sharp et al., 1973).

Hipòtesi IV: El model lingüístic de l'escola tindrà un efecte en el grau de consciència pragmàtica i les actituds lingüístiques dels nostres participants en la L3 (Cenoz, 2002, 2003; Portolés i Safont, in press; Safont, 2005).

Hipòtesi V: Les diferents escoles investigades mostraran variabilitat en els seus resultats pel que fa al grau de consciència pragmàtica i actituds lingüístiques (Jessner, 2008). A més, el grau de consciència pragmàtica estarà relacionat en les actituds lingüístiques (Safont 2013b).

Plantejament i metodologia utilitzats

L' estructura de la tesi es divideix en dos blocs principals: la primera part recull el marc teòric on la nostra investigació està basada, i engloba el capítol 1, 2 i 3. La segona part presenta l'estudi empíric que es va portar a terme i està organitzada en tres capítols diferents. D'aquesta manera, aquesta tesi conté sis capítols que podrien ser resumits de la manera següent:

El capítol 1 proporciona una revisió de la literatura en el camp del multilingüisme. Primer, es presenta el marc general sociolingüístic del context on es va portar a terme l'estudi. Segon, s'ofereix un resum d'Europa com a continent multilingüe i es destaca la importància d'aprendre llengües. Tercer, es descriu les noves tendències en educació multilingüe, donant especial èmfasi a la *Continua of Multilingual Education* proposada per Cenoz (2009). En quart lloc, s'examina la recerca en multilingüisme des d'un punt de vista tradicional. S'emfatitza la necessitat d'adoptar mètodes de recerca que tinguen en compte el dinamisme i complexitat de multilingüisme (Aronin i Singleton, 2012), com ara el DMM. Aquest model, basat en *Dynamic Systems Theory* (Teoria de Sistemes Dinàmics), té unes implicacions en el procés d'adquisició d'una tercera llengua. També es descriuen les característiques principals dels aprenents de L3 en comparació amb els de L2 i L1. Finalment, s'avança l'interès dels autors d'analitzar el grau de consciència pragmàtica d'infants multilingües donat els avantatges que presenten els aprenents multilingües en nombrosos estudis centrats en *linguistic awareness* (consciència lingüística).

El capítol 2 comença amb una revisió dels fonaments teòrics de competència pragmàtica en processos d'adquisició de L1, L2 i L3. Tenint establertes les premisses principals del concepte competència pragmàtica, es descriu l'objecte pragmàtic a analitzar (l'acte de parla de les peticions) i les taxonomies utilitzades en l'estudi de peticions (Trosborg, 1995; Alcón, Safont i Martínez-Flor, 2005). Aquest capítol també ens proporciona un resum clar dels estudis portats a terme en la

producció i comprensió de les peticions en la L1, L2 i L3. Es destaca la necessitat de portar a terme estudis de peticions que tinguen en compte el bagatge lingüístic dels infants, ja que són quasi inexistents (Safont, 2011, 2012, 2013b). També es suggereix que l'àmbit afectiu té una funció molt important en el procés d'adquisició del llenguatge.

El capítol 3 examina el marc teòric de les actituds lingüístiques; un dels factors afectius més importants en l'adquisició del llenguatge. Es presenta un resum dels estudis portats a terme en la Comunitat Valenciana i també recull la recerca portada a terme en infants en el camp d'actituds lingüístiques. Finalment, emfatitza la mancança d'estudis que examinen la relació entre actituds lingüístiques i consciència pragmàtica. Aquest capítol que tanca la revisió teòrica i la primera part de l'estudi, ens porta a l'estudi empíric en el capítol 4 i 5.

El capítol 4 comença amb un resum breu de la motivació de l'estudi i els buits de recerca identificats com a punt de sortida per formular les cinc preguntes d'investigació i hipòtesis que guien l'estudi. A continuació, es descriuen els participants que van participar a l'estudi amb gran detall i els instruments de recollida de dades. També informa del procediment en el desenvolupament de la investigació i de l'anàlisi estadística emprada amb les dades. Els resultats de la investigació i les aportacions originals al camp d'estudi es detallen en el capítol 5.

Finalment, el capítol 6 conclou la tesi fent una recapitulació dels principals resultats que han derivat de la investigació i proposa algunes implicacions pedagògiques. Després, es suggereixen futures

línies d'investigació i es mencionen les limitacions trobades. Al final de la tesi podem trobar una llista de referències i un conjunt d'apèndixs. Els apèndixs proporcionen les còpies dels materials que van emprar en la recollida de dades.

Aquest va ser el plantejament de la tesi i a continuació, proporcionarem una descripció de la metodologia emprada en l'estudi per tal de contestar les preguntes d'investigació i provar les hipòtesis formulades.

Els participants del estudi eren 402 aprenents d'anglès com a L3 pertanyents a 10 escoles diferents de la província de Castelló de la Plana. Per fer les nostres anàlisis vam tindre en compte dos variables: factor edat i el model lingüístic de l'escola. Pel que fa a l'edat, la mostra es va dividir en dos grups: 206 estudiants de segon curs de preescolar (4-5 anys) i 196 estudiants de tercer de primària (8-9 anys). Vam tindre en compte dos períodes d'edat ja que aquests s'han considerat crucials en l'anàlisi del desenvolupament del llenguatge (Nicholas & Lightbown, 2008). En referència al model lingüístic, la mostra es va dividir en 197 participants que segueixen el model lingüístic en català (PEV, Programes d'Ensenyament en Valencià) i 205 estudiants que segueixen el model en castellà (PIP, Programes d'Incorporació Progressiva).

El mètode va consistir en la combinació de diversos instruments per tal de mesurar el grau de consciència pragmàtica i les actituds lingüístiques en les tres llengües. El grau de consciència pragmàtica es va analitzar mitjançant un test de comprensió pragmàtica en format

audio-visual. Els participants van mirar un vídeo on apareixien titelles que representaven sis actuacions on hi havia peticions apropiades (*pots obrir la finestra, per favor)*? i no tant apropiades (*Obris la finestra ara mateix!*). Als participants se'ls va distribuir un llibret on apareixien les fotografies de les titelles i ells tenien que identificar la petició apropiada i la no tan apropiada. A la petició apropiada pegaven un gomet verd i a la no tant apropiada ficaven un gomet roig.

Les actituds lingüístiques van ser examinades mitjançant la *matched-guise technique* i una entrevista oral. La *matched-guise technique* estava basada en el conte del tres porquets perquè els infants estigueren familiaritzats en l'argument. Els estudiants escoltaven un extracte del conte en les tres llengües i havien de valorar-lo mitjançant gomets verds, grocs i rojos. Aquests colors van ser escollits perquè els participants pogueren fàcilment identificar el color amb la escala de colors que tenen els semàfors. Per tal de recollir dades qualitatives, vam incloure entrevistes de curta durada per tindre una millor comprensió de les actituds lingüístiques dels participants. Van ser preguntats sobre quina llengua preferien (català, anglès o castellà) i el perquè de la seua resposta.

En les anàlisis, vam tindre en compte la comprensió de peticions apropiades i les actituds favorables. Totes les respostes van ser analitzades amb el programa *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS) i es van aplicar proves no paramètriques, com ara *Friedman test, Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks test, Kruskal-Wallis Test* i *Spearman Correlation*.

Aportacions originals

Les aportacions principals d'aquest estudi per cada hipòtesi proposada podria ser resumida de la següent manera:

La Hipòtesi I suggeria que els participants diferenciarien els sistemes pragmàtics de cada llengua i mostrarien un nivell alt de consciència pragmàtica en català, castellà i anglès (Barnes, 2008; Jessner, 2008; Safont, 2011, 2012 2013a, b). A més, també vam formular que els estudiants de primària mostrarien un nivell més alt de consciència pragmàtica que els estudiants de preescolar (Elrod, 1983; Mabel, 1994; Lee, 2010; Takakuwa, 2000). Tenint en compte els resultats que vam obtindre podem confirmar que els participants (i) tenen un grau alt de consciència pragmàtica en cada llengua, (ii) mostren signes de diferenciació pragmàtica i (iii) aquesta consciència pragmàtica augmenta amb l'edat.

En línia amb altres estudis centrats en multilingües primerencs (Barnes, 2008; Safont, 2011, 2012, 2013b), els nostres participants van mostrar un grau alt de consciència pragmàtica, tot i que els seus sistemes pragmàtics no estan plenament desenvolupats, especialment l'anglès. Estos resultats contradiuen els estudis basats en una concepció monolingüe (Carrell, 1981; Lee, 2010; Papafragou, 2000; Tomasello, 2008) ja que el grau de consciència pragmàtica dels nostres aprenents no va estar determinat pel nivell de llengua, sinó per la competència multilingüe. Podem argumentar que el bagatge multilingüe dels participants i la seva experiència com aprenents de castellà i català els pot haver-hi proporcionat un nivell alt de

consciència pragmàtica en la L3. Les habilitats i competències dels nostres infants multilingües donen evidència del M-factor proposat per Herdina i Jessner (2002). El nostre estudi també assenyala que el castellà mostra el grau més alt de consciència pragmàtica, seguit pel català i finalment l'anglès. Les diferències entre les tres llengües van ser estadísticament significatives. Els resultats confirmen que la diferenciació pragmàtica es aparent en edat primerenques (Barnes, 2008; Montanari, 2009; Safont, 2011, 2012, 2013b).

També vam trobar que els estudiants d'educació primària van mostrar un nivell més alt de consciència pragmàtica que els de preescolar (Axia & Baroni, 1985; Baroni & Axia, 1989; Bates, 1976; Takakuwa, 2000; Wilkinson et al., 1984). Com era d'esperar, el nivel de consciència pragmàtica augmenta amb línia en el desenvolupament emocional, cognitiu i social dels infants. No obstant això, cal emfatitzar que els participants de preescolar mostren uns nivells de consciència pragmàtica molt alts, tot i que encara estan en la etapa de pre-alfabetització. Aquest estudi mostra que els nens/es de 4 anys són capaços de reconèixer les peticions que són pragmàticament apropiades en les tres llengües. Estos resultats contradiuen estudis previs (Axia & Baroni, 1985; Bates, 1976; Baroni & Axia, 1989; Bernicot, 1991; Lee, 2010; Wagner et al., 2010; Wilkinson et al., 1984) centrats en la L1 i L2 que assenyalen que la consciència pragmàtica s'adquireix a l' edat de 7 anys. A més, la comparació dels dos grups d'edat va mostrar que el grau de consciència pragmàtica en català i anglès fluctua i canvia amb el temps. Per tant, aquestes aportacions donen evidència del dinamisme, complexitat i variabilitat

de la ment multilingüe així com dels beneficis pragmàtics dels parlants multilingües.

La Hipòtesi II va pronosticar que les peticions que inclogueren la partícula mitigadora *per favor* serien reconegudes com més apropiades que aquelles que inclogueren *grounders* (Achiba 2003; Cromdal, 1996; Ellis, 1992; Rose, 2000). A més, la hipòtesi també va formular que tant els *grounders* com la particular *per favor* serien reconegudes més fàcilment pels aprenents de primària que pels de preescolar (Axia & Baroni, 1985; Baroni & Axia, 1989; Takakuwa, 2000; Wilkinson et al., 1984). Els resultats que vam obtindre suggereixen que els *grounders* es reconeixen més freqüentment com apropiats que les peticions que incloguen la partícula *per favor*, malgrat el fet que el *grounder* és sintàcticament més complex. Els nostres resultats coincideixen amb els de Safont (2012). A més, aquest punt és particularment important ja que els nostres aprenents multilingües van ser capaços d'identificar el *grounder* en la L3, tot i que el seu nivell de competència en llengua anglesa es bastant limitat. Aquests resultats contradiuen estudis anteriors monolingües (Bates, 1976; Cromdal, 1996; Wagner et al., 2010; Wilkinson et al., 1984) on el grau de consciència pragmàtica està determinat pel nivell de llengua. Per tant, els resultats de la Hipòtesi II tornen a donar evidència de la competència multilingüe del nostres estudiants i de les seues habilitats pragmàtiques.

A banda, tant els *grounders* com la partícula *per favor* van ser reconeguts més fàcilment pels aprenents de primària que pels de preescolar (Axia & Baroni, 1985; Baroni & Axia, 1989; Takakuwa,

2000; Wilkinson et al., 1984). No obstant això, curiosament, vam trobar que els participants de preescolar van identificar més fàcilment la petició que incloïa la partícula *per favor* en la L3 (*please*) que els de primària. Vam proposar que aquests resultats poden estar relacionats en el desenvolupament social i emocional de nens ja que la partícula *per favor* és un element clau de socialització en l'adquisició del llenguatge. El M-factor també va ajudar als infants de preescolar a reconèixer els modificadors *per favor* i *grounders* com elements pragmàticament apropiats a l'hora de fer peticions.

La Hipòtesi III va suggerir que les actituds lingüístiques envers el català, castellà i anglès variarien (Safont, 2007; Portolés, 2011, Nightingale, 2012). També suggeria que els participants de preescolar mostrarien actituds més favorables cap a la llengua minoritària (català) i estrangera (anglès) i els de primària cap a la llengua dominant (castellà) (Baker, 1992; Cenoz, 2002, 2003; Hoare, 2000; Lefever, 2009; Nikolov, 1999; Sharp et al., 1973). Aquesta hipòtesi també va ser confirmada. Tenint en compte els resultats, els participants van mostrar que no totes les llengües del seu repertori lingüístic són valorades de la mateixa manera. En general, van mostrar actituds més favorables cap al castellà, seguit pel català i menys favorables cap a l' anglès. Vam argumentar raons polítiques, socials i psicològiques a aquest fet. S'emfatitza que l'estatus social d'una llengua pot influir en les actituds lingüístiques dels participants.

El factor edat també apareix com una variable influent en les actituds lingüístiques. Els estudiants de preescolar mostren preferència per la llengua minoritària i estrangera, mentre que els de primària

prefereixen la majoritària. Es considera que els majors prefereixen el castellà per formar part de la llengua i cultura dominant ja que el català es considera d'un estatus social inferior. L'estudi també mostra com les actituds cap a l'anglès decreixen al llarg dels anys, com altres estudis han declarat prèviament (Cenoz, 2002, 2003; Heining-Boynton & Haitema, 2007; Henry & Apelgren, 2008; Lefever, 2009; Nikolov, 1999; Muñoz & Tragant, 2001). De fet, vam trobar un canvi de percepció cap a les llengües en les entrevistes que vam portar a terme després de realitzar la *matched-guise technique*. Els aprenents de preescolar es decanten per la llengua que parlen els seus pares o mestres. En el cas dels aprenents de primària, també mostren actituds molt positives cap a la llengua parlada en l'àmbit familiar, però no en l'educatiu. Estos comencen a tindre actituds més instrumentals i tenen en compte l'estatus de la llengua en les seues valoracions. Per tant, en línia amb les premisses del DMM, les actituds lingüístiques són dinàmiques, complexes i poden ser modificades per la influència de factors no lingüístics.

La Hipòtesi IV va suggerir que el model lingüístic de l'escola tindria un efecte en el grau de consciència pragmàtica i en les actituds lingüístiques dels nostres participants en la L3 (Cenoz, 2002, 2003; Portolés i Safont, in press; Safont, 2005). Els resultats van confirmar la hipòtesi i van informar que aquells estudiants que segueixen els programes en línia catalana (PEV) van realitzar millor el test de comprensió pragmàtica que els escolaritzats en línia castellana (PIP). S'argumenta que la instrucció en català promou la consciència pragmàtica en la L3 perquè l'input rebut en la L1 i L2 és més equilibrat i, per tant, adquireixen uns beneficis pragmàtics, com va

ocórrer en els participants de l'estudi de Safont (2005). Altres estudis (Portolés i Safont, in press; Portolés i Martín, 2012) en el mateix context també han argumentat que els estudiants en models PEV mostren un repertori més extens de funcions pragmàtiques i practiques multilingües, com ara el *translanguaging*, que els aprenents en models d'instrucció en castellà (PIP).

A més, també vam trobar que les actituds lingüístiques dels nostres participants en la L3 són més favorable en models PEV que en PIP. S'argumenta que els aprenents escolaritzats en línia catalana mostren actituds més positives cap a altres llengües i cultures. Per això, es considera que l'escolarització en una llengua o altra juga un paper fonamental en el context del nostre estudi.

La Hipòtesi V suggeria que les diferents escoles investigades mostrarien variabilitat en els seus resultats pel que fa al grau de consciència pragmàtica i actituds lingüístiques (Jessner, 2008) i els resultats ho van confirmar. La *Continua of Multilingual Education* proposada per Cenoz (2009) ens va ajudar a interpretar els resultats. S'argumenta que la variabilitat de resultats d'una escola a l'altra es deguda a la influència de factors i els efectes d'estos en el desenvolupament multilingüe. Ecke (2004:341) exposa que és "helpful to conceive language development holistically as the interplay of environmental, cognitive, social-affective, and linguistic variables."

Aquesta Hipòtesi també implicava que el grau de consciència pragmàtica estaria relacionat en les actituds lingüístiques (Safont

2013b). L'estudi ha confirmat la relació existent entre actituds de llengua i consciència pragmàtica. La part afectiva es fonamental en l'adquisició del llenguatge i les actituds lingüístiques pareixen tindre una relació en les eleccions pragmàtiques. Finalment, podem concloure que l'adquisició multilingüe és un procés dinàmic on diverses variables estan interrelacionades.

Conclusions obtingudes i futures línies d' investigació

Considerem que aquest estudi podria ser una contribució important en el camp del multilingüisme i específicament en el DMM. Aquest model ens ha permès analitzar la interacció de diversos factors en el desenvolupament multilingüe d' aprenents d'anglès com a L3. Específicament, ens hem centrat en l'anàlisi de la consciència pragmàtica i actituds lingüístiques en relació a altres factors, com ara l'edat, el model lingüístic o l'estatus.

Des del nostre punt de vista, els resultats han aportat evidència dels nivells alts de consciència pragmàtica dels aprenents multilingües. Les conclusions més destacables són (1) el grau alt de consciència pragmàtica en la L3 per part de tots els participants, especialment en el cas dels aprenents en edat de pre-alfabetització i (2) el reconeixement del *grounders* com a modificadors apropiats. Estos resultats suggereixen que el nivell de consciència pragmàtica no està determinat pel nivell de llengua, sinó per una competència multilingüe (*multilingual proficiency*). Podem argumentar que el bagatge multilingüe dels participants i la seva experiència com aprenents de castellà i català els pot haver-hi proporcionat un nivell alt de

consciència pragmàtica en la L3. Les habilitats i competències dels nostres infants multilingües aporten evidència del M-factor proposat per Herdina i Jessner (2002).

Aquest estudi també ha contribuït a comprendre el desenvolupament pragmàtic dels 4 als 9 anys. Les aportacions més destacables són la fluctuació dels sistemes pragmàtics al llarg del temps, concretament l'anglès i el català. Cal també remarcar que els participants de preescolar realitzen millor la comprensió de peticions en anglès que inclouen la particular *per favor* que els estudiants de primària. Aquests resultats poden estar lligats al desenvolupament social, cognitiu i emocional dels infants. De la mateixa manera, les actituds lingüístiques també influeixen en el desenvolupament dels infants ja que aquestes tendeixen a canviar al llarg del temps. Per tant, podem concloure que les actituds cap a les llengües són dinàmiques i poden ser influenciades pel context polític, ideològic, i cultural (Cenoz, 2009).

Finalment, l'estudi present dóna suport al DMM proposat per Herdina i Jessner (2002) ja que podem confirmar que l'adquisició multilingüe no és un procés previsible, estàtic i lineal. La influència de factors i el bagatge lingüístic dels infants són factors fonamentals per tal d'obtindre informació més àmplia i completa del desenvolupament multilingüe dels infants. Considerem que aquesta tesi pot contribuir a la investigació futura ja que tots els resultats han estat examinats des d'una perspectiva totalment multilingüe i dinàmica amb la fi de cobrir els buits existents en la recerca del multilingüisme.

Tanmateix, a banda dels beneficis que es deriven d'aquestes conclusions, també cal reconèixer les limitacions de l' estudi. Aquestes limitacions ens van permetre proposar futures línies d'investigació.

En general, l'estudi va suposar un repte important a causa de la manca de recerca anterior dins del camp de consciència pragmàtica, actituds lingüístiques i multilingüisme. Més concretament, cap estudi s'havia centrat en l'anàlisi de la comprensió de peticions en la L3 o en la relació entre actituds lingüístiques i consciència pragmàtica. Aquesta absència de estudis va fer dificultós formular les hipòtesis i interpretar els resultats. Tanmateix, també creiem que aquesta absència de literatura fa l'estudi més exploratori i original.

Una segona limitació va estar relacionada en l'instrument per analitzar la consciència pragmàtica. Hi haguera sigut més avantatjós que el test de comprensió pragmàtica incloguera més tipus de peticions i mitigadors per tindre una descripció més exhaustiva de la comprensió multilingüe dels infants. Per tant, proposem incloure més exemples de peticions en català, castellà i anglès en estudis futurs.

Una tercera limitació és que no vam tindre en compte el bagatge lingüístic dels estudiants immigrants. Dewaele (2008) emfatitza que cal distingir entre monolingües i bilingües, bilingües i trilingües, trilingües i quadrilingües, etcètera, ja que existeixen diferències qualitatives i quantitatives importants entre uns i altres. A banda, també hauria sigut interessant examinar la influència de la llengua materna ja que esta variable ha estat documentada com a factor

determinant en estudis d'adquisició del llenguatge (Baker, 1992; Muñoz, 2001). En aquest estudi no hem analitzat l'efecte del L1 en la consciència pragmàtica i les actituds lingüístiques. Considerem que futures línies d'investigació podrien tindre en consideració la influència de la L1 en el desenvolupament multilingüe.

L'última limitació fa referència a la producció de peticions. Al nostre entendre, la producció de les peticions necessita ser investigada i comparada en els resultats obtinguts en comprensió de peticions. El discurs de l'aula que vam recollir en les aules ens pot permetre obtindre un marc més complet i ampli de l'acte de parla de les peticions en infants, així com més aportacions del desenvolupament multilingüe. L'objecte d'estudi seria la producció de la L1, L2 i L3 en l'aula i les interaccions existents. Estudis que examinen el multilingüisme precoç dins l'aula necessiten ser més documentats i investigats.

Com a conclusió i malgrat les limitacions, aquest estudi ha contribuït en la recerca del multilingüisme ja que ha sigut el primer que ha examinat la consciència pragmàtica i actituds lingüístiques en infants consecutius multilingües. La investigació portada a terme ofereix un ferm suport al DMM de Herdina i Jessner (2002) ja que el multilingüisme és un sistema complex on hi ha vàries variables interrelacionades. Finalment, aquest estudi obris una nova línia d'investigació des d'una perspectiva completament multilingüe i dinàmica.