

# Children’s Multilingual Experiences and Linguistic Identities in Digital Media

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## Information on the Study

The current qualitative study focuses on children from the Middle Eastern backgrounds in the multilingual Luxembourg and explores the ways in which they make sense of their experiences of Multilingualism at home, school and with social media. In particular, it investigates the roles of language policies at home and school in shaping the immigrant children’s multilingualism and the ways in which children negotiate and construct their linguistic identities.

## Focus on Digital Media

With the advance of technology and the spread of digital media, a significant part of language practices and social interactions now take place through digital media. The affordances of digital media allow for the use of linguistic and semiotic resources in the form of multiple modalities for translocal communication and participation in various communities without being bound by any overt language policies and other barriers (Blommeart, 2019; Palvainen, 2020). Language practices on digital media can play a significant role in minority background adolescents' linguistic identity construction and language socialization in the target community as well as their communication and language socialization in the heritage language (Androustopoulos, 2010; Little, 2020).

## Methodology

### Participants

The main participants of the study will be four children aged 12 to 16 from Persian-speaking families in Luxembourg plus their parents and teachers. Currently, I am looking into Iranian and Afghan communities in Luxembourg, and I intend to recruit the participants from one or both of these communities.

### Data Collection

To collect data throughout the academic year 2022-2023, I will use three established methods within the paradigm of qualitative research (i.e. semi-structured interviews, online/offline observations, self-recorded conversations) as well as the recently established method of mediagrams (Lexander & Androustopoulos, 2021). The latter is explained further here.

### Data Analysis

All data, including the transcriptions and the field notes will be analyzed inductively and deductively through thematic analysis, positioning analysis and the visualisation of mediagrams, and finally, be triangulated.

## Research Questions

- 1- In what ways do the family language policy and language-in-education policies shape children’s multilingual experiences?
- 2- In what ways do the immigrant children express agency when negotiating the language policies and using their semiotic resources for communication?
- 3- In what ways do these children negotiate and develop their linguistic identities when languaging at home, school and on social media?

## Context

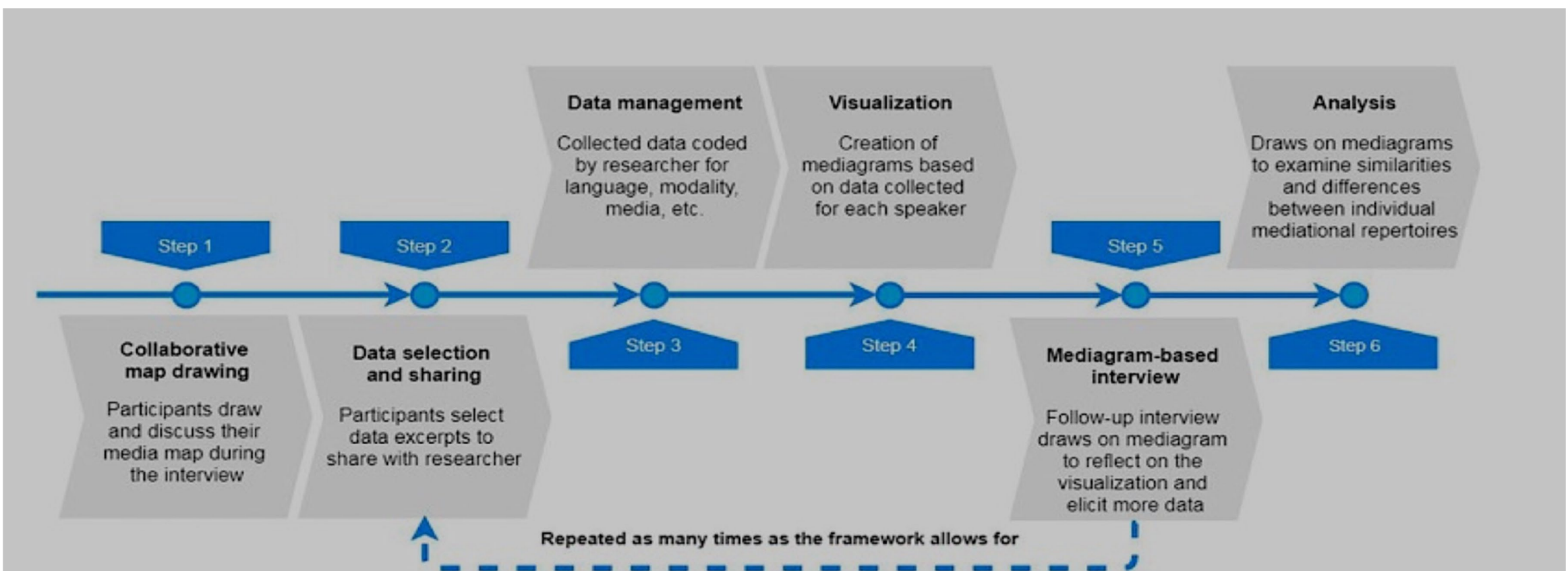
- Luxembourg as an officially multilingual state
- trilingual education system: French, Luxembourgish and German
- large communities of immigrants from various ethnic backgrounds
- lack of studies on children and families from the Middle Eastern background and their experiences of multilingualism in this context



## Multilingual Experiences in Social Media

- multilingual experiences and language-life or Spracherleben on digital media
- children’s agency when shaping their multilingual experiences in online interactions and making sense of their experiences
- a space for self-positioning and drawing on linguistic and semiotic repertoire to perform identities
- research methods: online ethnography, digital story transposition and mediagrams

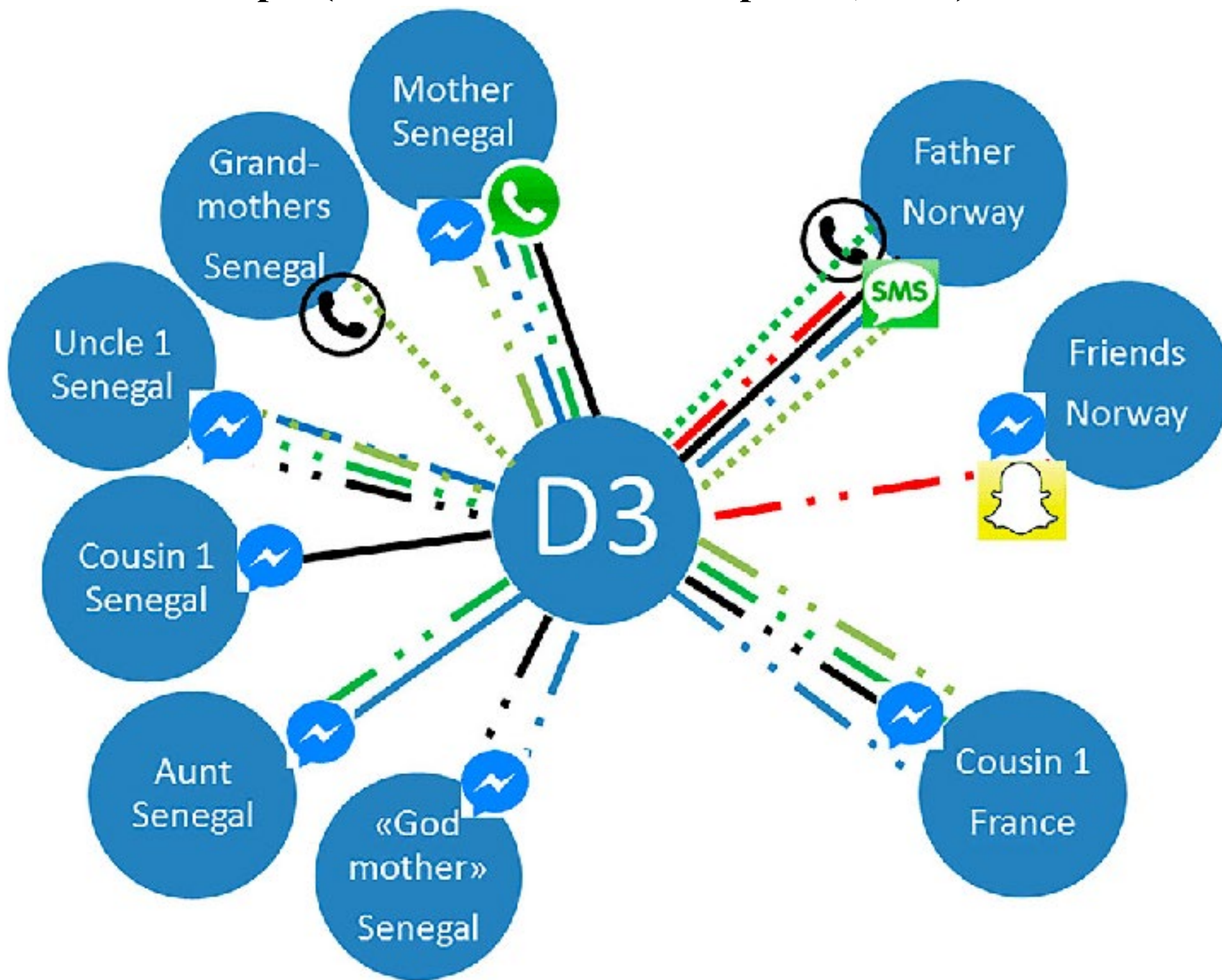
## Working with Mediagrams



The process of compiling mediagrams from the interviews and data excerpts (Lexander & Androustopoulos, 2021)

## Example of one mediagram

- visualisation of online interactions of the participant D3
- interaction media (icons)
- interaction modality (lines, dots)
- language choice (colours)
- self-reported excerpts



(Lexander & Androustopoulos, 2021)

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