Handling Ambivalence
A Grounded Theory of Bilingualism in the everyday life
Abstract

During the last decades, immigration to Sweden has increased. As a result of this, a larger number of individuals are growing up with two languages. This means that the field of bilingualism has emerged as topic of relevance in Sociology, as well as other disciplines of Social Sciences. Bilingualism has been studied from different perspectives in Linguistics. However, in Sociology, focus has been mostly on the questions of integration, culture and ethnicity, where language has been seen as one of many aspects. I argue that bilingualism is an important social phenomenon in its own right, since it shapes the everyday lives of bilingual individuals and changes the landscape of our society. Using Grounded Theory bilingualism in the everyday life is analyzed and explored, using material from qualitative interviews with ten individuals who have grown up with Swedish and one other language. It is here suggested that bilingualism in the everyday life can be understood as a process of handling ambivalence. This process takes place between the social context and the self and is influenced by and influences them both. A central part of this process is bilingualism seen simultaneously as tension and as resource.

Keywords: bilingualism, Grounded Theory, everyday life, handling ambivalence.
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1. Introduction

During the last decades, immigration to Sweden has increased. In addition to other changes in society as a result of increased and heterogeneous immigration, this means that what Extra & Verhoeven (1999:5) calls “traditional patterns of language variation” have changed. In the case of Sweden, a traditionally monolingual/mono-ethnical nation, this means that there are now a large number of individuals who are or have been growing up as bi- or multilinguals, speaking one language at home and Swedish outside of the home. The importance of language for social contacts and communication as well as for identifications, and other (social) psychological aspects with different groups, here takes on new dimensions, since in the case of these individuals, it concerns not the use of one language but at least two. On the basis of these changes in Swedish society, related with immigration, I argue that questions related to bilingualism and especially what type of influence it has on the individual living in society are of importance for researchers in different disciplines of Social Science and Humanities.

Bilingualism in itself is a very complex concept with many different definitions (see e.g. Baetens Beardsmore 1986:1ff) that has been studied extensively using different perspectives, but without reaching agreement about how to define it (Romaine 1995:27). Research in Sociology related to immigration and issues of bilingualism has mostly focused on issues of ethnicity integration, and/or cultural differences. In this type of research, language is seen as one factor (out of many) that characterizes or distinguishes different ethnical/cultural groups (see e.g. Hechter 1978:297, Znaniecki 1939:807). Research in Linguistics has studied bilingualism from different perspectives, focusing on topics such as bilingual language processing (e.g. Green 2000, Grosjean 2000), the bilingual lexicon (e.g. Kroll & de Groot 2000) and other issues related with bilinguals’ use of the different languages (e.g. Fishman 2000). Also bi- and multilingual societies have been studied. However, issues related with the bilingual individual and his/her relation to and experiences of social contexts have not been studied to the same extent. I argue that studies that seek a theoretical explanation to how bilingualism is experienced and formed in the everyday lives of bilingual individuals themselves can contribute towards a deeper understanding of the concept as well as related issues. This is valuable not only to Sociology but also to Linguistics. The study presented in this paper is such a study.

This paper describes the formation of a theory of bilingualism in the everyday life, using a Grounded Theory methodological framework. In essence, Grounded Theory is a theory-generating method (Haig 1995:1) that “consists of flexible strategies for focusing and expediting qualitative data collection and analysis” (Charmaz 2003:311). The theoretical framework offered here views bilingualism as a process of handling ambivalence, a process of constant change and development, taking place in between the social context and the self. Important aspects shaping this process of handling the ambivalent bilingualism are the view on bilingualism as resource versus as tension.

Before proceeding to formulating the aim and research question, as well as a describing the outline of this paper, two things should be emphasized. Using a Grounded Theory framework means that the research process starts with the collection of empirical data. Therefore, the literature review is confined to defining certain sensitizing concepts (Blumer Statistics Sweden (2008:17) estimates that over 1 million has immigrated to Sweden since the 1950’s (i.e. after World War II). For an overview of developments in Sweden regarding immigration and languages, linked amongst other things to new challenges for the educational system, see Boyd (2001). Something that may be related to the focus on integration of foreign-born individuals/groups in (Western) European public discourse (Extra & Verhoeven 1999:4).

4 For examples of such studies, see e.g. Bayley & Schecter (2003).
1969), i.e. concepts that help to focus the research on certain issues. In the current study, the concept of bilingualism has this purpose. When working with Grounded Theory, even more than with other methods, it is of utmost importance to carefully describe the procedures used to generate the theoretical framework, since this description provides the basis for validating the theory (see e.g. Suddaby 2006:637, Corbin & Strauss 1990:4, Bruce 2007:64). It is also important for the researcher to specify her position regarding e.g. ontology and epistemology (see Creswell 2007:16). In addition to this it is necessary to give a general overview of the Grounded Theory methodology, since not every reader is familiar with this methodology. For these reasons, the methodology chapter (Chapter 3) and the chapter describing the process of data analysis (Chapter 4) are relatively extensive. The amount of detail given in these chapters may at the first glance seem excessive. However, it is my personal conviction that careful description of decisions regarding methodology is necessary in order for the reader to be able to judge the appropriateness of the results. Focus in the current study is also on developing theory from the empirical material, i.e. on the own analysis, and not on comparing this theory to other theory; this offers another explanation for the relative weight of the methodology and analysis chapters.

1.1 Aim and research question
The aim of the current study is, using a Grounded Theory methodological framework, to develop a theory about bilingualism in the everyday life, as seen from the perspective of bilingual individuals. The aim of the theoretical framework outlined in this paper is the general aim for all theories; i.e. “to capture the complexity of life in formalized conceptualizations” (Gallosi et al. 2005:121). The research question is: How do bilingual individuals perceive bilingualism in their everyday lives?

1.2 Outline of the paper
This paper proceeds as follows. Chapter 2 describes the concept of bilingualism, used as a sensitizing concept (Blumer 1969) for the current study. In Chapter 3, the methodological framework and procedures used in the current study are described, including a general description of Grounded Theory methodology as well as a description of the material collected. Chapter 4 describes the process of data analysis, divided into three phases: the open phase, the axial phase, and the start of the theoretical phase. In Chapter 5, the results in form of a theoretical model are presented and discussed. Finally, in Chapter 6, final remarks are given.

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5 This naturally leads to very short background chapters.
2. Bilingualism: a definition

For the current study, it is necessary to define the concept of bilingualism, since it works as a sensitizing concept (Blumer 1969), that defines the population to be studied and thus provides criteria for the selection of the research subjects or participants of the study. In this section, the concept will be defined in such a way that it will provide useful guidelines for the selection of the individuals to interview. The purpose of this section is not to give an overview of all possible definitions of the concept but rather to state the definition on which I have chosen to base this study.

There is no single clear-cut definition of what bilingualism is or who is a bilingual: “The question of who is and who is not a bilingual is more difficult to answer than it first appears” (Wei 2000:5). The experts on language and its use have noted that, “linguists themselves are not agreed on how bilingualism should be defined” (Romaine 1995:27). There is no one true definition of the concept. In fact, there are almost as many answers as there are researchers of the topic. There is not even consensus within the discipline on how many languages the bilingual speaks; whereas some authors use the term only for people who have knowledge of and use two languages (Wei 2000), others use it to cover everyone with the possession of two or more languages (Myers-Scotton 2006, Appel & Muysken 2006). I will use the term bilingualism in the first sense, limiting this investigation of the phenomenon of bilingualism to those who grew up with two languages; for those with the possession of more than two languages, I find multilingual to be an appropriate term. Most authors agree that it is necessary to specify whether or not the term bilingualism is used on the individual or societal level (Baetens Beardsmore 1986:4, Appel & Myusken 2006:1). Since this is study of bilingualism as a phenomenon influencing peoples’ everyday lives, it clearly concerns individual bilingualism.

Usually a number of key variables are identified to judge if a person is or is not bilingual. These factors are mostly connected to: (1) the age and manner of acquisition, (2) the proficiency level in specific languages, (3) domains of language use and (4) self-identification (Wei 2000:5). There can be many different types of bilingualism (see e.g. Baetens Beardsmore 1986, Appel & Muyskens 2008, Myers-Scotton 2000), depending on the levels of proficiency in the different languages, but I judge this to be of little importance to the current study, since it, as sociological study, does not concern measuring or classifying bilingualism, but rather to study the phenomenon as such. Important to keep in mind, however, is that there are different degrees of bilingualism (see e.g. Baetens Beardsmore 1986:6f); bilingual or not is not a dichotomy, but rather a scale where an individual at different times can occupy different positions. Thus the question of the exact linguistic competence of the participants can be left out of my definition of bilingualism. However, one must be aware of the fact that the experienced proficiency level of the participants may prove to be relevant. This leaves the following important aspects to be decided upon: (1) age/manner of acquisition, (2) language use, and (3) self-identification.

Concerning the age and manner of acquisition, i.e. how the language was learned, Baetens Beardsmore (1986:8) defines as primary bilingual a person who learned both languages in a natural environment as a child. This means that learning took place in a non-formal setting, i.e. not as formal instruction and that both languages were a part of the everyday life of the participant from an early age. Learning two languages during the preschool age (in Sweden up until 5-6 years of age), would most likely lead to primary

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6 Judging the language proficiency of the participants is not of interest here and would be better left to linguistic studies of bilingualism.

7 As opposed to secondary bilingual who received systematic instruction in the second language at school in a formal class-room environment.
bilingualism in my estimation. One can also assume that this type of bilingualism would have an influence on the everyday life of a person, which means that this forms an adequate definition of bilingualism on the aspect of age and manner of acquisition.

The use of both languages is an important factor, since this study concern bilingualism as it influences peoples’ everyday lives in society. Appel & Myusken (2006:3) give a sociological definition of bilingualism: “Somebody who regularly uses two or more languages in alternation is a bilingual”. Since I am interested in bilingualism as a phenomenon in the everyday lives in society, it follows that the definition used here has to include an element of use. In order to be considered bilingual according to my definition the participants must use both their languages regularly in their everyday lives. However, it is important to clarify that this does not mean that they have to use both languages in the same way, for the same purpose or to the same extent or even using the same medium (written/spoken). In fact: “Bilinguals use their languages differently for different purposes in different domains” (Wei 2000:5). Rather, it is meant as a criterion clarifying that the bilingual person, in order to be considered bilingual, needs to use both languages in his/her everyday life. However, the different languages need not, and most likely cannot, be used to the same extent in the everyday life of a person.

Concerning the third aspect of bilingualism, self-identification, I deem it necessary in order to be bilingual to consider oneself a bilingual. In order to study bilingualism as a phenomenon in the everyday life, it is necessary to find participants who see themselves as bilingual. This also makes the criteria of language proficiency less important – the important factor is not the actual knowledge of the languages but whether or not the person sees herself as bilingual, since this is how bilingualism becomes an aspect of a person’s everyday life, being a part of his/her social and hence, in this way, bilingualism enters the scene as an object worth studying in Sociology.

To summarize, the definition of bilingualism used throughout this paper as well as for choosing participants of the study is the following: the person needs to have learned both languages in the pre-school age (before age of 5/6), use both languages on a regular basis in the everyday life, and consider him/herself to be bilingual. All participants in this study need to fulfill these three criteria. However, the person’s own account will be used as the truth – a person who states that he/she learned both languages at an early age, uses them regularly and is a bilingual will be judged to be an appropriate participant of the current study.

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8 Another, less relevant for this paper but still common and influential way of viewing this is in terms of early and late bilingualism, where early bilingualism is often seen as occurring before the age of 11 (Baeßens-Beadsmore 1986:28) or before cerebral lateralization occurs in the brain (around puberty). Some authors advocate that there is a critical age after which the person can no longer become completely fluent in the second language. For an introduction to the critical age hypothesis see e.g. Myers-Scotton (2006:chapter 11). For early advocates of the theory, see e.g. Krashen (1973) and Lenneberg (1967). For authors arguing against the hypothesis, see e.g. Snow & Hoefnagel-Höhle (1978) and Marinova-Todd, et al. (2000). For an overview of findings concerning age and second language acquisition, see Singleton (2001).
3. Methodology

This chapter consists of four sections. First, a general description of the most important elements of Grounded Theory Methodology (Section 3.1) is given. Second, two complex aspects of using Grounded Theory are discussed briefly (Section 3.2). Third, the ontological and epistemological position of this study is described (Section 3.3). Finally, the current study is described in detail (Section 3.4), including a description of the reasons for choosing GT (3.4.1), the sampling process (3.4.2), a description of the data collected and the interview situation (3.4.3) and a detailed description of the procedures used for the data analysis (3.4.4). When using Grounded Theory, it is of utmost importance to clarify methodological and procedural choices; hence, a substantial methodology section, including a thorough discussion of complex or problematic issues related to the methodology, is necessary. The detailed description of methodology here may lead the reader into believing that this is in fact a paper that aims at developing the procedures of Grounded Theory. This is not the purpose of this paper.\(^9\) Rather, the detailed description is needed for transparency of the analysis, and forms an important part of the focus of this thesis, which is on analyzing and theorizing from the data.

3.1 Grounded Theory – a general overview

Grounded Theory (hereafter GT) was created by Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss with their classic work *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (1967). Since its foundation, GT has been criticized, debated and developed by its founders as well as by other researchers. However, all versions of GT have a common goal: “to construct theories in order to understand phenomena” (Haig 1995:1). GT is a method which enables the researcher to create his/her own theoretical framework and concepts, starting from findings from the field work.

After their classical work, the two sociologists went on to develop different versions of GT, where Glaser’s version (e.g. Glaser 1978, 1992, 2002) is often called classic or traditional GT and Strauss’ version (e.g. Corbin & Strauss 1990, Strauss 1987, Strauss & Corbin 1998) is sometimes called developed GT.\(^10\) Some authors identify a third branch of GT (Hood 2007:163) developed by Kathy Charmaz (e.g. Charmaz 1990, 2006), often called constructivist GT. It focuses on data as produced by researcher and researched, whereas the other two approaches, especially Glaser’s, tend to see data as at least partly objective. A number of common features can be identified between these three approaches.

Charmaz (2003:313) identifies six common traits of all types of GT: (1) simultaneous data collection and analysis, (2) “pursuit of emergent themes through early analysis”, (3) “discovery of basic social process in data”, (4) “an inductive construction of abstract categories that explain and synthesize these processes”, (5) “sampling to refine these processes through comparison” and (6) “integration of categories into a theoretical framework”. To summarize these traits, when using GT, data collection and analysis are parallel processes,\(^11\) and the researcher is using *constant comparison* and *theoretical sampling* with the goal of reaching *theoretical saturation* (Hood 2007:163). In addition to these concepts, Hallberg (2006:143f) also mentions the importance of the *coding process*, beginning with open coding and then focusing the analysis, the focus on relations between

\(^9\) Even though this detailed description of the procedures used, may to some extent, serve this purpose, it has not been the author’s intention.

\(^10\) For an overview of the debate between Glaser and Strauss, see Melia (1996).

\(^11\) Something which makes GT different from many other qualitative approaches, where instead all data is collected before the researcher begins the analysis.
In addition to these aspects, it is important to point out the fact that GT “is an interpretative process, not a logico-deductive one” (Suddaby 2006:638); focus is on the researcher’s interpretative analysis of the data, not on testing hypothesis against data. The core of the interpretative process is conceptualization (see e.g. Glaser 2002:23), i.e. the abstraction of patterns found in data and creation of theoretical concepts to describe these patterns. The researcher collects data and analyses it in order to see patterns that can be formulated as theoretical concepts and relations between them. What is then a theoretical concept in GT? It can be described as “the naming of an emergent social pattern grounded in research data” (Glaser 2002:24). Important to note is that “concepts are abstract of time, place and people, and that concepts have enduring grab” (Glaser 2002:24); i.e. in order to create concept, abstraction is necessary. How is then this process of creating abstract concepts performed in GT? Abstraction is performed through the coding process and constant comparison. Below the common features of GT are described and discussed.

### 3.1.1 Emergence

**Emergence** means that the theory constructed grows out of material collected from field work. This means that data is not used to test an already existing theory, but to create a new one. Emergence can be interpreted as when “[d]ata is not ‘forced’ to fit; data is nurtured until the bud of theory begins to flower” (Weingand 1993:22). This analogy is beautiful, viewing the researcher as a gardener that enables the theory to grow. The problematic issue is whether this points towards a view where certain data has an inherent potential for a certain theory. Depending on how a bud is taken care of, it may grow to become large or not, but a sunflower seed can never become a rose. Seeing data as a bud is problematic – maybe a better analogy would be to see the theory as a child growing up as a result of a combination of inherent aspects, the context around it and the parents’ care; theory as a combination between data, social context and the researcher’s care. However, the core of emergence, namely the importance of not forcing the data to fit into a preconceived structure, or testing hypothesis is a strong point of GT. It is valuable, since it enables the researcher to aim at ‘thinking outside the box’ and find new explanations for the studied phenomena.

While the process of creating a grounded theory is predominantly emergent, one needs to be aware of and acknowledge the need for careful planning, just as is the case with any type of research project (see Bruce 2007:65).

### 3.1.2 Coding

**Coding** is central in GT, since “[i]t is through coding that the conceptual abstraction of data and its reintegration as theory takes place” (Holton 2007:265). Coding means identifying social processes in the data (Mella 2007:22), and categorizing, naming and abstracting these processes with the goal of creating a theory. It “distills data, sorts them, and gives us a handle for making comparison with other segments of data” (Charmaz 2006:3). Emphasis is on seeking and finding patterns in the data (Mella 2007:34); this means searching for phenomena that are “repeatedly being present” (Corbin & Strauss 1990:7). Concepts earn their way into the theory, are grounded through reappearing in different parts of the data. It is important not to create concepts from single incidents: “A one incident concept is not a careful generation of a pattern. It is not a pattern. It is a conjecture” (Glaser 2002:33). With all GT coding procedures, the coding starts close to the data and becomes more abstract, until a theoretical model is created.
Throughout this paper I use code to denote the least abstract unit that is found mainly in the first phase of coding. Codes can then be grouped together to form categories, where codes then form part of the properties of a category. Some codes may become categories in themselves, if abstract and important enough. Concepts are the most abstract units; basically these are the most important categories that have been developed further. This does not mean that coding as a process is not abstract; in fact the coding process is a process of abstraction, of creating gradually more abstract units, that can in the end be named concept.

Concerning the coding procedure there are some differences between the methods of Glaser and Strauss.12 “Glaser’s method is to fracture and select in substantive coding, then relate and integrate in theoretical coding. Strauss’s method is fracture in open coding, relate and integrate in axial coding, and then select and integrate in selective coding” (Walker & Myrick 2006:556).13

In open coding, the first phase of the coding process, the data is fragmented and named; it is “the interpretative process by which data are broken down analytically” (Corbin & Strauss 1990:12). This phase is sometimes divided into two parts: initial and focused coding. In the initial coding, the material is coded line-by-line, where every line gets a name describing it, or, more efficiently, incident-to-incident, where incidents are coded and compared (Charmaz 2006:50ff). “[F]ocused coding means using the most significant and/or frequent earlier codes to sift through large amounts of data” (Charmaz 2006:57), and is not necessary and it is still important to be open to new, emerging ideas throughout the process (Glaser & Strauss 1967:40).

The second phase, axial coding, has as its purpose “to relate categories to subcategories” and it “specifies the properties and dimensions of a category” (Charmaz 2006:60).14 For example, both gold and silver can be related to each other and grouped together under the common heading of ‘metals’. Similarly, different attitudes on a certain phenomena can also be grouped together under a common label. In the axial phase, codes are related to each other to form networks of relations. Through these relations, categories are created. Theoretical saturation is reached when collecting new data does not lead to the discovery of new properties of the categories (Glaser & Strauss 1967:61).15 In a short-term project, such as the current one, this notion is complicated to include, since the project has a clear deadline and the researcher may therefore be forced to quit data collection before the categories have been saturated. The concept of saturation is very complex and complicated, since no one except the researcher can judge when saturation is reached, and this judgment naturally has to be made on basis of feelings – there is no way of knowing with certainty that collecting more data would not reveal additional properties of your categories. Dey (1999) therefore prefers to call the categories that form the outcome of the project “categories suggested by data” (Dey 1999, in Charmaz 2006:114). Instead of saturation, a better term is “theoretical sufficiency” (Dey 1999:257, in Charmaz 2006:114). This means that categories have been developed to a sufficient extent, so that it is possible to explore their relationships and draw some conclusions.

In the last phase of the analysis, theoretical coding, “the analyst is charged with the task of integrating the data around a central theme, hypothesis, or story to generate a theory” (Walker & Myrick 2006:556). In the centre of the emerging theoretical framework or model

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12 For an overview of the difference between Glaser and Strauss concerning the coding process, see Walker & Myrick (2006).
13 In the current study, a structure closer to that of Strauss is used. However, the conditional matrix, taking into account not only what is present in the data but also wider societal conditions, proposed by e.g. Corbin & Strauss (1990), has not been used in the current study. Instead a more open type of axial coding has been used, where focus has been on grouping codes together to form categories through establishing relation between codes.
14 See also Glaser & Strauss (1967:36).
15 See also e.g. Charmaz (2006:113ff).
is “the core category, the concept that organizes the theory” (Rennie 1998:103). A theory can also have more than one core category, since an important part of creating a theory is linking concepts with each other; a large part of a theoretical framework consists of the relations between its different concepts.

When coding, it is important to work close to the data but be aware that “the codes reflect the researcher’s interests and perspective as well as the information in the data” (Charmaz 2003:319). The researcher codes what he or she finds important in relation to the phenomenon studied: “We may think out codes capture the empirical reality. Yet it is our reality; we choose the words that constitute our codes. Thus we define what we see as significant in the data and describe what we think is happening” (Charmaz 2006:47). This idea expressed by Charmaz (2006) directs us towards a constructivist view of GT. However, the researchers influence on the coding process and hence on the results, needs to be dealt with in all types of GT. In Section 3.3, the ontological and epistemological position of the current study will be clarified.

### 3.1.3 Constant comparison and memoing

Constant comparison is central in GT: “The purpose of grounded theory methodology is to generate theory through the process of constant comparison” (Kendall 1999:746). It means that “every part of data, i.e. emerging codes, categories, properties, and dimensions as well as different parts of the data, are constantly compared with all other parts of the data to explore variations, similarities and differences in data” (Hallberg 2006:143). Using constant comparison may seem easy, just being a matter of comparing incidents with each other and always moving back and forth between the emerging theory and the data. However, since this is to a large extent a cognitive process within the researcher, the problematic issue is related with how to document this process. One tool for this is memoing.

Throughout the process of coding, analyzing and organizing the data, codes and categories, the researcher writes memos that document the process of developing the theory, i.e. of conceptualization. Many authors stresses that continuous memoing forms an essential part of GT (Corbin & Strauss 1990:10, Charmaz 1990:1169, Lempert 2007:245) Memos have to be spontaneous, ‘trying to catch ideas of the moment’, but they also form the core of the emerging theory (Charmaz 2006:94), since “[m]emos chart, record, and detail a major analytic phase of our journey” (Charmaz 2006:72) and “[i]n the memo writing process, the researcher analytically interprets data” (Lempert 2007:245). In this way, memos can be used for theoretical development (Lempert 2007:262) as “memo writing constitutes the worded world, a world that is constantly rewritten to reflect participants’ stories and our own histories” (Mills et al. 2006a:12). Holton (2007:284) emphasizes the importance of ‘sorting’ ideas/memos to create the final theoretical framework.

### 3.1.4 Theoretical sampling

Theoretical sampling means that, after initial data collection, usually made by a type of convenience sampling (Morse 2007:235), and coding, further selection of data is done on theoretical grounds (Hood 2007:155), i.e. the theory directs the sampling (Morse 2007:240). This differs from the traditional, positivist notions of good sampling as representative of a certain population. The argument for not having a statistical, probabilistic sample is that the goal of GT is to develop, and not test theory. Cases are therefore selected because they present some relevant characteristics for finding significant relationships and understanding

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16 See also Charmaz (1990, 2000, 2003).
17 See also Glaser & Strauss (1967:101-115).
the social phenomena studied. Theoretical sampling can be done in different ways, for example through collecting data from new participants or places, or return to the participants to ask them of new topics or make new observations in the same places.

Using theoretical sampling is thought to be necessary by some authors (e.g. Morse 2007:235) in order to develop the categories (see Charmaz 2006:100). However, the concept of theoretical sampling is not completely clear and especially in a small scale study with a strict deadline, such as the current one, it may be hard to do this to a large extent. The theoretical sample can also, in practice, be limited by the accessibility to individuals considered important according to the theoretical criteria. In such a case, the researcher should discuss in what measure the limitations are acting against the theoretical validity of the sample.

Deciding when to start theoretical sampling is an important decision. It can be done from the start of the data collection, but some authors (e.g. Charmaz 1990:1163) find it more appropriate to move to theoretical sampling late in the research process, when key concepts are already defined, since this enables the researcher to be more open for emerging themes throughout the beginning of the process. I argue that theoretical sampling, in this sense, is not necessary to a large extent in cases were the study is relatively small and has a clear time limit, such as the current study. In this case, it may be enough to define theoretical criteria (initial key concepts) that are assumed relevant for the field work and from those theoretical criteria different individuals are selected to be interviewed. Important is that sampling is “strategic, specific, and systematic (Charmaz 2006:103). Going further with theoretical sampling to develop the concepts can be done in a follow-up study. This is clearly linked to the idea of a grounded theory as an ever-developing theoretical framework – in fact, one can always do further theoretical sampling, since social realities are complex and the nuances of concepts many.

3.1.5 Concluding a GT research project
A detailed reading of the literature of the research topic follows after the main empirical work, data collection and coding, is done: “Once the researcher has developed a fresh set of categories, he or she can compare them with concepts in the literature and can begin to place his or her study appropriately within it” (Charmaz 1990:1163). A GT study should contain a phase where literature comparison is made and the fresh theoretical model or categories are compared with others. However, testing theory is left for later (Glaser & Strauss 1967:103); verification through testing against new material is, once the theoretical concepts have been saturated, not necessary.

The framework developed in a GT study is not the perfect model, but rather a constantly evolving search for different aspects of a phenomenon; “theory as an ever-developing entity, not as a perfect product” (Glaser & Strauss 1967:32). This is one of the strengths of GT since emphasizes is on research as being a constant flow of development. Theory is not static; just as the social lives and contexts of people are changing so is theory. Even though one strives towards finding concepts with ‘enduring grab’ (see Glaser 2002), to explain a phenomenon, one still has to remain open for changes in concepts, their properties and relationships. It is also common and useful to “to establish preliminary frameworks, so that different hypotheses and pieces of evidence can be clustered and relationships determined” (Weingand 1993:22). In one sense, the product of a study using GT is always a preliminary framework; models will be exchanged for new ones. This should be kept in mind – the framework developed in the current study is to be viewed as a starting point for further research into the topic and not as a finished product.
3.2 Grounded Theory – two complex issues

When using GT two issues are especially important and at the same time complex: the issue of how to treat knowledge that the researcher has before entering the field (Section 3.2.1), and the question about how categorization are made throughout the coding process and how this influences the resulting theory (Section 3.2.2). These two issues will be discussed briefly here. The aim is not to provide an extensive overview, but rather to raise the reader’s awareness of these complex and complicating issues.

3.2.1 How to handle knowledge beforehand

The question about what knowledge the researcher should have before entering the field has been debated at length within GT. Ideally, the researcher is supposed to go to the field without pre-conceived concepts, but she has inevitably acquired extensive knowledge of diverse topics before starting the study. This was acknowledged by the creators of GT: “[o]f course, the researcher does not approach reality as a tabula rasa. He must have a perspective that will help him see relevant data and abstract significant categories from his scrutiny of the data” (Glaser & Strauss 1967:3). Some GT researchers use ‘sensitizing concepts’ (Blumer 1969), that act as points of departure for the research (Charmaz 2006:17), or form a conceptual framework that is a part of the analysis (Bowen 2006:15f), while others see this is a imposing a preconceived categorization structure on the data and thus not letting the theory emerge in a proper way (Glaser 2002, Holton 2007). So how can the researcher handle preconceived knowledge? This is not a simple and straight-forward question and it is not possible to find an answer in a brief discussion such as this one.

There is some confusion concerning what constitutes ‘pre-existing knowledge’. Does it mean applying an already existing theory to your data or being influenced by your earlier knowledge of theories? In the latter sense, it is clearly not possible for the researcher to be without preconceived knowledge, since only a person who has had no academic education could be without ‘pre-existing knowledge’ of prior theories. I believe the problem of knowledge beforehand is larger if one has a post-positivistic perspective. If one believes in one, true reality, and gives the researcher the goal of trying to depict this reality as truly as possible, then every type of knowledge beforehand can be seen as a contamination, clouding the researcher’s perspective. However, from a constructivist perspective, it is clear that data is created by researcher and participants together and that analysis is made by the researcher; theory is not forming itself but this does not make theories less valuable.

A researcher using GT has to have some knowledge of the field in order to be able to collect and analyze rich data, but should do his/her best to remain open to the different aspects of the phenomenon under study as expressed in the data; “[w]e should not confuse an open mind with and empty head” (Dey 2007:176). This is certainly true, since not allowing the researcher any knowledge beforehand would mean the researcher is always a novice in the field, something that is not constructive for theoretical development. Instead, it is important to “be continuously aware of the possibility that you are being influenced by pre-existing conceptualizations of your subject area” (Suddaby 2006:635); i.e. to be aware of your theoretical background and how it influences you. I see this as the first crucial step in trying to handle the complex issue of knowledge before the field work.

The second important issue, once the researcher is aware of his/her theoretical background and ideas about the field, is to try to transform this into concepts that can be used as starting points for the study; only in this way can the researcher show how his/her knowledge beforehand influences the study, or remove its influence, depending on how sees

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18 This includes your ontological and epistemological position as well.
the question. This type of sensitizing concepts can also be seen as general ideas (Charmaz 2003:319) that the researcher has before collecting data. For example, in the current study, the definition of bilingualism (as outlined in Chapter 2), works as a sensitizing concept, since it directs which participants are chosen for the study and thus influences the data collection process to a large extent. The basic idea of the current study, that two languages in the everyday life, i.e. bilingualism, has some effect or influence on the participants to some extent, can be seen as a sensitizing concept. Without this idea, the direction of the current study would be different. However, what is also important is that the researcher is ready to remove the sensitizing concepts from the final model, if these prove not to be necessary for understanding the phenomena studied. The researcher should, thus, not be too attached to pre-existing theories, but keep an open mind for new patterns in the data. If this is not done, there is the risk that the project will be transformed into hypothesis testing: “[t]he real danger of prior knowledge in grounded theory is not that it will contaminate a researcher’s perspective, but rather that it will force the researcher into testing hypotheses, either overtly or unconsciously, rather than directly observing” (Suddaby 2006:635).

3.2.2 Categorization and its influence on theoretical development

Dey (2007) discusses the important question of categorization, and how it influences theories created with GT. He argues that categorization, such as even the initial open coding, is not a simple process, but can be highly problematic since categorization in itself creates certain connections and relationships (Dey 2007:178); i.e. how we classify phenomena or occurrences/episodes/stories in the data affects the links we later see between our different categories, since these relationships are at least partly inherent in our system of classification. He links this to theories of categorization as often made using a prototypical case of that category (Dey 2007:169f).\textsuperscript{19} Categorization is a necessary part of conceptualization and theory development since it means fragmenting data into pieces, that can be analyzed and put together to form a new picture of the studied phenomena. Hence, how it is done and what consequences it has for research important to consider for every researcher, not only within the frame of a GT methodology.

One can argue that categorization has two parts: one in the initial stages of the coding process, and another when the researcher chooses which interesting threads to follow up in the analysis. Concerning the initial categorization, it is necessary to make the “underlying theoretical context of categorization” clear (Dey 2007:176), i.e. how, or on what grounds, the researcher categorizes. However, actually doing this is very complex since categorization is not a completely conscious process, especially not in the early stages of the coding process. The researcher can make his/her theoretical background and initial assumptions clear but to explain how this shapes the categorization process is not as easy. Categorization is related not only to social aspects and research paradigms but also to general aspects of human cognition, something which makes the process of clarifying a categorization system complex. Categorizations are also, naturally, related to language and its use, and creating certain categories and naming them in certain ways shapes the later parts of the research process, through layers of meaning being present in words – meanings that the researcher may intend or may not even be aware of. This early type of categorizations is therefore important to our later results. However, it is hard to envision how the researcher could be able to account for a classification system that is ‘subconscious’ to a large extent. It can be a goal to try to be aware of how ones categorization processes works, but I am not sure if it is really possible. What is important, I argue, is that the reader of any study is aware of the fact that this early categorization shapes the process.

\textsuperscript{19} For more about prototype theory see e.g. Rosch (1978).
Concerning the later type of categorization, Glucksmann (2000:35) refers to the organization of data and analysis as ‘slicing the cake’, where slicing in a particular way gives a certain view on the material: “treating the same material in very different ways, and accentuating different points” (Glucksmann 2000:35). This is categorization based on the researcher’s conscious choices. There are many different ways to structure and analyze data and the final result depends on where focus is put at the start of the research. No theory can therefore emerge by itself; theory is always a product of the researcher’s choices. However, these choices are not arbitrary or random but based on e.g. the researcher’s knowledge of the field and understanding of the data. Still, it is important to remain open to the contents of the data. What is important is to make clear, just as Glucksmann (2000) does, that the researcher makes choices, and does not follow ‘inherent structures’ in the material. The researcher is responsible for the development of the theory: “[t]he theory depends on the researcher’s view; it does not and cannot stand outside of it” (Charmaz 2006:130).

3.3 Ontology, epistemology and axiology in the current study

When starting a research project, the researcher must take a stance on questions of ontology (“the nature of reality”), epistemology (how it is possible to gain knowledge about the world), and axiology (“the role of values in research”), as well as on which methodology to use and how to present the final product (Creswell 2007:16)\(^\text{20}\), i.e. “examine where they are in relation to the area of interest” (Mills et al. 2006a:10). The purpose of this section is to clarify my position on the first three aspects.\(^\text{21}\) These issues are not to be taken lightly, since these choices determine the possible field of study, possible ways of studying it and types of answers sought as well as the researcher’s position in relation to the field.

Traditional/classic GT is often seen as representing a post-positivist tradition of research (Annells 1996:391\(^\text{22}\)), i.e. there is a reality, but we can only perceive it imperfectly and we aim to see it better, through improving our methodological tools. Some authors also point out the fact that the original theorists did not account for how the position of the researcher in the world influences data collection and analysis (see Lempert 2007:247). This indicates that the original theorist considered the researcher “more of a conduit for the research process than that of a creator of it” (Charmaz 2003:313). However, Holton (2007) argues that “as a general methodology, classic grounded theory can adopt any epistemological perspective appropriate to the data and the ontological stance of the researcher” (Holton 2007:269). Even though I do not work with classic grounded theory as outlined by Glaser (e.g. 1978), my position is that there is a clear difference between GT as the ontological and epistemological position of its founders and as a set of methodological procedures. As a set of procedures, GT is a methodology for creating theory from empirical data, and does not necessarily entail a specific ontological and epistemological position. I argue, in line with the argument made by Holton (2007), that GT is compatible with different types of perspectives, since “[m]ethods are merely tools” (Charmaz 2006:15) and their purposes are determined by the position of the researcher. However, GT is not to be used without epistemological and ontological perspectives; the researcher has to choose position.

Concerning ontology, the nature of the world around us, certain aspects of the world, such as time and weight can be measured objectively. However, how people interpret the world and live with other people and with the physical aspects of the world around us cannot be judged in this fashion. Thus, the first important standpoint regarding reality and research is

\(^{20}\) See also Creswell (2003).
\(^{21}\) The presentation style is pre-determined (The nature of this project is such that the aim is to produce a master’s thesis) and reasons for choosing GT will be outlined in Section 3.4.1.
\(^{22}\) See also Mills et al. (2006a:8).
that multiple realities exist (Charmaz 2003:314). Concerning epistemology, and the type of knowledge possible to gain through research, the social world(s) and the realities of people cannot be understood in any other way than through the researcher’s perceptions, perceptions colored by the experiences and opinions. There can be no objective knowledge about the social world. Our task as social scientists is not to describe ‘reality’ but to build theoretical models and explore different interpretations of the world around us and how these interpretations are shaped by and shapes the formal and informal structures and interactions of our society. A second important point is that data is not just collected but co-constructed by researcher and participants (Charmaz 2003:314); “social constructionist perspective assumes an active, not neutral, observer whose decisions shape both process and product throughout the research” (Charmaz 1990:1165); data is seen as forming constructions of reality: “[h]ow you collect data affects which phenomena you will see, how, where, and when you will see them, and what sense you will make of them” (Charmaz 2006:15). This means emphasizing the researcher as author (Mills et al. 2006b:31) of the research process as a whole as well as of the final product.

The perspective taken in the current study is a constructivist one. Research means creating knowledge about how the social worlds are constructed, not finding it. In other words: the theoretical framework constructed in the current study “provides an interpretive portrayal of the studied world” (Charmaz 2003:314). This is the case, since “[d]ata do not provide a window on reality. Rather, the ‘discovered’ reality arises from the interactive process and its temporal, cultural, and structural context” (Charmaz 2000:524, quoted in Mills et al. 2006b:31). In this sense, “it is misleading to conceptualise raw material as being ‘raw’ in any essential sense” - data is and was always “produced for particular purposes” (Glucksmann 2000:26); “data is constructed through an on-going interaction between researcher and participants” (Hallberg 2006:146). This makes it necessary to attend to the question of the relationship between researcher and participants (Hall & Callery 2001:260) since “recognising that all sources of knowledge are produced, on the basis of specific relations between investigator and the object investigated” (Glucksmann 2000:22) is of fundamental importance to any research projects as well as to making knowledge claims. From this follows that it is necessary to take into account that “[h]uman subject research is not neutral; human subject researchers are not separate and distinct from their research process” (Lempert 2007:261).

Concerning axiology, role of values in research, Charmaz (1990:1165) argues that the researcher’s values shape the process; this reflects my position. My values determine what type of questions I ask and guide my interests in the topic. Still, it is important to listen carefully to the participants’ opinions; this is done through involvement of the researcher in the research process and the participants’ lives. While acknowledging the influence of my own values on the research process, I have had as a goal to do the participants ideas and lives justice. This means remaining open to the content of the material and the analysis and performing a careful analysis that does not take the value of certain aspects of the studies subject for granted.

3.4 Describing the procedures of the current study

It is of utmost importance to describe the data collection and analysis in detail; otherwise the reader cannot judge its quality (Bruce 2007:64). Therefore, this section will describe the procedures used in the current study. Section 3.5.1 outlines the reasons for choosing GT. In

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23 See also: “The process of data analysis, including coding techniques and category creation, should be made apparent to the reader” (Suddaby 2006:637) and “[q]ualitative methods, like their quantitative cousins, can be systematically evaluated only if their canons and procedures are made explicit” (Corbin & Strauss 1990:4).
section 3.4.2, the sampling process will be described. Section 3.4.3 focuses on describing the data and the process of data collection. Finally, in Section 3.4.4, the data analysis process, including the coding process, will be described.

### 3.4.1 Reasons for choosing GT

Weingand (1993:19) writes that “the method selected must be appropriate to the problem under analysis”. Different methods have different purposes and answer different types of questions. GT is suitable when the researcher has an open research question and is seeking a theoretical explanation. GT is also appropriate “when you want to investigate how individuals interpret reality” (Suddaby 2006:634).

There are two reasons for choosing GT. First, the current study has an open research question: to analyse bilingualism in the everyday life. This research question is directed towards exploring how bilinguals perceive reality, i.e. what type of feelings/ideas etc. they express in connection with their use of the different languages in their everyday lives. This research question is suitable for GT. The current study seeks to create a theoretical framework for understanding bilingualism as a phenomenon influencing people’s everyday lives and the primary interest is to explore conceptual relationships regarding this issue. Using GT is also in this sense appropriate. Second, GT is a method that allows the researcher to be creative, and go beyond already existing theory to look at data in new ways. As a researcher, it is necessary to work with methods that you find inspiring and that allow you to look at your chosen topic from an angle that sparks your interest. For me, GT is such a method.

### 3.4.2 Sampling

Having clear initial criteria for the selection of participants is necessary since it ensures that even a convenience sampling procedure is structured. In Chapter 2 bilingualism was defined. These criteria of bilingualism for selection of participants make the target group very diverse. Diverse representations of a phenomenon are sought when working with GT; however, for a small-scale study, such as the current, it is sensible to limit the group studied.

In GT, sociological categories, e.g. gender, age, socio-economic class, may be used for sampling (Morse 2007:236). In the current study, this was done to limit the target group, and to broaden the varying experiences present in the material. Age and occupation was used to limit the target group. All participants were 20-30 years of age and students, PhD-candidates or had recently graduated. They were either born in Sweden or came to Sweden latest at the age of five. All participants had Swedish as one of the two languages learned in childhood. No problems were experienced with sampling according to these criteria. Type of language (different language families and geographical distance to Sweden), circumstances of growing up (being born in Sweden vs. different ages of arrival) and type of family constellation (one or two parents with another language than Swedish) were taken into consideration in the selection of participants to have participants with as diverse backgrounds as possible. However, no systematic structure was used for this, since sampling was to a large extent based on availability. Participants were recruited through personal contacts, using my own social network. When recruited for the study, i.e. before being interviewed, all participants were given a written copy of my definition of bilingualism (see Chapter 2) as well as of the limitations related to age and occupation so as to ensure that they fulfilled these criteria.  

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24 Even so, one person was recruited who, when the interview started, i.e. when I asked the initial question about the person’s background, was found not to fulfill the criteria of having learned Swedish before the age of 6. (The person arrived to Sweden only at the age of 14). Since I did not want to interrupt the interview during its first minute, I made a very short interview and after the interview I explained to the person that she did not fulfill the
The participants had the following languages: Finnish, German, Polish, Bosnian, Farsi/Dari, Arabic, Estonian, and Hungarian. A total of ten participants were interviewed.\textsuperscript{25} Two had recently graduated, two are enrolled in a PhD-program and the others are university students. Four participants has one parent with Swedish as mother tongue and one parent with the other language and six participants has two parents with the other language as mother tongue. Some initial problems with finding male participants were experienced, but four male participants were found.

Concerning the question of theoretical sampling, theoretical criteria were used to do the initial sampling, since the sampling was based on a definition of the concept of bilingualism. Further on, individuals with a diverse background were chosen because they were thought to add valuable information concerning the developing theory. Also, a form of theoretical sampling was used throughout all the later interviews, since I followed up on interesting theoretical leads during the whole of the open phase. I argue that this qualifies as having done sampling on theoretical grounds, considering the fact that the current study is relatively small and has a clear time limit. This will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

3.4.3 Data collection: the material and the situation of collection it

Often in GT studies, several types of data are used (Charmaz 2006:14). However, since this is a small-scale study, it was decided to use one type of material; it is more important to analyze one type of material properly during the short duration of this study, rather than making a less thorough study of different types of material. Since the main interest here is how bilingualism is experienced by the participants of the study, interview material was most suitable. Charmaz (2003:312)\textsuperscript{26} also argues that in-depth interviews are especially suitable for GT since it combines flexibility and control, i.e. the researcher can direct the topics of the interviews while still having the possibility to follow new leads. Interview material is not a description of ‘reality’, rather an interview reflects what interviewers and participants bring to the interview, impressions during it, and the relationship constructed through it; “the result is a construction – or a reconstruction – of a reality” (Charmaz 2006:27).

Just as recommended by Charmaz (2006:26), the aim was to ask broad, open-ended questions and ‘follow the lead’ of the participants, and at the same time directing the interview towards specific topics of interest. Therefore an interview guide was constructed (see Appendix 1) consisting of questions concerning five different topics: growing up, everyday life, languages in the everyday life, the emotional and social meaning of the languages, and discourses about bilingualism. These topics were perceived to be central for exploring the phenomenon of bilingualism in the participants’ lives. These topics/questions were used as starting points and as a back-up in case the participants would not talk freely. The purpose of the interview guide changed during the data collection – at the beginning I kept my questions close to the interview guide, so as not to miss any of the areas of interest, but in the later interviews, it was used as a support if the participant did not mention some of the topics. In most cases, it was unnecessary.

The material consists of approximately 440 minutes (about 7 hours and 20min) of recorded interviews from 10 participants. The material was recorded using a digital voice recorder and was transcribed word-by-word. The use of a recorder was not experienced as a disturbing factor – none of the participants showed any reluctance towards being recorded; most expressed a positive attitude towards it. Using a recorder allowed me to focus on the participants’ words as well as their facial expressions and gestures. This information, as well

\textsuperscript{25}Not more than two participants with the same language were interviewed.

\textsuperscript{26}See also Charmaz (2006:26).
as the tone of voice, was included in the interview transcripts when deemed relevant for interpreting the utterances. Each interview was transcribed and coded before doing the next interview. In this way I could follow up interesting threads from earlier interviews in the later ones. This is in line with what Starks & Brown Trinidad (2007:1376) writes about structuring the empirical work: “[i]deal, each interview or observation is coded before the next is conducted so that new information can be incorporated into subsequent encounters”.

Seven of the interviews were made at the university in a semi-private location with few people passing by. One interview was made in the participant’s home, since this participant had a very small child. This interview felt especially personal since I got to share the participant’s everyday life for a while. The two interviews with PhD-students were made at their offices at the university. These two interviews felt the most ‘business-like’. On the one hand, these participants, being researchers themselves, understood very well that they were helping me through letting me interview them. They therefore gave short and concise answers, showing that they were willing to give me just enough time to let me ask my questions. On the other hand they did seem to have a genuine interest in the topic.

Even though there are similarities between the participants and me as the interviewer, concerning age and educational background, we still came to the interview situation with different aims: “the attempt to equalise the relation between interviewer and interviewee is an impossible and misguided one, given their very different and unequal interests, investment in, and relation to the research process” (Glucksmann 2000:21). I could feel this throughout the interviews. Whereas some participants talked profusely about topics that seemed to interest them, but may not have been exactly what I was asking about, other participants tried to give me the ‘right’ answer. It was clear that different participants came to the interview situation with different expectations that also differed from my aims. Still, I felt mostly comfortable in the interview situation, especially during the later interviews when I was more used to my own questions and started to feel more experienced. Sometimes I felt a bit awkward with formulating certain questions. I also felt some insecurity when noticing that not all my prepared questions were understood by the participants. This made my questioning somewhat insecure at some occasions during the interviews and may well have influenced the participants’ answers.

One general problem experienced was the difficulty with not asking yes/no-questions or straight-forward questions probing the participants’ opinions about a certain issue. When listening to the first recordings, I became aware of this and during the later interviews, I tried to rephrase yes/no-questions as a more open question asking about how and/or why. The participants reacted differently to these ‘closed’ questions: some of them continued talking, clarifying their position on the subject, whereas other just answered with a short sentence or even just one word. The participants in general differed with regard to how talkative they were. A few were ideal participants (see e.g. Morse 2007:231f), since they provided rich, detailed information without almost any input from me. I experienced larger problems with getting the male participants to provide detailed answers, something which could be related to differences between (stereotypically) male and female discourse. However, issues related to gender have not been the focus of the current study, as length of answers was not an important fact in the analysis. The male participants did not express qualitatively different answers from the female participants; there was only a difference in quantity.

27 With the exception of interviews 6 and 7, since due to the availability of the participants, these interviews had to be made straight after each other.

28 “The knowledge relations of the interview situation inevitably place the researcher in a position of overall control despite the objective of extracting information about and from the researched. She sets it up; she wants to know; she determines the questions; she analyses the answers; she turns them into the more formal format that is socially recognised as constituting a contribution to knowledge” (Glucksmann 2000:34).
After having done the first half of the interviews, I started to become more ‘efficient’ as interviewer, but to a certain extent less open. At this point I already had many interesting topics to pursue and became somewhat more reluctant to look into new leads with follow-up questions, unless the new topic seemed to be of central importance to that participant. This surely shaped the resulting material, but this is an effect that is hard to avoid when working with interview material. From a GT point of view, this can also be seen as doing rudimentary theoretical sampling, trying to gain more information about the topics that after the first few interviews started to emerge as theoretically interesting. During the interviews, I encountered many well- and pre-formulated ideas on the topic, but also moments where I could clearly feel new thoughts coming to the participants, a phenomenon which may be due to the fact that “the interviewer’s questions ask the participants to describe and reflect upon his or her experiences in ways that seldom occur in everyday life” (Charmaz 2006:25). When this happened, it turned the interview session into more of an exploration of the participants’ ideas and feelings, and less into questioning. During these moments, I could feel clearly how knowledge was constructed through the interaction between me, the interviewer, and the participants, as pointed out by e.g. Mills et al. (2006a:9). I also realized that with having more skill as an interviewer, I could create these situations through asking certain questions; however, this is not an easy accomplishment. After completing all the interviews, I realize more than ever that interviewing is an art; practice really makes a difference.

The process of data collection was very intense, with many interviews in a short time. This had both positive and negative effects. It enabled me to immerse myself in the material, to work closely and intensely with the participants’ stories and the resulting open codes. It was also easy to keep ideas from earlier interviews fresh in mind while conducting later interviews, which allowed me to follow up on interesting threads from earlier interviews through probing those topics more extensively with later participants. However, the process was sometimes too intense, giving me the feeling that maybe there was not enough time to code properly before the next interview. A longer break was inserted after half of the interviews; during this time my earlier thoughts had time to mature. The intensive structure also led to very long sessions of transcribing, which was very demanding. Still, with the limited amount of time allowed for this project, I find that the intense model was the better choice, since it made it allowed me more time for the axial and theoretical phases of analysis.

3.4.4 Analyzing the data

The process of analysis consisted of three phases: open, axial and theoretical. My process followed closely the ideas of Starks & Brown Trinidad (2007:1376) where open coding means fracturing the data into pieces and placing the pieces in categories, axial coding focuses on relationships between codes, including the creation of categories based on the existing open codes, and the theoretical phase (which they call the selective phase), including identification of the core category and creating a theoretical model based on the relation between the core category and other central categories. One complicated issue experienced throughout the coding process, was that the interviews were conducted in Swedish, while the coding was done in English. This problem will be discussed further in Chapter 6. In order to code and analyze the material, Atlas.ti was used. Atlas.ti is a computer program, which comprises tools for exploring and analyzing qualitative data, such as e.g. texts, pictures or audio material. It allows the researcher to e.g. code material, write memos, relate memos to codes, write comments on codes, and related codes to each other to explore relations present in the data.29

29 To some extent similar to the procedures suggested by e.g. Corbin & Strauss 1990.
30 For more information, see User’s Manual for ATLAS.ti 5.0. (2004).
In the **open phase**, the material was coded incident-to-incident (see Charmaz 2006:53). On a few occasions, when encountering an incident that seemed to be of central importance to understanding and conceptualizing the material, line-by-line coding was used. Even though no codes were named with the exact expressions used by the participants, focus was on keeping the codes very close to the material; different positions on the same topic/question were coded differently at this stage. This was done in order to keep as many of the nuances in the material as possible. Therefore the number of codes grew rapidly, making the coding process very complex. The exact same phenomenon was sometimes coded differently, simply due to the large amount of codes. Therefore, on a number of occasions throughout the coding process, I went through all codes looking for potential overlaps and similarities. Any identical codes found were then merged together. Focus was on coding different types of interactions, opinions, structures, and relationships. The open phase was concluded by creating a loose, preliminary network consisting of most codes found in the material. The relations established in this last part of the open phase were seen as indicating possible relations, but still as being open for further analysis and discussion. During the formation of this network codes that were found to have approximately the same meaning and relations to other codes were merged together. A small number of codes that were not present to a large extent in the data were removed. Throughout the open phase, memos were used for capturing the most important themes in each interview as well as for writing down thoughts on codes and topics that seemed to be of central importance.

In the **axial phase**, I chose a number of codes and analyzed and discussed their relationships with other codes. These codes are chosen because of the interesting theoretical issue to which they are connected. To a large extent, this coincides with the most central, in the sense of being the most frequent, codes in the material. This means choosing to create categories out of certain codes. The categories will be explored and discussed using quotations from the participants etc. After having done this, a short literature review of the categories according to the properties and relationships found in my data will be presented. The aim in the axial phase is to explore properties of the different categories as well as their relations to other codes or sub-categories. I do not aim to reach theoretical saturation, since I judge this to be impossible in a project of this size and length, but my aim is instead to form categories that are theoretically sufficient (see Dey 1999, Charmaz 2006). In the current project, this means that the categories/concepts have been developed to the extent possible within the time given and with the amount of material collected here.

This literature review serves to deepen my understanding of the meaning of the category as well as its relations. The aim of the axial phase was to develop some of the interesting and central codes into theoretical concepts. The choices made at the beginning of the axial phase naturally have profound effects on the emerging theory. It is necessary to point out that it is never possible to follow all the interesting threads in a research process; starting the axial phase meant choosing the directions of the focus of this study. Choosing codes on which to focus at the beginning of the axial phase, as well as how the initial codes are used to name incidents in the data, i.e. initial categorization through coding, shapes the emerging theory (see Section 3.2.2, Dey 2007). Choosing the codes on which to focus is what Glucksmann (2000) refers to as ‘slicing the cake’.

Corbin & Strauss (1990:11) writes that it is necessary to analyze broader structural conditions of the data, through the use of a conditional matrix. In a small scale study like the current one, to do this in a relatively accurate fashion require an extensive knowledge of the field, which is not possible to gain in such a small scale project as the current one. To use a conditional matrix for analyzing my data would therefore lead to too much speculation about how certain aspects found in the material relates to the structures of society in general. Therefore focus is on establishing relations within the data and not on relating the data to
society and its structures etc. However, in the overview of the literature concerning the
categories, theories linking the categories with structural features will of course not be
excluded. The important thing to note is that I will not speculate in factors regarding the lives
and situations of the participants outside of what is present in the data. Thus, my theoretical
analysis of the material will be based strictly on what is present there. In the results part of
this thesis, the theoretical phase, the grounded, explored and discussed categories are related
to each other to form a theoretical model. This model is then described and discussed
thoroughly.
4. Analysis

In this chapter, the analysis of the material will be described. This chapter is divided into three sections. Section 4.1 describes the open phase and Section 4.2 the axial phase. In section 4.3 the final theoretical analysis leading to the creation of the theoretical model will be described. This model is then described and discussed in Chapter 5.

4.1 The open phase

In this section, the results from the open phase are described. First, the process of open coding and creation of the first open network of relations between codes is described (Section 4.1.1), before moving on to shortly describe the most frequent codes, both concerning occurrences in the material and links with other codes (Section 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 respectively). Note that these codes may not always be the most interesting: whereas a single occurrence does not hold much worth when creating a theory, frequency in occurrence is but an indicator of a theoretically interesting code. The theoretically most interesting codes will be further analyzed and discussed in the axial phase (Section 4.2).

4.1.1 General description of the open phase

In the open phase the whole of the material was coded, using specific, nuanced codes to describe different types of interesting phenomena, e.g. processes, emotions, opinions, structures, interactions, changes and ideas. The open phase consisted of 18 different coding sessions, each ranging from one to eight hours in length. For each interview, one session was used to code the whole interview. After every second or third interview, a session, in which similarities between different codes and between different occurrences of the codes were analyzed, was inserted. Focus of these sessions was on clarifying the meanings of the open codes as well as considering their possible relationships to each other. This enabled me to find codes pertaining to the same phenomenon, and merge them together and to gain a better understanding of the meaning of the codes. In addition to this, each new instance of a code found in the material was compared to all other instances of the same code, as well as to codes having a related meaning, according to the idea of constant comparison, one of the cornerstones of GT (see Section 3.1.3). In all the later coding sessions, I also went back and forth between the different interviews, since when coding the later interviews, I discovered new aspects also present in the earlier ones.

After the first interviews, some interesting aspects had been found, but it was clear that more data was needed. This was different from the feeling when coding the last interviews. With the exception of in Interview 9, which was a very long and in all ways rich interview, very few new codes were found in the later interviews. I felt that the picture of bilingualism in the everyday life, started to become, if not saturated, then still theoretically sufficient (Dey 1999) to move on to the axial phase.

In the last four coding sessions, when the whole material had been coded, focus was first on clarifying the codes as well as on reducing the number of codes. After coding all ten interviews, I had a total of 226 codes, which was judged to be too much for creating a network. The number of codes was reduced to 175 through combining similar and overlapping codes under more abstract labels. This was done through constant comparison; reading and re-reading the list of codes and comparing them to each other as well as to the quotations. When I was unsure about whether two codes could be merged together, I re-read
all their quotations to see if the quotations contained enough shared meaning to be grouped together under a common label.

In the last part of the open phase a network was created, using the Atlas.ti network editor (see User’s Manual for ATLAS.ti 5.0 2004:37, 213-249). The network editor allowed me to place connected codes next to each other and if deemed appropriate, link them together. In most cases, the Atlas.ti-relation of ‘is associated with’ was used, which simply indicates some kind of unspecified relation between the two codes.\(^{31}\) When creating the open network, more codes were found that could be merged together and/or removed. The codes that were completely removed were those that could not be included into any of the other ones and were also infrequent and non-central. Reducing the codes and creating the network was made through moving back and forth between list of codes and the network picture, thus: looking at the meaning of the codes, looking at the quotations, looking at the relations of the codes to other codes in order to find codes with similar meaning. Codes were merged in order to create more abstract codes.

The open coding was a struggle between the need to be general, i.e. to abstract, and to keep every code close to the specific situation; to keep the nuances of the phenomena in the material. The large amount of codes in the final open network is due to the wish to keep as many nuances as possible until the axial phase. Also, I experienced that the grouping of the codes according to theme when starting the network was important for how links were seen. The resulting large and loose network (see Appendix 3) of preliminary relations, consisting of 105 codes, contains both more abstract and more specific codes.

**4.1.2 The most frequent codes**

Here the ten most frequent codes are described (number of occurrences in brackets). The most frequent code is *not interacting much with 'other' community* (19). Here instances related to not having a 'community' of people from the other country or not spending time with them were coded. This is related both to cultural aspects, i.e. people with the same cultural background and to speakers of the other language. *Seeing bilingualism as a resource* (18) is another one of the most frequent codes. This code has been used for all occurrences where positive opinions of being bilingual are expressed. *Other as language of the home* (18), means that the other language is used primarily for communication with family and that the family is the most important – or in some cases only – connection with the other language. As *complicated relation/ambivalence with identity as other* (16) occurrences of feeling ambivalent in relation with being other, both in a Swedish context and in the context of the other country, was coded. This includes instances of feeling insecure about being able to ‘pass’ as a member of the other group or as native speaker of the other language. As *becoming more open/understanding through comparing different cultures* (14) was coded instances where ideas connected to that bilingualism gives a broader view towards most things, makes a person more flexible and gives a more open perspective towards cultural differences.

As *negative view of/opposition towards other language* (14), all instances of expressing a negative view towards the other language were coded. This includes for example not wanting to speak the other language at certain periods in childhood/adolescence. A large part of this, and the reason why this is such a heavy code, consists of expressions of negative opinions directed towards home language teaching, i.e. lessons in the other language received in the school. In the material, few positive experiences of this are found, but many different types of negative experiences, e.g. the level being too basic or too advanced, the teaching being too strict or it simply being uninteresting since the person could not understand the

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\(^{31}\) See User’s Manual for ATLAS.ti 5.0 (2004:209-213) for a description of the different types of relations. See Appendix 2 for a list of the relations used in the current study.
point with taking such lessons. As wanting to belong (14) all instances of expressions connected to a wish to belong to a group or a context were coded. To a large extent, but not exclusively this was directed toward majority group belonging. This code was extra strong in accounts about adolescence when not being different was experienced as an important part of the life. As experiencing Swedish as mother tongue (13), instances of establishing that Swedish is the mother tongue were coded. Even though all participants express that they have more or less full functional proficiency in other, many of them still establish Swedish as being the primary language or mother tongue. This is also clearly an ongoing process where Swedish becomes the mother tongue, i.e. the person’s best language, even though it is not the person’s first language, and is clearly connected to the proficiency level in different domains. As experiencing difference in how children and adults ascribe identity to others (13) instances related to seeing a difference in behavior and/or attitude from adults than from children were coded. These differences were related to level of acceptance of the person as a member of the in-group, where the children were more accepting.

Finally, as creating clear difference between languages (11) instances of the idea that the languages are not the same in the sense of having the same function, meaning or level of command were coded. It can also be related to different amount of use of the two languages. This is also an ongoing, constantly changing process, where the balance between the two languages may shift, e.g. through one of the languages being the language of education or through using one language less and less.

4.1.3 The codes with most links to other codes

Three of the eleven codes that have the most links to other codes are the same as the most frequent codes. These are (number of links in brackets): other as the language of the home (12), creating clear difference between languages (11) and wanting to belong (8).

As creating family culture (10), things related to the process of creating own family traditions, related to both cultures and languages, were coded. This is both being created by and influencing formation of the self of the person and the family members. Ambivalence in relation to own self (9) includes instances of confusion regarding own identities and instances related to the complex defining process of creating identities in relation to two different cultures, as well as not knowing how to handle the extra grains of identity that the other language brings. As losing (contact with) other language (9) instances of both feeling a decline in proficiency of the language but also to a large extent using it less, were coded. Other not being so deep/rich (9) includes instances of not being able to use the other language fully, i.e. in all context. This includes expressions of having a limited register in the other language, of not knowing youth language or vernacular types of the language but also about not being able to write the language or not knowing the academic language. Other language as emotionally important (9) includes expressions of different degrees of the emotional importance of the other language. As question of mother tongue as complex (9) instances of making a direct comment on the complexity of the issue of what is the mother tongue were coded. As complex relationship between language and self (8), occurrences of comments on this relationship in a way that indicated the complexity of this process-directed link between language and the self were coded. Finally, language as important part of belonging (8) is a code that collects all instances of describing the influence of language and language use in belonging to a group or culture.
4.2 The axial phase

In this section the axial phase will be described. Section 4.2.1 briefly describes the beginning of the axial phase. Sections 4.2.2-4.2.6 describe the different codes that are analyzed, discussed and made into theoretical categories/concepts during this phase. Each category will also be related to other theories.

4.2.1 Beginning the axial phase

The starting point of the axial phase was the large network from the open phase (see Appendix 2). From this five codes were chosen, namely the following: seeing bilingualism as a resource, language as important part of belonging, question of mother tongue as complex, complex relationship between language and self, and ambivalence in relation to own self. A combination of three criteria was used for choosing them: (1) frequency in the material, (2) the amount of links to other codes, (3) and level of abstractedness; each of these three criteria contributes in its own way to the chosen codes being theoretically interesting and relevant for the emerging picture. It is important to note that the selection of which codes to develop constitutes a choice made by the researcher’s theoretical interests and will shape the resulting theory. For example, one part of the large, open network deals with society and its view on languages and status. Even though this is a theoretically interesting topic, it does not form a central part of the material and these codes dealing with this subject are therefore not so developed. Also, this subject is not linked to the rest of the material to a large extent. Therefore, I have chosen not to pursue this issue in the current study. However, the codes in that section could form the starting point for another study focusing on languages and status. For similar reasons, other interesting topics such as the participants’ view on giving their own children bilingualism, i.e. teaching them the other language, and issues related to the family culture are not pursued.

After having chosen these codes, focused networks of them and their relations were created and the relations were analyzed in detail and changed when appropriate. When analyzing the relations, some of the codes being related to the category could be merged together. Due to this, the smaller networks are to certain extents different then the large, open network. These changes were all necessary in order to follow the process of exploring the categories, which is the purpose of axial coding.

Throughout the axial phase, the term complex is used to denote multi-facetted issues, i.e. issues that are not simply but rather consist of a large number of different aspects. Complex, as it is used here, should not be interpreted as something negative, but rather as reflecting a social world consisting of many different and intertwined issues. The purpose here is not to show simple connections but rather to analyze and try to form conclusions about the complexity of bilingualism in the everyday life.

4.2.2 Seeing bilingualism as a resource

At first, this code seemed to be almost theoretically uninteresting, since it simply concerns positive statements towards bilingualism. But when looking closer at the properties of the code, and, more importantly, its relations to other codes, I realized that the theoretically interesting questions is not only in what way bilingualism is seen as a resource, i.e. the different types of resource it can be, but also how it is formed and perceived as a resource and which aspects that influence it. Below, the network of the code is shown.
Bilingualism emerges as a resource in different ways, i.e. has different properties. First, it is seen as a resource for the career; in this sense bilingualism is a functionally directed, career-connected asset. This is a resource that can be used in addition to other resources the person has, and it may or may not be connected to having knowledge of a specific language. As expressed in the material: 'I know that languages are appreciated, in the professional life, doesn’t really matter where you come, it’s just good, and positive, I think that it’s just positive with bilingualism' and 'it may be if you apply for a job and it is written that I know more languages, then it's good.' Bilingualism is also seen as a resource because it has helped and will help the person to learn further languages. Here it is very closely connected to the code early languages makes later language learning easier; in fact, this code forms a part of bilingualism as a resource. It is clear in the material that this can be an important part of the reason why the childhood bilingualism is important: 'I absolutely believe that my knowledge of languages comes from the fact that I learned two languages at an early age.' This can also be related to the code bilingualism affecting later choices in life, where the bilingualism gives possibilities, either through the person having a certain language that allows him/her to do certain things or because the childhood bilingualism is seen as having affecting the person’s interests in languages and/or other cultures. Here bilingualism can be seen as a functional resource. Its usefulness is then determined by what it can be used for, i.e. a type of instrumental value, that can be used for different purposes.

Secondly, bilingualism also adds value in certain social situations, through giving ability to interact in a language, since language knowledge determines ability to interact. Even though the possibilities of interaction are not determined solely by the ability to use language, bilingualism becomes an important social resource, through giving connections and possibilities for interaction. This is also connected with knowledge of many languages important in the home. Here, not only the childhood bilingualism becomes important but also further languages learned. Growing up in an environment where knowledge of languages is important – or is taken to be something necessary and natural - leads to a view of bilingualism as an important part of the life. This means that the bilingualism (or multilingualism) is much more than just an asset when applying for work, but an important part of the person’s

32 The instances of this type of resource were coded simply as bilingualism as a resource.
33 ‘jag vet att språk är uppskattat, i arbetslivet, spelar egentligen inte så stor roll vart man kommer, det är bra liksom, och positivt, jag tror att det bara är positivt med tvåspråkighet’ (participant 8) and ‘det är väl om man söker jobb och det står att jag kan fler språk så är ju det bra’ (participant 10).
34 ‘jag tror absolut att mina språkkunskaper kommer från det faktum att jag lärde mig två språk i tidig ålder’ (participant 9).
everyday life; bilingualism becomes not only a functional resource, helping the person to fulfill certain goals, but an important aspect in the social life of the person.

There is also the idea of bilingualism as creating possibilities for becoming more open/understanding through comparing different cultures. Here bilingualism is not a resource that has a function, for e.g. career but is connected to personal development and gaining more understanding of others; this can be seen as a more emotionally-directed resource. This is linked with the code getting richer personal culture with two languages; here bilingualism, as well as having access to different cultures, contributes to giving the person richer experiences that make the person grow: ‘I believe that it is a richer experience if one gets two cultures’ and ‘it’s pretty nice to have like two cultures, one has a bit from both worlds.’

In opposition to bilingualism as different types of resource stand experiences of negative reactions from others on other language. This code is not frequent in the material, but still shows how the view on bilingualism is connected to how it is seen by others, i.e. how the value of bilingualism, as a certain language combination or in general, is connected to the social setting. This indicates the importance of the social context for understanding how bilingualism becomes a resource. This is also connected to an influencing factor, namely the effects of the status of the language on the view of how much of a resource the bilingualism constitutes. However, this influence does not emerge as large in the material and the accounts are to a large extent pointing towards that it would have been a larger resource if it would have been English: ‘they would have thought that it was cooler, if it was another language, like say American English, or something, then it would have meant status.’

To conclude, bilingualism can be seen as a functional, social and emotional resource, where the functional aspects allows the person to use it for various ends, the social creates possibilities for interaction and the emotional gives the person richer experiences. The value of this resource is influenced by the social context. This is illustrated in the network below.

![Network Diagram]

When looking at the network above, I see clear connections with Bourdieu’s concepts capital and field. Capital is value, "accumulated labor" (Bourdieu 1986a:241) giving a person a certain position in society, and certain possibilities to act and interact. Bourdieu (2006:483) writes that “linguistic signs are also goods”; language has value. In the same way, bilingualism has a value, i.e. it can be converted into different types of capital; it can be used in a functional way to give the person economic or cultural capital or increase the person’s

35 'jag tror att det är en rikare upplevelse om man får två kulturer’ (participant 1) and ‘det är ju ganska skönt att man har liksom två kulturer, man har lite från båda världar’ (participant 4).

36 ‘dom skulle ha tyckt att det var coole i fall det var ett annat språk, som typ amerikansk engelska, eller nåt sånt, för då hade det nog varit status’ (participant 1).

37 Bourdieu (1986a:243) identifies three main types of capital, economical and social and cultural, where social and cultural capital works as symbolic capital being "unrecognized as capital and recognized as legitimate competence" (1986a:245). For more about capital in general, see e.g. Bourdieu (1986b).

38 For more about converting one type of capital into another, see e.g. Bourdieu (1986b:248).
social capital through increased social contacts. Even bilingualism as an emotional resource can help the person accumulate different types of capital, since gaining insights and richer experiences may be converted into all different types of capital, depending on the wish of the person. Just as the value of the bilingualism, including that of the specific language combination, varies with regard to the social context, so does the value of different types of capital vary according to the field, since different fields, as differently structured social spaces, have specific internal values (Bourdieu 2000:81) that decide which types of properties and capital that are useful in a certain market (Bourdieu 1994:269f). In other words: “the particular environment organizes a particular regime of language” (Blommaert et al. 2005:198), giving different language competences different values in different situations (Blommaert et al. 2005:211). That multilingualism becomes capital, especially in a global context, has also been pointed out by Rassool (2004:204). From this perspective bilingualism can be seen as a resource that gives the person the possibility of accumulating different types of capital, but the value of this resource depends on the field where person is situated. The importance of the context for the value of knowledge of different languages has also been pointed out by Blommaert et al. (2005:199), who links space, contexts and the value of multilingualism to the works of Goffman and Bourdieu, and argue that “[m]ultilingualism is not what individuals have or lack, but what the environment, as structured determination and interactional emergence, enables and disables them to deploy” (Blommaert et al. 2005:213); this is to a large extent reflected in my material.

4.2.3 Language as important part of belonging

Language as an important part of belonging points towards the importance of language for identifications, integration, groups and social interactions on different levels of society. Belonging should here be understood as having different, potential meanings: as an emotion as well as being integrated in a more functional sense. In one way belonging can be seen as a scale with different degrees, where emotional belonging and deep identification with a certain group constitutes a ‘higher level’ of belonging than simply being able to function in a certain social situation. At the same time, they can be seen as fundamentally different types of belonging. Also, the importance of language for the different types of belonging may vary. This shows the complexity of belonging as a concept. Below the network of the code language as important part of belonging is shown.

![Diagram of relationships between language and culture, belonging, and social interactions]

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39 For more about social capital, see Bourdieu (1986a:248f).
The network has two different parts. The left part, consisting of the codes question of mother tongue as complex, differentiating between languages based on functionality, emotionality, sociality and complex relation between language and self, represents the person’s identification with a language, i.e. how important the language is for the person’s self/identities. The right part concerns the question of belonging, i.e. how important belonging is as an emotional aspect for the self, and consists of the codes parents wanting to belong, not seem different, complicated relation/ambivalence with identity as other and wanting to belong. Here I argue that not only the own view on belonging but also the parents’ view on belonging, both towards majority and minority groups, is shaping the person’s view on relation between language and belonging: ‘well, it’s because my parents always have stressed the fact that we should not feel excluded, so I don’t want my children to feel that way either’, ‘they [the parents] have always prioritized Swedish, that it is the most important that we know it well’ and my parents have never that way, they have never, like, wanted us to keep this Iranian that much that we are separating ourselves from the society. In between are two codes that deal with the link between language and culture, i.e. language and being a part of a larger social context, of connections on the macro level and language use connected to person, which concerns language as the tool for feeling connected to certain persons, i.e. on the micro level of society.

All the links between language as important part of belonging and the other codes were of the type ‘associated with’ showing that they are to a certain extent unspecified. However, when analyzing the issue more in-depth, it becomes clear that these different codes, or rather the four different dimensions that they represent, forms parts of the concept of language as important part of belonging. The dimensions can be thought of as representing the importance of language, belonging, macro-level and micro-level connections for the individual. Macro-level connections should be understood as connections with the larger community and formal structures of society, whereas micro-level connections concern significant others and closer, personal relationships. The network below shows these dimensions in relation with language as an important part of belonging.

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Language as an important part of belonging, thus, operates in four different dimensions, but the different dimensions may influence to a different degree depending on personality of the person as well as contextual features of a specific social situation. The different dimensions also influence each other.

Much has been written, in different disciplines, about the connection between language and group membership. One influential direction, Ethnolinguistic Identity Theory (see e.g.

40 "det är ju för att mina föräldrar har varit så hårdt med att vi inte ska känna oss utanförr, så vill inte jag att mina barn ska göra det heller", "dom har alltid prioriterat svenskan, att det viktigaste är att vi kan den bra liksom" and mina föräldrar har aldrig varit så, dom har liksom aldrig velat att vi ska behålla det här iranska så himla mycket att vi liksom särskiljer oss från samhället" (participant 9)
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Giles & Johnson (1987) sees “language as a salient marker of group membership and social identity” (Hansen & Liu 1997:568) and has its basis in Social Identity Theory as developed by Tajfel & Turner (e.g. 1979) and that builds on the idea of group membership as important for the social identity of the individual. The idea that language is essential for creating different types of groups or societies has been expressed by many researchers. Examples in sociolinguistics include: “[w]ith its language a group distinguishes itself. The cultural norms and values of a group are transmitted by its language” (Appel & Muysken 2006:11), “social identity and ethnicity are in large part established and maintained through language” (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz 1982:7, quoted in Hansen & Liu 1997:568) and “speaking a given language in different spatial contexts can define individuals as ‘in place’ or ‘out of place’ and affect their sense of identification and belonging” (Valentine et al. 2008:385). In sociology/social psychology, language is often seen as one of different cultural/ethnical markers that are important for group formation (Hechter 1978:297, Znaniecki 1939:807). It has also, among other things, been pointed out that language is an essential part in socialization (Berger 1966:109, Bernstein 1979:314ff), and in the creation of the idea of the nation: “from the start the nation was conceived in language” (Anderson 2006[1983]:149). Clearly, from these account, language is important for all aspects of society. As expressed by Giddens (1987:64): “language is the medium of social practice”.

4.2.4 Question of mother tongue as complex

Below, the network of question of mother tongue as complex is shown.

In the process of analyzing the code question of mother tongue as complex, many changes were made compared with the large, loose network. Two codes, establishing other as second and other language first, were merged into one code reflecting the multi-facetted issue of other language first, yet second. Also creating clear differences between languages and experiencing division between functions, social & emotions was merged into one very heavy code named differentiating between languages based on functionality, emotionality, sociality to reflect the fact that it is not only differentiating between the languages but on certain grounds, that can be related to functional, social or emotional aspects of the person’s life.
When looking closer at the network above one notices that it seems to have a second center, the code differentiating between languages based on functionality, emotionality, sociality that is also linked to all other codes, indicating how central that code is for understanding the different aspects of mother tongue. In the material, there is a clear difference between seeing mother tongue as the first language the person learned, as the best/richest language, i.e. the language in which the person can express himself/herself most fully, as the most used language, and as the most important language emotionally. This code, as a property of question of mother tongue as complex shows us that mother tongue is indeed a very complex concept to the participants of this study and different languages may carry different meanings for the person. This is also connected to the idea that bilingualism means having two first languages, i.e. two languages learned at the same time: ‘it is a lot like that, that one speaks about ones first language, but when one is bilingual, one has two first languages.’41 Ideally, the person is supposed to have the same proficiency in these two languages. However, this does not correspond to the reality of the participants. The proficiency in a language is connected to how much the language is used in the everyday life: ‘I rarely speak Finnish, so Finnish have become so, like, a bit ‘held-back’ and a bit, like, less rich than Swedish.’42 However, using a language rarely does not make it unimportant; it can even create a large emotional value for the language: ‘I have a pretty large emotional attachment to both languages, mostly it’s Finnish at the moment, since I do not speak it so often.’43

What is seen as the mother tongue can also be related to none of these issues, but instead to a choice made by the person: ‘I cannot see Polish as my mother tongue, even if it the first language I learned, because it is not a language I choose to speak, to formulate myself in.’44 However, whether or not one can speak about a ‘real’ individual choice of language or a choice influenced by the social context is not clear in the material. The issue of choice is a large one and outside the scope of this study. However, there is clearly a link between the question of mother tongue to the self and to others, through belonging and wanting to belong (complex relationship between language and self and language as important part of belonging).

Mother tongue is a highly value-laden concept, since having a language as mother tongue means being a ‘native speaker’ and this in turn gives certain privileges, not only connected to the language as such but also as a born member of a linguistic community, a certain social context, i.e. the definition of mother tongue has sociopolitical consequences (Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson 1989:451). It is also apparent that this is of central importance to understanding the participants’ realities, and that mother tongue is something that is not there, but is created in an ongoing, changing process and in relation to the self, significant others and the social context. For all participants, it is a process where Swedish gains importance in relation with the other language, Swedish becomes more and more of the mother tongue, in all the senses of the concept, including for the inner life of the person. In the words of participant 6: ‘I do believe that Estonian was my principal language when I was really small’ but describing the situation now: ‘yes, I think in Swedish, I live in Swedish, so,

41 ‘det är mycket så där att man pratar om sitt första språk, men när man är tvåspråkig har man ju två förstaspråk’ (participant 1).
42 ‘det är väldigt sällan jag pratar finska, så finskan har så, ja, blivit lite tillbakahållen och lite, liksom mindre rikt än svenskan’ (participant 1).
43 ‘jag har ganska stor känslomässig anknytning till båda språken, mest är det finska just nu eftersom jag inte pratar det så mycket’ (participant 1).
44 ‘jag kan ju inte se polska som mitt modernsmål även om det är det första språket som jag lärde mig, för det är inte ett språk jag väljer att prata på, att formulera mig på’ (participant 5).
Swedish is Swedish, well one says that the first language one learns is ones mother tongue, but I still think that Swedish is my mother tongue and Estonian is my second language.\footnote{‘jag har för mig att ändå estniskan var mitt främsta språk när jag var riktigt liten’ and ‘ja, jag tänker ju på svenska, jag lever på svenska, så, svenska är svenska, liksom, man säger väl att det första språk man lär sig är ens modersmål men jag tycker nog ändå att svenska är mitt modersmål, och att estniskan är mitt andra språk’ (participant 6).}

The complexity of the code for the participants in the current study is clearly expressed in the following: ‘it is the word in itself that makes it impossible to say like that, because it is mother tongue, and my mother does not have Swedish as mother tongue, so to speak, so it is not possible, actually, but from a functional view, one can say that I have Swedish as mother tongue.’\footnote{‘det är ordet i sig som gör att man inte kan säga så, eftersom det heter modersmål, och min moder har ju inte svenska som modersmål om man säger, så det går ju inte, egentligen, men rent funktionellt kan man ju säga att jag har svenska som modersmål’ (participant 9).} One language can be the language of your parents and the first language you learned but still not be your best language or the most important one. Mother tongue is a concept containing many different aspects, many different facets. The aspects in the material are similar to the description of the concept of mother tongue given by Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson (1989:452ff), who identify four different types of definitions: origin, which states that the mother tongue is the language of the mother/parents or the first language learned by the person, competence-based definitions centered around language knowledge, i.e. ‘stronger’ language is mother tongue, function, that states that the mother tongue is the language that is used most by the person and finally, identification, where mother tongue is the language the person is most attached to and has the most positive attitude towards. In the material, expression related to these different definitions as conflicting are clear; the participants are struggling to find their way through ambivalence between how to call and value their languages, an ambivalence that cannot be reconciled through using only one definition of mother tongue.

Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson (1989:452) also state three important assumptions: (1) it is possible to have multiple mother tongues, (2) the mother tongue of a person may vary depending on the definition used, and (3) the mother tongue can change during a person’s life (except if the definition related to origin is used). From the accounts given by the participants, it is clear that these assumptions have relevance; I would say that the complexity of the issues concerning mother tongue in the participants lives is connected with the fact that the discourse concerning mother tongue present in society does not take the assumptions of Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson (1989) to be true, but rather sees mother tongue as stable, simple to define and as something of which a person can only have one. This discourse leads the participants towards ambivalence in relation with the question of the mother tongue. They feel forced to give only one language as their mother tongue but still feel that this one language, be it Swedish or be it the other language, cannot fully cover their experiences, i.e. that they consist of more parts than a monolingual person. To conclude, the issue of mother tongue has many facets and how it is judged is connected to the social context and how this concept is defined and discussed in discourses in social contexts.

\subsection*{4.2.5 Complex relationship between language and self}

The code complex relationship between language and self is linked with language as important part of belonging and question of mother tongue as complex, since these issues influence the view on language as a part of the person’s identities and in relation to others. However, these relationships will be analyzed further in the theoretical phase (Chapter 5).
One interesting issue related to the relationship between language(s) and the self is connected with language use and the relationship with the parents (seeing the complexity of child-parent relation and many/different languages). This is to a large extent connected with not having the same level of command, or emotional attachment to, the same languages as the parents. In fact, the relationship between the two languages for parents and child are the opposite: ‘Bosnian is more like Swedish for my parents, one could say that I speak fluent Bosnian, but that I, I do not have an accent, but I lack that little you know, just like they lack it when they speak Swedish.’47 This is also to some extent connected with the issue of lacking own relationship with other language, since in most cases this means the other language is largely shaped by the language use of the parents and thus not having an own voice in that language: ‘I feel that I maybe cannot express exactly, as it should be, in German, also because a lot of my German language is her [the mother’s] German language, that I do not have an own, like my own way of expressing myself in German.’48 Lacking own relationship with the other language is connected with having few contacts in that language outside the family.

Another important aspect of the relationship between language and self is connected with the two languages as having different values, being used differently or contributing in different ways towards the parts of the personality: differentiating between languages based on functionality, emotionality, sociality, different use of different languages, and different personalities in different languages. The first code is also connected with the relationships with parents, where parental relationships can be closely linked with one language: ‘the whole of my relationship with my mother, me and my mother, we’re very close, and it is our tool to express feelings and talk to each other, it is almost a bit holy this between my mother and me, that is it Polish we speak.’49 It is also connected to the importance of having another language, except Swedish: ‘it has made me the one I am.’50 The participants use their languages differently: ‘I feel that I use the language in different ways when I speak with my parents, about certain things I talk with them in Persian.’51 This can be related to functionality as well, but is mainly related to emotional and social aspects. Language use is also connected with

47 ‘bosniskan är väl mer, som svenskan är för mina föräldrar, man skulle kunna säg att jag pratar flytande bosniska men att jag, jag bryter väl inte, jag är väl inte nån brytning, men jag saknar ju det där lilla du vet, precis som dom saknar när dom pratar svenska’ (participant 4).
48 ‘jag känner att jag kanske inte riktigt får fram precis, precis så som det skulle va, på tyska för att jag, också för att mycket av mitt tyska språk är hennes tyska språk, alltså att jag inte har ett eget, alltså inte ett eget tilltal på tyska’ (participant 2).
49 ‘alltså hela min relation till min mamma, jag och min mamma står varandra väldigt nära, ehm, och det är vårat verkyg att förmedla känslor och prata med varandra och ehm, det är nästan lite heligt det här mellan min mamma och mig, att det är polska vi pratar’ (participant 3).
50 ‘det har ju format mig till den jag är’ (participant 6).
51 ‘däremot känner jag att jag använder språken på olika sätt när jag pratar med mina föräldrar, vissa saker pratar jag med dom på persiska’ (participant 9).
aspects of personalities: 'it feels like there are different personalities linked with different languages' and 'one has another character, depending on which language one speaks, I think.'  

This should not be interpreted as suffering from any type of personality disorder but simply that using the different languages in different social contexts emphasizes different parts of our personalities; one could talk about contextual personalities, making us act differently in different situations. This is closely linked with using different strategies in different languages and is related with the social context.

To conclude, languages are used differently by the participants and speaking different languages influences parts of the self. This is also connected with the relationships with parents and other significant others as well as with (lack of) connections with speakers of the non-majority language, i.e. with the different types of social contexts where the individual is located. This is consistent with earlier accounts of bilinguals’ use of the different languages; that they are used differently and that the person therefore also has different types of knowledge of the languages (see Grosjean 1994). It can also be related to the conclusions of Pavlenko’s (2006) large study of the connection between bilingualism and self/selves/personalities. In her study, she, using discourse analysis, analyzed answers, from different types of bi/multilinguals, to the question if they experienced different selves/personalities when speaking different languages. Her goal was to “understand key influences that shape individuals’ perceptions of the relationships between their languages and selves” (Pavlenko 2006:6) and found four different sources of what she calls ‘perceptions of different selves’. These four are: (1) differences in culture and linguistic expressions, where both the language in itself and the culture connected with it made the participant feel like different persons, (2) learning contexts, where the contexts affected the way the person felt when speaking the language, (3) language emotionality, and (4) proficiency, where having less emotional attachment to or less proficiency in one language made the person feel ‘artificial’ when speaking that language between the languages (Pavlenko 2006:10). However, she also found participants that claimed to experience “a ‘true’ self, single and unitary, unaffected by the change in languages” (Pavlenko 2006:24).

From her results, it is clear that the relationship between language and self/selves is not a simple one, but rather that it is affected by a complex combination of contextual features, individual personalities, as well as how the individual’s position is shaped by different discourses about this connection present in society. Her study offers an increased understanding of a theme that was only touched upon in the current study; whereas she explicitly asked the question about this relationship, this was not included in the current study, but rather the complexity of language and self/selves emerged, sometimes explicit, sometimes implicit, from the participants’ stories. It also becomes clear that the question of what constitutes a self or a personality is complex and can be understood differently by different individuals. Another important aspect to point out is that “language not only plays an important part in individuals’ processes of self-identification but also in the way that identities are read and ascribed by others in specific spatial contexts and communities of practice” (Valentine et al. 2008:381), thus the role of language(s) in identities formation is twofold – for group membership as well as individual expression but also for receiving input from others. Individuals and groups use language to interact and to form their identities; an individual classifies the world around her with the help of language but in the process of interacting socially, she is also classified by others. The interplay between language and self is complex; the both shape each other; they can be understood "as mutually constituted.” (Valentine et al. 2008:377).

52 ‘det känns som att det är olika personligheter som är kopplade till olika språk’ (participant 9) and ’man har en annan karaktär, beroende på vilket språk man talar, tycker jag’ (participant 10).
4.2.6 Ambivalence in relation to own self

The code *ambivalence in relation to own self* describes the feelings of ambivalence the participants have in relation with their own identities, with personality, personal culture and the self. This includes not knowing how to handle parts of the self, or not feeling able to determine where one is from and where the home is, as well as how to be able to show others the whole self. In itself this code is not very clear and is based on a feeling the researcher gets when studying the material; it represents a latent structure in the material. However, it stands out as central in the material, to a large extent because of its relations. In addition to this, it is also theoretically interesting. Below a network of the code and its relations is shown.

As can be seen from the network above, many of the nine codes that are related to ambivalence in relation to own self are also related to each other. This is an indicator of the complexity of the subject related to self and identities. Many of these codes are also ‘heavy’ codes, i.e. they have many quotations from the material as well as many links to other codes. This shows that this ambivalence in relation to the self, or different aspects of identities, is to a large extent connected with its relations to other codes, in fact, the other codes and also their relationships to each other creates the ambivalence.

The ambivalence related to the own self is to a large extent shaped by the central interaction and tensions between the need to belong to different types of social contexts (*wanting to belong*), the fact that the feeling of belonging is connected to how other people see the person (*connecting feeling of belonging to how being seen*), and the wish to create the own self without doing it in relation to others (*wanting to create own identity free from others classifications*). The need to belong is seen as an essential property of the ambivalence, as well of the material as a whole showing that the need to belong is central to the self. Still, the ambivalence in relation to the own self is shaped by the wish to conform to others, and become liked by others, to fit in. *Wanting to create own identity free from others classifications* means on one hand related to the two cultures and language communities but also to people in general, and forms a part of the ambivalence. Still, how the person is seen is important for the feeling in the ambivalent self, which creates a complex situation, related both to the identity as Swedish and as the other nationalities, as being in-group or other in different situations. This can also be linked with *not being able to relate to oneself as different* and *being Swedish with some extra spice*. As expressed by participant 2: ‘I feel that I am 100% Swedish and then a couple of percents German as well and what I am to do with..."
those percentages, I don’t really know, it’s like it always becomes a bit strange, like it’s too much in some situations and not enough in others.’

This tension between the wishes of the self and the wishes of other is also reflected in the complicated relation/ambivalence with identity as other, that is also a part of the ambivalence felt towards the own self. This is a very complex code that entails different types of complicated relationships with the part of the identity linked to the other country. For example, the participants express feelings of insecurity about not being able to pass as a member of the in-group in the context of the other country, acting stupid or simply wanting to fit in: ‘I am afraid of making mistakes, because I want to please them, want them to think that I fit in, I want them to think that I’m capable, that I’m good, that I’m nice’ and ‘maybe I just become that nervous, like, that I should make something stupid like that, without really noticing.’

This is also related to being insecure about the own behavior or feeling uncomfortable: ‘but I am not always so comfortable in that role, when I am in Poland, I do not know if it’s about me or if it’s the people that are, because I know, my brother doesn’t experience the same thing, he finds me silly.’ This is connected to a large extent with a wish to fit in and at the same time express the own personality. Participant 9 expresses how she becomes extra sensitive in the context of the other country; wanting to fit in and acting very flexible, following the wishes of others and carefully monitoring and adhering to the social codes/norms, and by doing this, changing the own personality to an extent where she does not like the result: ‘during later years I have had a very hard time with, eh, myself when I’m in Iran because I feel that I cannot be myself, and I find it very, very hard when I’m there, and when I come home.’

This is clearly connected to feeling a part of the group only through positive response from the other members of the group. It is also connected with different personalities in different languages, since the fact that different parts of the personality are linked with using a certain language is also connected with adapting to the context: ‘one is another person, more or less another person, when one speaks another language.’

The part of the self that is the other identity can also simply be complicated to handle: ‘I have a pretty complicated relation with my identity as German or not German.’ This can create tension between the different aspects of the self.

A more positive side of the ambivalence is the openness that comes with having access to different cultures and different contexts (becoming more open/understanding through comparing different cultures). The fact that bilingualism gives a broader view of society, cultures and people is strongly present throughout the material: ‘one learns to master both, like, social codes, and both the cultural contexts and all that.’

53 *‘jag känner att jag är 100% svensk och så några procent tysk också och vad jag ska göra med dom procenten vet jag inte riktigt liksom, och det är som att det alltid blir lite tokigt, alltså att det är för mycket i vissa lägen och för lite i andra lägen’ (participant 2).*

54 *‘jag är rädd för att göra fel för att jag vill vara dom till lags, vill att dom ska tycka att jag småler in, jag vill att dom ska tycka att jag är duktig, att jag är bra, att jag är snäll’ (participant 9) and jag kanske bara blir så nervös liksom, så där, att jag ska göra en foppa så där utan att riktigt veta’ (participant 3).*

55 *‘men jag är inte alltid så bekväm i den rollen, när jag är i polen, jag vet inte om det beror på mig eller om, det är, människorna som är, för jag vet, min broer han upplever inte alls samma sak han tycker jag är fänig’ (participant 3).*

56 *‘så här på senare år har jag ju haft väldigt svårt för, eh, mig själv när jag är i iran för att jag känner att jag inte kan va mig själv, jag är inte mig själv, och jag tycker att det är väldigt, väldigt jobbigt, när jag är där och när jag kommer hem’ (participant 9).*

57 *‘man är en annan person, mer eller mindre en annan person, när man talar ett annat språk’ (participant 10).*

58 *‘jag har en ganska komplicerad relation till min identitet som tysk eller inte tysk’ (participant 2).*

59 *‘man lär sig bemästra båda liksom sociala koderna och båda kulturella kontexterna och allt det där’ (participant 1).*
e.g. choosing groups. This is related to being able to handle, or simply being in, many different social contexts.

To summarize, *ambivalence in relation to own self*, can be seen as being formed through three different dimensions, namely handling different social contexts, the tension between self and others and the tensions between different aspects of the self. This is illustrated in the network below:

When comparing the thought above with existing theory, Communicative Accommodation Theory (CAT)\(^{60}\) is useful for understanding the category *ambivalence in relation to own self*. CAT is an “interdisciplinary model of relational processes in communicative interaction” (Coupland 2010:22); “a theory of both intergroup and interpersonal communication” (Gallois et al. 2005:122). The basic idea expressed in the complex theory is that “relationships are managed by means of communication” (Gallois et al. 2005:123) and that in every communicative situation a person (or a group) has different alternatives for their behavior and that the different choices have different effects. Two different strategies are identified: “*Convergence* is defined as a strategy through which individuals adapt their communicative behavior in such a way as to become more similar to their interlocutor’s behavior” whereas “the strategy of *divergence* leads to an accentuation of differences between self and others” (Gallois et al. 2005:123); i.e. it is a strategy to distinguish oneself from others (Giles et al. 1991:7ff).\(^{61}\) I do not interpret this as being a completely conscious and individual choice but that the behavior of the individual in one specific situation is formed by the influence from the larger social context.

Which strategies are convergent and divergent depends on the context. Giles et al. (1991:18) write that “convergence reflects /…/ a speaker’s or group’s need (often unconscious) for social integration or identification with another”, i.e. for an individual to be accepted as part of a group, or a group as a part of society. This is strikingly similar to the central tension seen in the material, both as it concerns the different aspects of the self and the tension between self and others. Using the terminology of CAT, one could say that the participants experience a tension between their ‘will’, conscious and unconscious, to converge, i.e. belong to a group, and their will to diverge, i.e. state their individuality. It is of course not only connected with wanting to diverge in the sense of stressing ones individuality, but also, in certain contexts, to diverge from certain groups. CAT also places importance on how behavior is perceived and evaluated by both sides in a communicative encounter between groups or individuals and it emphasizes that it is not only a question of actual behavior in a

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\(^{60}\) For relatively short, yet thorough, overview of the developments and current form of CAT, see Gallois et al. (2005).

\(^{61}\) These concepts have also been these concepts have also been called *accommodation* and *non-accommodation* (see Gallois et al. 2005).
situation but also that it is a psychological process (Gallois et al. 2005:136f). The result of this tension is ambiguity and ambivalence in relation to the self.

Just as symbols and languages in society are redefined through use in different situations (see St. Clair 1982:226), so are identities continuously changing as response to the multitude of different experiences encountered in the everyday life; identities can be seen as fluid and multidimensional (Rassool 2004:200). This is especially true for bilinguals with a background in different cultures, and becomes apparent in my material. The result is ambivalence in relation to the self, which can be conceptualized as interplay of the three different aspects outlined above.

4.3 Creating theory: Starting the theoretical phase

In this section, the process of analysis between the results from the axial phase and the final theoretical model is described. The starting point of the theoretical phase was the five categories from the axial phase, including their properties, i.e. the more abstract codes developed during the axial phase. These five categories and their properties, a total of 19 different codes, were linked together in a network providing the basis for the theory (see Appendix 4). The idea was to use the properties to tie the categories together in order to keep the emerging theory close to the properties of the categories, close to the material; to ground it in the properties in the same way as the properties are grounded in the quotations from the material. This was thought to be a more appropriate approach than simply linking the five categories to each other, since in this way the emerging theoretical model includes the developments from the axial phase. Looking closer at the categories and their properties led to some major changes, since some of the properties were found to be essential for understanding the central themes in the material, while some of the categories were found to be less important. This process had three stages. Constant comparison formed an essential and integrated part of all stages. Memos as well as descriptions of the codes made during earlier stages provided valuable insights that helped shaping the theory.

In the first stage some reductions were made. First, the category question of mother tongue as complex was merged into the category complex relationship between language and self. This was done since the question of mother tongue was marked as being a part of the complicated question of the relationship between language and self already at an earlier stage. It is an important question in its own right but here it appears as a contributing factor to, or aspect of, the issue of language and self as a whole. Second, the two properties, handling different social contexts and social resource were merged together, since they were found to describe the same idea. Third, different use of different languages and different personalities in different languages were merged into differentiating between languages based on functionality, emotionality, sociality, since these two were found to be mere aspects of the larger question of differentiation between the languages. Fourth, language & self/identifications was merged into complex relation between language and self. This was done since language and self/identification was found to be a part of this complex relation. Some of the relations between categories were also changed. The network after these changes (consisting of 14 codes) can be found in Appendix 5. This network had a complex set of relations between the different categories.

The second stage also started with three further reductions. The category language as important part of belonging was merged into belonging & self/identifications, originally a property that was now found to include the questions connected with language and belonging. This was done, since it was felt that the core of this category was connected with aspects of belonging, and language as contributing or not contributing to feelings of belonging, i.e. language as an instrument that can be used to create, change and maintain an individual’s
position in relation to a group. The category differentiating between languages based on functionality, emotionality, sociality was found to be a property of complex relationship between language and self and was merged into it. The categories macro-level connections and influence from social context were merged into one, named macro-level connections/contextual influence. Also a new category, bilingualism as tension, was inserted. At this stage, I diverged from the original relations assigned between all the categories/properties and tried to focus on the most essential relations. When doing this, it was clear that a central piece of the theoretic puzzle was missing, to connect the different categories to each other. When looking closer at the data, reading quotations again and analyzing the content of the categories, it was found that the missing piece was connected to the process of managing or handling the bilingual self, i.e. to mediate between different aspects of the ambivalence related with both bilingualism as tension and as resource as well as to external influence and connection with society and significant others. The category was named mediation: finding the balance. The resulting network can be found in Appendix 5.

The third and final stage consisted of a simplification of the network. This simply meant that the different aspects of bilingualism as tension and as resource were included in their main categories and that the categories micro-connections, macro-connection & societal influence and belonging & self/identifications were combined into one named belonging: micro/macro connections, external influence & self/identifications, which was later renamed social context. The category complex relationship between language and self/identifications was renamed the self. Finally, the newly created mediation: finding the balance was merged into ambivalence in relation to self, since this was found to describe a central process in the material, namely the process of handling the ambivalent bilingualism. This gives us a final model of five categories that will be explained in the following chapter.
5. Handling ambivalence: A Grounded Theory of bilingualism in the everyday life

In this chapter, the theoretical model that forms the result of the current study is described and discussed. First, the different concepts in the model, social context, self, tension, resource and handling the ambivalent bilingualism, will be defined and discussed following what has been outlined above in the axial phase and first parts of the theoretical phase, before moving on to discuss their relationships. Important to note is that this theoretical model only provides an outline of the central processes found in the data; it is a preliminary framework that needs to be developed further in order to be able to account for all different influencing factors. Focus is on developing the theory based on the empirical data on the first hand and not on other theories. The choice to not relate the final theoretical framework to the theories discussed above (Section 4.2) is a conscious one. These theories served their purpose for broadening the understanding of the categories, but the core of the suggested model is grounded in the data, not in other theories. In order to develop the suggested theory further a more thorough literature review would be needed, in addition to the detailed empirical analysis performed in the current study. The current study cannot include such a theoretical comparison, which is related to the fact that the different aspects of the model leads into complex theoretical areas, concerning e.g. the nature of the self and the influence of the social context on the self. Within the limitations set on the current study, it is not possible to make these complex theoretical discussions justice, and such a discussion is therefore best left to future studies, while the current one focuses on the results from the empirical study.

The social context consists of both micro and macro connections and is concerned with external influence on the individual. Examples of micro connections include the relationships with family and friends, i.e. with significant others. Macro connections consist of relationships with generalized others as well as influence from discourses and formal structures present in the society. The social context is seen as simultaneously one single macro context, as an individual has specific position in the structures of (Swedish) society, and as a myriad of different micro contexts, between which the individual moves, and which are constantly changing. This can be compared with the traditional division of (macro) social structures versus (micro) interactions in specific situations. In this model, the concept of social context comprises both these aspects and it does not presume that the one is more important than the other. This means that the fact that the concept is called social context in singular does not mean that I am of the opinion that there exists only one, uniform social context. Quite the opposite, in addition to both being one and many at the same moment, the social context is also not only something tangible and ‘real’, but also an idea or concept present inside each individual. It is important to point out that the bilingual individual, just as any other individual, is a part of the social context and interacts with others inside the frame of this context. This means that the influence from the social context is also experienced through the view of the person, not only through actual, practical influence, i.e. not only through actions of others or social structures. From this follows that the social context is both a macro- and macro-sociological concept that is also related to (social) psychological aspects.

Concerning the self, I do not intend to define what it is, since the issue of the nature of the self is outside the scope of the current study and therefore too extensive to be clarified here. However, three comments related with the self and language/bilingualism are necessary in order to later be able to clarify what type of influence the process of handling the ambivalent bilingualism has on the self. First, I see the self as being an ongoing process of development and change. This means that the self is not a constant core signifying inborn traits of an individual, but that it is affected by the individual’s experiences and the
surroundings. Second, behavior, or ‘expressions of self’ as one could also name it, is always performed or presented in a social context. Even when alone, an individual is aware of the social context (in the above described sense). Third, any individual has access to different behavioral strategies and information about appropriateness of their usage; the use of these different strategies leads to different presentations of the self in different contexts. One can choose to call these strategies different selves or different parts of one unified self. For the current study, the position taken on this issue is not central. The important point is simply that there are different strategies available to the individual for expressing the self to others in different situations.

As was discussed above (Section 4.2.2), bilingualism as resource consists of three different parts or types of resource, functional, social and emotional. These three are not always easy to separate in real-life situations, but this distinction is highly relevant for understanding the nature of bilingualism as a resource and other analytic purposes. This is also related to individual’s often diffuse ideas about why they think that a certain thing is a resource for them in their everyday lives. Bilingualism can simultaneously contain all the three resources to different and to the same or different degrees. The more important the non-majority language is for contact with family and friends, the more emotionally important it is to the bilingual individual. The more possibilities that language gives for interaction with individuals and groups outside of the closest circle of personal relations, the more important social resource it is. The higher it is valued as an asset in a specific social context, the more of a functional resource it becomes to the individual in that context. However, bilingualism is not only a resource in relation with the social context but also in relation to the self. This can be seen most clearly in the case of bilingualism as an emotional resource. Also the view on the position of the majority language, both from the bilingual individual and from society in general, is important for shaping the impression of bilingualism as resource.

Bilingualism as tension (see Section 4.2.6) has two parts: the tensions between self and others related to the issue of language, identities, groups and other individuals, and the tensions between different aspects of the own self. The first one is connected with wanting to be free of the stereotypes of others, wanting to create the own self without (negative) outside influence and at the same time wanting to belong to different social contexts, both at micro and macro level. The second one is closely connected with how belonging to different groups and speaking different languages can be experienced as tension between different parts of an individual’s personality, i.e. tension between different behaviors or wishes to belong to specific groups. It is important to point out that bilingualism as tension and as resource are not to be seen a binary properties, where resource is positive and tension negative. Rather, they are both part of the process of handling bilingualism, and tension as well as resource can contribute in different ways to this process. At any time, both of them are also present. Bilingualism in the everyday life does, as indicated by the results from the axial phase of the current study, always contain elements of both tension and resource simultaneously.

Finally, handling the ambivalent bilingualism is a process of constant change, of managing the everyday life in different social contexts. The ambivalence in relation with the self was discussed above (Section 4.2.6) and this discussion can be summarized as follows. The ambivalent self is formed in relation with the two different types of tensions (see above) and to a process of being in and handling different social contexts. Ambivalence is created through the interaction of these issues with the self. The process of handling this ambivalence cannot be explained without reference to its links with the other concepts in the model. Therefore, I will now move on to describe and discuss these relationships. Below, the theoretical model suggested by the results of the current study is shown.
Even though creating a model always means simplification, and the concepts of the model, i.e. those outlined above, are ‘dense’ concepts, containing different layers of meaning, I argue that from this model it is possible to gain understanding of the basic idea of what role bilingualism plays in the everyday life of bilinguals. The central concept here is that bilingualism in the everyday life means handling the ambivalence that comes from the different social contexts, and is formed in relation with the self. This process can be seen through expressions of bilingualism as both tension and resource.

As can be seen from the model above, the social context could be seen as forming the starting point of the process, being placed to the left in the model above. However, the self is also of importance for the model. The process of handling the ambivalent bilingualism is formed through the interaction of the self with the social context, i.e. the process takes place between the self and the social context; this is the reason for placing social context and self on the sides of this process. Depending on the perspective taken, one can argue for the importance of the one over the other; from the material of the current study, it is only clear that both these aspects are crucial for the process of handling ambivalence. They are also formed through interaction with each other; the self is shaped by the social context and the social context is created through interaction between different individuals and a diverse number of formal and informal structures.

The process of handling the ambivalent bilingualism, i.e. being between a view of bilingualism as tension and as resource, takes place in a situation that is shaped by being in between the self and the social context. It can also be seen as a process of negotiation. The idea of negotiation is, in fact, central to understanding the process of handling the ambivalent bilingualism. Negotiation means that the individual uses different resources for establishing a position within the framework of a specific social context, as well as that a position can be used to negotiate the value of a resource. An individual’s interactions as well as his/her social position affects the influence from the social context on this process since it gives the individual specific starting point for negotiating the value of their bilingualism. In a similar way the self, as earlier experiences and personal traits, shapes the position of negotiation. Negotiation can be viewed from a perspective that focuses on the inherent possibilities for conflicts present in a negotiation situation, i.e. a more negative view, or from a perspective that sees negotiation as carrying potential for influencing ones social position and for raising the value of ones resources, i.e. a more positive perspective. From the accounts given by the participants of the current study, the second perspective is more prominent, i.e. the potential for using negotiation to increase the value of their bilingualism seems to be realized by these individuals.

However, the idea of negotiation still indicates an inherent tension in the process, i.e. the tension between the wishes of self and those of others. The idea here, as expressed above, is that the concept of social context includes all aspects of a person’s social life that are external to the individual self. This view can be questioned, but for this model, summarizing all individual-external aspects under one heading is appropriate, since I want to illustrate the point of the inherent tension between self and surroundings. The social surroundings are pushing the individual in certain directions concerning how to handle bilingualism, i.e.
concerning expected/normative ways of dealing with the ambivalence. Simultaneously, the individual self also exerts influence on this process. Earlier experiences as well as personal traits present in the self at any given moment influence the person’s ability to handle the ambivalence as to transform it into what can be called a ‘useful tension’, i.e. a tension that will lead to development of the person, or a resource. The different aspects of the self also have views on how this process of handling ambivalence is supposed to be treated, which gives an extra dimension to the tension, namely between the different aspects of the self. Questions connected with the importance for the individual of belonging to different groups as well as to society in general are of importance here, since they determine at least partly the extent of the influence of the influence from the social context on the process of handling the ambivalent bilingualism.

So far, the model discussion has been focused on the inherent tensions in the two processes, i.e. the process that creates ambivalence and the process that handles it. However, seeing bilingualism as a resource also has its important place here. Bilingualism is formed as a resource in relation with the self and the social context. Individual ideas about how important knowledge of languages is for the self, and how large a role bilingualism plays in the everyday life of the individual influence how the ambivalence that is brings is handled. At the same time, if bilingualism, especially with the language combination the person has, is seen as a resource in the social context, this is also important. Inherent to the process of handling the ambivalent bilingualism is the idea of bilingualism as a resource to be used and experienced. I want to emphasis that experiencing bilingualism as tension and as resource are simultaneous processes, but that the degree of both tension and resource as well as the relationship between them, varies.

Important to point out is that the relations seen in the model are reciprocal ones. Reciprocal relationships mean that the influence goes in both directions. This means that the process of handling the ambivalent bilingualism is influenced by and influences the social context and the self. In a similar manner, how bilingualism is formed and perceived as tension and resource is influenced and influences the process. Individual selves, as well as the process of handling bilingualism do influence social contexts. As expressed by Giddens (1991:2): “The self is not a passive entity, determined by external influences; in forging their self-identities, no matter how local their specific contexts of action, individuals contribute to and directly promote social influence that are global in their consequences and implications”. One can argue that the social context influences an individual to a larger extent than the other way around. However, this also depends on which part of the social context to which one relates. Macro structures of society may not be influenced by a single individual’s views or action but other individuals will certainly be. In this way, how bilingualism is perceived as a combination of tension and resource influences the process of handling the ambivalence and through these aspects being part of the process the view on bilingualism is affected. In this way, the reciprocal relationships lead to the process being in a constant flux between focus on the different aspects, i.e. self, context, tension and resource, and focus on the handling of the ambivalence. In addition to the interaction between self and social context, part of the complexity of the process of handling ambivalence is created through reciprocal interaction between tension and resource. At the same time as bilingualism is shaping experiences of ambivalence, it can also be seen as a tool for handling this ambivalence, through being both a resource and a tension.

Change is an important part of the ongoing process of handling the ambivalent bilingualism. A change in the context, or in the self, brings a change in feelings, attitudes etc. towards the bilingualism. In a similar way, the handling, as negotiating ones position in relation to oneself and to society, shapes the surroundings. Complex change is brought forward through reciprocal relationships. Unidirectional relationships cannot account for the
ongoing process of change that is the handling of ambivalence in the context of bilingualism. I argue that the multi-faceted realities found in the material are only possible through complex reciprocal relationships. Another aspect contributing towards change is the influence of the individual’s choice. As has been outlined above, different strategies are used by the individual to influence his/her position in society, to associate oneself with a specific group, or to present ones bilingualism as more of a resource, or when suitable as tension. This use of different strategies indicates that the individual can to some extent influence the process of handling the ambivalence. This is also in line with what has been argued above, since the process of handling the ambivalent bilingualism takes place in interaction between the self and the social context. Thus, the model presumes the existence of a self that can act with or against what is expected by the social context. Also, being or positioning oneself as bilingual in the first place is to a large extent a choice. Individual choices are always made in a context, but are not determined by contextual features alone. Focusing on these reciprocal relationships, the model can be seen as consisting of different circles, with the self in the middle surrounded by the process of handling ambivalence, including bilingualism as tension and as resource, which is in its turn surrounded by the social context. Such a view on the proposed model is shown below:

As can be seen above in this second visualization of the model, the social context surrounds the process of handling the ambivalent bilingualism. In the middle of this process is the self. What cannot easily be shown in such a model are the constant interactions between the different layers, in this case, context, self and the actual process. However, this visualization, in addition to the model shown above, may clarify parts of the reasoning brought forward here that are not completely clear from the other model above.

The process of handling ambivalence could also to some extent be analyzed as a being performed in a living system, the individual, receiving input from the other different aspects present in the model and structuring it. Upon receiving input the system reacts, through internal change and through giving output that is then perceived as input by the other parts of the model. To some extent, this can be compared to Luhmann’s (e.g. 2002) Systems Theory, and his concept of autopoiesis. Autopoiesis (see e.g. Luhmann 2002:54, 176ff) is a concept that captures the idea of living and separated systems constantly changing due to interpretation and re-interpretation of input. Systems, in Luhmann’s sense are self-reproducing: “Autopoetic systems are the products of their own operations” (Luhmann 2002:103). This is done through creating and changing meanings (Luhmann 2002:83). In this way social systems (or ‘systems of communication’ in Luhmann’s terminology) and systems

62 These results regarding the process of handling ambivalence in relation to the self could be related to the division of the self into I and Me (see e.g. Mead 1967), were handling ambivalence can be seen as a process of transferring tensions in the I to a resource that can be used in the social context, i.e. to be included in the Me. However, a detailed discussion of the issue of the relation between my model and different theories of the self is better left to future studies. Here, I only want to point out that there may be possibilities to interpret my model in terms of existing social-psychological theories of the self.
of the mind (i.e. individuals) use each other’s output as input in order to be able to change and develop structurally: “They use each other for a reciprocal initiation of these structural changes” (Luhmann 2002:177), acting as each other’s environments. In a similar way, the self as a product of the process of handling ambivalence in relation with the social context, is a product of its own operations. The reactions of the self, and the input received from its environment shapes it. This can also be linked to the issue of choice as discussed above. Seeing individuals and the social context as living, i.e. constantly changing, and self-reproducing systems inevitably makes the issue of choice an important one. The different systems, according to Luhmann (see 2002:52) react to input, but react according to their own principles, each system has its own logic, which is not necessarily consistent with another type of logic found in other systems. In this way, the individual, as a system of the mind, reacts in ways that can be linked with the input provided since its birth by the social system, but still has its own logic. Similarly, the process of handling ambivalence can be seen as being performed according to the logic of the individual, i.e. the choice of the individual is not irrelevant to determine his/her reaction. Making a choice about which factors to be influenced by regarding behavioral strategies, or Luhmann’s terminology operating, performing an operation, “means making a distinction and indicating one side (and not the other side) of the distinction” (Luhmann 2002:85), i.e. a choice between different strategies. The importance is that this is to be seen as an active process; there are no passive receivers of input, the different systems are related to each other with living relationships, and are actors in the process of information-exchange. In the case of individuals growing up to become bilinguals, bilingualism or not is itself a complex choice, since it entails bilingualism both as resource and as tension, it entails ambivalence but also a process of handling it that leads to development of the individual.

Using this angle, each of the aspects; the social context, the self and even the process of handling ambivalence, could be seen as forming their own systems with their own logics/manners of communication. Tension and resource are from this perspective seen as parts of the process of handling, being both input and result/output from the system of handling ambivalence. How this model could be properly placed within the framework of systems theory is a too large question to analyze here; this would require a more detailed analysis of the proposed model as well as of Systems Theory. However, the reader should keep this possibility in mind.

The model suggested here shows the process of the individual handling bilingualism in the everyday life. However, it would be possible to also see this as a model of society handling bilingualism, where there is a social context and individual selves, individuals with different experiences and personalities, and that in between these, there is a process of handling bilingualism in society. This was not researched in the current study, but it could be argued that it is possible to envision the societal process as being similar as the process for the individual. Naturally, more research is needed to establish this view. However, on societal level, negotiation between different groups is constantly shaping and reshaping the landscape of society. Bilingualism, especially in the context of a traditionally monolingual society such as the Swedish one, needs to be handled in society, individuals need to be classified.

A final important point is that the relationships are not casual; they influence each other, but they do not cause each other. Establishing casual relationships regarding social phenomena is more or less impossible; the current study is no exception. However, this is also not a goal here. The goal has rather been to indicate the complexity of the links between the concepts that form the model.

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Environment in Luhmann’s terminology simply means everything that is not included in the system. The environment and the system are separated from each other. See e.g. Luhmann (2002:50ff).
6. Final remarks

In this paper, a model of bilingualism in the everyday life described as a process of handling ambivalence, of negotiation between self and the social context, has been suggested. This process consists of bilingualism seen both as tension and as resource. Important aspects are the reciprocal relationships between the different parts of the model and that the process of handling ambivalence is a process of negotiation. It has been argued that this process is central to bilingual individuals’ experiences of being and becoming bilingual.

Any given study has its strengths and weaknesses; no research project is perfect. From my perspective, there are two problematic issues with the current study. First, the interviews were performed in Swedish while the coding was done in English. This may have influenced the theory, since the content of, or rather, my interpretation of, the material, had to be summarized as a code in English and this code was then in turn used to create the model. However, since the codes were constantly compared with the quotations throughout the whole process and codes were renamed with more suitable names in the cases where the names were found to not give an accurate description of the quotations, I do not find this to be such a large weakness as it seemed when starting the research project. Still, when interpreting the resulting model, it is important to keep the larger issue about the relationship between language and meaning in mind; this is not only an important issues in projects containing materials and/or coding in different languages, but also for research projects in general.

Second, the time limit naturally restricted the size of the current study as well as the length of the process of analysis. This issue can be divided into two parts, connected with theoretical sampling and literature review. Concerning the literature review, the limited time simply meant that the amount of theoretical comparison was limited. Depending on the importance one places on comparison with already existing theory, this could be seen as a serious shortcoming of the current study. Since the aim with the current study is not to formulate the ultimate theory of bilingualism in the everyday life but rather to create a first outline for such a theory, a preliminary framework for understanding the process of handling the ambivalent bilingualism, I argue that the literature review done in the axial phase is sufficient. However, a larger theoretical comparison would have to be done as a part of developing this preliminary theoretical framework. Concerning theoretical sampling, due to the time limit of this project, the initial sample was chosen on theoretical grounds and even though sampling was to a large extent based on availability of the participants, the later interviews were directed towards providing answers for the issues that seemed most relevant after the first interviews. However, a more extensive theoretical sampling would have made it possible to further deepen the understanding of the key concepts. When valuating the resulting theoretical framework, it is important to take this into account; this framework is therefore to be seen as forming an outline for a theoretical model. More research into this topic is certainly needed in order to fully validate the model. However, I argue that the model is sound, within the limitations of the current study.

Concerning strengths, one of the main strengths of the current study is that, even though it is a study with a sociological focus, it also includes as linguistic perspective. It is my opinion that sociology and linguistics can benefit from each others’ insights; in fact that this is beneficial for studies of bilingualism was already argued by the famous sociolinguist Joshua Fishman (1968), but is still not done to a large extent. The current study has done this through combining theories from these fields, as well as looking at the material and emerging theory from the perspective of both linguistics and sociology. This combined perspective allowed me to analyze the material more in-depth, as well as gave me access to a more diverse spectrum of theories for comparison.
Another main strength is the carefully structured coding process. This process has also been described in detail so as to give the reader the possibility to judge the suggested model on basis of as much evidence as possible. Since a grounded theory is validated through being grounded in the data, these descriptions are crucial in order to make sure the reader understands how the analysis was performed and through this gains an insight into the validity of the results.

There are many possibilities for continuing research into different aspects of the theoretical model outlined in this paper. Three different suggestions are made here. First, the model could be tested in a larger study, where the main categories would be investigated in greater detail. This would contribute towards forming a more nuanced theoretical understanding of the process of handling ambivalence in the context of bilingualism. A larger study could also include a more diverse set of experiences, through broadening the target group to include bilinguals from different age groups as well as educational and social backgrounds. Also other contexts than the Swedish one could be studied. Second, the material analyzed contains many other interesting categories/issues that were not developed in the current study. Thus, there is a possibility to study the material from other angles, ‘slice the cake’ in a different way. This would lead towards insights into other dimensions of bilingualism in the everyday life. Understanding about how other aspects of bilingualism are related to the handling of ambivalence could also lead to a development of that concept. This could entail both analyzing certain aspects that were left out of the current study, such as the issue connected with status of different languages or related with child-parent relationships and bilingualism, or coding the material from completely new angles. Third, a more detailed comparison between the suggested model and other theories from sociology/social psychology as well as from linguistics and other related fields could be made. Such a comparison would further understanding of how the results of the current study can be placed within these fields.

To conclude, some final remarks concerning the current study. First, a short comment regarding the possibilities of generalization of the proposed model. The model was developed from a relatively small empirical sample provided from participants with a specific type of bilingualism. This does not influence the quality of the analysis performed but should be kept in mind when discussing generalization of the model to bilingualism as a general phenomenon.\footnote{Assuming that such a model can at all be found, since bilingualism is not a homogenous phenomenon.} Second, the individual has possibilities to influence the process of handling the ambivalent bilingualism; bilingualism and how to enact it in a social context can partly be seen as a choice, a choice made under influence from the context, but still not determined by it. This choice is a complex one, since it contains bilingualism both as resource and as tension. The individual reacts on influence from the social context, but also chooses to react. Third, and finally, it has to be stressed that the complexity of the process of handling the ambivalent bilingualism is not to be seen as negative. Bilingualism, although complex, is in most cases (and certainly from the perspectives expressed by the participants of the current study), enriching, not problematic.
7. References


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### Appendix 1: Interview guide

1. **Inledning, kort presentation, spela in på band, konfidentialitet.** Introduction, short presentation, recording, confidentiality.

2. **Berätta lite om dig själv och din bakgrund. (vilka språk).** Tell something about yourself and your background, (which languages).

3. **Teman**  
   **(Theme)**
   **Uppväxten**  
   **Growing-up**
   - **ungefårlig fråga**  
     **approx. question**
   - **Berätta lite mer om din uppväxt**  
     **Tell a bit more about growing up**
   - **Var/hur lärde du dig språken?**  
     **Where/how did you learn the languages**

   **Vardagslivet**  
   **Everyday life**
   - **Berätta om din vardag**  
     **Tell about your everyday life**

   **Språken i vardagen**  
   **Languages in the everyday life**
   - **På vilket sätt påverkar de två språken din vardag?**  
     **In what way does the two languages affect your everyday life**
   - **Ge exempel – give examples**
   - **Olika språk i situationer?**  
     **different lang in situations**
   - **Sociala kontakter i olika grupper? Familj?**  
     **Social contacts in different groups? Family?**

   **Språkens betydelse**  
   **(känslomässig/socialt)**
   **The importance of the languages (emotional, social)**
   - **Vad betyder dina två språk för dig?**  
     **What does your languages mean to you?**
   - **sociala relationer, kultur, kommunikation**
   - **social relations, culture, communication**

   **Diskurser om tvåspråkighet**
   **How do you experience the Swedish society’s view of bilingualism?**
   - **Hur upplever du (det svenska) samhällets Finns skillnad beroende syn på tvåspråkighet?**  
     **How do you experience (the swedish society’s view of bilingualism)?**
   - **På vilket sätt påverkar denna syn dig?**  
     **In what way does this affect you?**

4. **Har du något du vill tillägga? Förtydliganden/något som vi inte tagit upp?** Do you have something you want to add? Clarifications/things we have not brought up?
### Appendix 2: List of Atlas.ti symbols

The following symbols are used to denote different types of relationships in the networks taken from Atlas.ti. The symbol C stands for code.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relation</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1 is associated with C2</td>
<td>==</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1 is part of C2</td>
<td>[]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1 is cause of C2</td>
<td>=&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1 contradicts C2</td>
<td>&lt;&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1 is a C2</td>
<td>isa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1 noname C2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1 is a property of C2</td>
<td>* }</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4: The starting point of the theoretical phase
Appendix 5: Theoretical phase: intermediate stages

The first network shows the network after the first stage of developments.

The second network shows the second intermediate stage of the theoretical phase, where the categories/properties have been centered around ambivalence in relation to self, mediation: finding the balance, bilingualism as tension and bilingualism as resource.