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**“The main task is to preserve Russian”:  
Language transmission in migrant and mixed  
families in Madrid**

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The working paper presents the results of a study of language transmission in small communities of Russian-speaking migrants living in Madrid. This research project “Child-rearing practices of Russian-speaking women in Spain in the course of life” benefited from financial support received from the Centre for German and European Studies (St. Petersburg State University – Bielefeld University). The working paper has been written while the author was in receipt of an “Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship at The University of Western Australia”.

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**Abstract:** *The working paper presents the results of a study of language transmission in small communities of Russian-speaking migrants living in Madrid. The research seeks to clarify the role played in this process by the characteristics of the environment, the resources of small communities and families, as well as the motivation of parents, the barriers and difficulties they face, and the strategies they use to overcome them. The empirical base consists of interviews with Russian-speaking parents, teachers and organizers of Russian-language structured forms of activities for children, as well as data of observation conducted during visits to these programs, meetings and walks with parents and children. The study demonstrates that while the super-diversity framework describes well what happens with the first-generation migrants, intergenerational changes in the practices of the use of language are great relates to the main conclusions of the assimilation theory. Using the super-diversity lens to study the language transmission has made it possible to pay attention to various combinations of migrants' attributes, which ultimately determine the existing diversity in the language practices and communicative environments of first-generation migrants. There are important similarities, which lie across borders of the dichotomy of mixedness - migrantness of a family. Many parents consider bilingualism as an integral part of good parenting, possess a number of techniques that are considered important, but in practice they face a lot of difficulties caused by specific features of family, "communities" and social context that they cannot overcome.*

**Keywords:** *language transmission, small communities, Russian-speaking migrants, super-diversity, language assimilation*

## Introduction

Many works have been devoted to understanding intergenerational language transmission in migrant and mixed families. These not only describe the course and outcome of these processes in different ways, but also differentiate the various causes that underlie them.

Traditionally, in migration studies intergenerational home-country language shift has been seen as one of the signs of the overall process of assimilation of migrants (Alba & Duyvendak, 2017; Alba & Nee, 2009; Gordon, 1964; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). The various intergenerational acculturation trends have been discovered in different migrant groups, which are characterized by differences in the degree of language proficiency of both children and parents in the country of reception and insertion of parents and children in the ethnic community (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Portes & Zhou, 1993; Zhou, 1997).

The assimilation perspective has been criticized for not taking into consideration the changes that have occurred in modern countries and cities. Contemporary migrant groups are not homogeneous communities, they are distinguished by diversity over age, gender, generation, social status etc. In parallel with these processes the social context has been diversified (Meissner & Vertovec, 2015; Vertovec, 2007, 2017). While assimilation theories focus on the incorporation of migrants into some mainstream or dominant groups of the host countries, the critics of this perspective argue that the notion of a dominant group is not applicable to heterogeneous residents of modern societies. Meanwhile, according to several studies, the general trend, that has been observed over three or more generations of migrants, confirms the fact that assimilation remains the main process characterizing intergenerational cultural changes at least in some countries (Alba et al., 2018a; Alba & Duyvendak, 2017; Alba & Nee, 2009).

By analyzing the various results of studies of intergenerational heritage language transmission in the context of this discussion, a number of contradicted results and conclusions are revealed. On the one hand, there are works that show how new social contexts, in which mixedness becomes an increasingly shared value, affect cultural interchange in families and the specificity of the cultural transmission, in particular, aimed at the multilingualism of children and showed in the diversity of language family repertoires (Gall & Meintel, 2015). On the other hand, a large number of studies continue to confirm the prevalence of linguistic assimilation in various migrant groups and in different countries (Alba & Duyvendak, 2017; Portes et al., 2016).

Small and dispersed groups of migrants who are most susceptible to assimilation are particularly interesting little-studied cases (Bozorgmehr & Meybodi, 2016; Garner, 1988; Kouzmin, 1988). Migrants from these groups develop various mechanisms to compensate for the lack of resources required for the language transmission but are not always successful (Garner, 1988). From the point of view of the debate on the diversification of modern migrant

groups and their social contexts, the question arises of what happens with the heritage language in small groups of migrants living in various super-diverse societies. *Is diversification of language scenarios observed or linguistic acculturation? What mechanisms underlie these processes?* While super-diversity approach criticizes the research focus on communities and ethnic groups, offering instead to take into account the multidimensional characteristics of migrants (Vertovec, 2017), in a number of studies, small and dispersed migration groups are described as communities and the cohesion of communities, their institutionalization, shared beliefs about the value of culture and the availability of other resources can precisely play a key role in the language transmission. *In this regard, another question of this study is the question of what is the community for these small dispersed group of migrants and what is its role in the process of language transmission and how is it related to the influence of the family?*

This study attempts to answer these questions examining language transmission among Russian-speaking migrants with children living in Madrid. Madrid is characterized by the small size and dispersity of Russian-speaking migrants. Spain has traditionally been a sending country, but in a short period of time, from the early 1990s, it turns into a receiving country that receives a large number of migrants from Morocco, Latin America, Eastern Europe and some Asian countries (Zapata-Barrero, 2010). Its unexpected attractiveness for migrants is explained by the significant economic growth, which, however, ends with the economic crisis of 2008, affecting different countries in Europe. The migration boom increased the number of foreign-born populations many times from 4.9% in 2000 to 12% in 2008 (Meissner & Vertovec, 2015; Portes et al., 2012). These shifts lead that Spain are cited as an example of how super-diversity relates to changes in migration patterns (Meissner & Vertovec, 2015). These processes have an impact on segregation trends in Madrid characterized by complexity of mechanisms and multidirectionality (Dominguez et al., 2012; Leal & Sorando, 2015). Middle-class areas remain socially homogeneous, the periphery becomes more heterogeneous, whereas a number of areas remain traditionally characterized by ethnic and social mix of the population. All these cases create their own unique social conditions in which dispersed Russian-speaking migrants live.

## **Assimilation vs Super-Diversity**

For a long time in the migration studies, the issue of the cultural transmission has been built into a broader discussion about what happen with migrants in the country of reception. The main vector of the discussion is connected with the changes that have occurred in societies, migration contexts, migrants themselves, and which have determined the analytical language of description and explanation of these processes, prevailing at certain periods or in different scientific country-specific traditions.

The indicators of cultural transmission such as the degree of language proficiency of migrants of the second or subsequent generations were considered as a marker of acculturation or integration trends within various assimilation and acculturation perspectives (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Portes & Zhou, 1993; Sam & Berry, 2006). According to the straight-line assimilation theory, migrants pass seven stages of assimilation, the first of which is acculturation or cultural or behavioral assimilation, in which migrants change of their cultural patterns, including used language, taken on them of the host society (Gordon, 1964).

The theory well explains the trajectories of migrants who arrived in the US from Europe in the late XIX - early XX centuries, confirming the thesis about the relationship between the achievement of migrants' professional and educational successes with the passage of the stages of assimilation. However, the studies of migrants of a new wave, mostly of non-European origin, demonstrate its limited capabilities to describe the consequences of assimilation. For instance, the assimilation of some groups of migrants living in areas with high crime rates and a low standard of living could anchor them in niches occupied by unfavorable surroundings, lead to the reproduction of poverty and crime, while cultural isolation in such areas, on the contrary, allowed migrants to maintain norms and values shared by members of the ethnic communities and ultimately contributed to upward social mobility, revealed in higher educational and professional successes of children compared with their parents. Nowadays, the classical approach finds few supporters, but some of its ideas are reflected in modern theories. New works substantiate the thesis that "assimilation" still has a great potential for explaining the experience of modern migrants (Alba & Nee, 1997). Despite all the changes, the main tendency in the trajectory of minorities is assimilation them into the mainstream (Alba et al., 2018).

Segmented assimilation theory has made it possible to explain the diversity of assimilation outcomes such as, for example, downward or upward assimilation, taking into account the various factors on which they depend the social segments in which migrants are incorporated, the legality of their status, prejudices towards migrants of this group, family and community resources, family composition and others (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Portes & Zhou, 1993; Zhou, 1997).

The theories, that have long dominated as key in migration studies to describe and explain the acculturation trends that occur with migrants, are actively criticized from different perspectives. Modern migrants fall not only in different institutional contexts that can significantly determine their place and trajectories in the host country (Crul et al., 2012; Crul & Vermeulen, 2003), they find themselves in cities whose population is heterogeneous, in other words, it do not form a dominant majority that is homogeneous in terms of its cultural characteristics. The idea of super-diversity, on the one hand, tries to take into account the fact that the local population of modern cities is very heterogeneous in terms of class, ethnicity, migration histories, self-identification, cultural

practices, etc. and cultural diversity is a feature of many modern cities, on the other hand, this term indicates changes that have occurred with modern migrant groups in different senses: the formation of new identities, relations of power and others (Crul, 2016; Vertovec, 2007). The ethnic group as a unit of analysis loses its significance. An approach is needed that would allow for taking into consideration the existing diversity over class, generation, cultural characteristics etc. This conclusion contrasts the evidence that the mainstream does not lose the role of the dominant cultural majority through existing social institutions, such as education, media, politics, and others, as well as through certain dominant social and cultural settings (Alba & Duyvendak, 2017).

## **Mixed unions as a special type of family**

In migration studies, mixed unions have traditionally had a special place. According to the classical concept of assimilation, marital assimilation that is the process of increasing the number of intermarriages with representatives of the local population, is the third stage of the linear process (Gordon, 1964). The frequency of mixed marriages acts as a marker for the assimilation process. Therefore, in some research, mixed families are being studied in the context of the integration perspective and in the logic of the classical assimilation approach, according to which migrants are becoming more adapted to the host society when they are assimilated.

This view of acculturation and assimilation of migrants have few supporters for a number of reasons. Firstly, there is no unambiguous relationship between endogamy or exogamy of the union and integration indicators (Alba & Foner, 2015; Rodriguez-Garcia et al., 2015). Secondly, the new approaches criticize not only the view on the process of assimilation as an indicator of the adaptation of migrants, but also the integration perspective in general, as an approach that does not take into account the changes that have occurred in countries and societies and the existing cultural diversity of both migrant and majorities groups.

There are two main directions of discussion. The former focuses on the cultural specifics of mixed couples, which is not limited to assimilation trends, according to which members of minority groups lose their cultural characteristics. Mixed unions are considered as special cases in terms of the cultural transmission and various aspects of parenting. The diversity of the family environment and its changes illustrates new forms: one of the partners can adapt the basic cultural features of not only the dominant culture but also the minority culture, partners can form a new family life style in different aspects, including language practices, self-identification, especially child-rearing and others (Beate Collet, 2012; Vasquez, 2014). This line of discussion is more about the cultural specifics of mixed couples and their difference from other family unions, whereas the debate about super-diversity discussed these issues from a different angle. From the latter point of view, mixedness, in some sense, is a

mainstream characteristic. However, studies that take into consideration intergenerational dynamics show that the racial characteristics of children in mixed unions, the neighborhoods in which they live and other characteristics indicate rather a mainstream expansion than super-diversity scenario (Alba et al., 2018). The number of inter-ethnic marriages dramatically increases in the second and subsequent generations (Kboo, 2004).

## **Studies of family language policy**

A large number of research has been devoted to the study of the intergenerational cultural transmission, many of which describe the role of the family as leading in this process (Arriagada, 2005; Soehl, 2016). Sociolinguistic studies show that without the support of the community, parents find it difficult to transmit the language to the child, especially in the families which are mixed (Hoffmann, 1985). Garner (1988) in the 80s studied the Russian community in Melbourne, which was represented by migrants from China and Western Europe. He describes this community as small and low visible. The study showed a high percentage of language retention, which is explained by the inclusion in the migrant community. Despite this, Garner suggests that if the community does not reinforce the new migrants with native speakers, then it will disappear.

Within the framework of the research of the family language policy, the practice of using and maintaining the language, as well as the cultural transfer is studied from a different perspective. Family language policy is defined as “explicit and overt planning in relation to language use within the home among family members” (King et al., 2008). This area of research is formed at the intersection of such research directions as language policy and child language acquisition. Spolsky (2004, 2012) distinguishes three components of language policy of the speech community: language practices, language beliefs or ideologies, management or planning. Language practices cover the used sounds, words, grammar, which form a kind of language used in certain situations, in other words, how people actually speak. Language ideologies and beliefs are a set of beliefs about the language and its use, about which language practices are acceptable and appropriate in different situations. Language management includes special efforts aimed at influencing practices and changing them.

Studies of child language acquisition examine the mechanisms and conditions for a child to study one or several languages, often paying attention to the interaction of an adult and a child at home. The approach of family language policy, combining a number of aspects of these areas of research, focuses on studying the practice of using the language in daily interaction in the family, family members’ beliefs about the language and its use, efforts aimed at language learning, changing practices, and the goals they want to achieve (King et al., 2008: 909).

## Russian-speaking migrants abroad

There is extensive literature on the study of migrants from Russia, in which examine people of different ethnicity, age, generation, emigrated for various reasons and in different historical periods. Such flexibility and sometimes uncertainty of boundaries of groups of people who is included in the Russian migrant communities or networks is caused by a number of reasons.

Firstly, Russian migrants are people who migrated not only from Russia, but also from the predecessor countries: the USSR and the Russian Empire, which included territories that nowadays belong to other countries. Therefore, this migration is part both the Russian migration history and the history of these countries. Secondly, Russian migrants are heterogeneous groups in terms of the ethnic identity of these people. Migrants, perceiving themselves as bearers of a certain Russian or (post-)/soviet culture, can describe and “imagine” themselves in different ethnic categories as well as they can change their self-perception after migration (see, Isurin, 2011; Varjonen et al., 2013). Thirdly, the post-Soviet migration, which in many respects has replenished or formed the communities of Russian migrants, represents a migration from different countries - people both Russian and non-Russian ethnicity from the former republics of the Soviet Union. Thus, under official statistical accounting, these people can fall into different groups in terms of ethnicity and the country where they were born, even though some of them can share ideas about their cultural closeness or similarity, use post-Soviet migrant networks as social capital and be members of migrant communities.

Taking into account these features, the researchers use a variety of terminology to describe groups and communities in which migrants from Russia are more or less included, with whom they identify themselves or with whose representatives they share the beliefs about a common cultural past or possessing similar socio-cultural characteristics, as well as in which the researchers include them themselves for analytical purposes. A variety of categories which have been used such as Russian-Speaking Diaspora, post-Soviet migrant community, Russian-speakers, Russian Diaspora, migrants from the former USSR (FSU), Russian-speaking community, Russian Jews etc., reflects the heterogeneity of migrants from Russia in terms of their ethnicity and identities, the period and causes of migration, the size of communities, generations and other characteristics (Aybak, 2017; Dietz, 2000; Harmon-Donovan; Jupp, 2001; Opara, 2017; Pechurina, 2017).

Despite the diversity of migration paths, biographical trajectories and categories used to identify themselves, there are common features of some groups of Russian migrants living in different countries, from the point of view of their description as communities. I singled out three groups of characteristics, based on the results of various studies, as well as studies comparing migrants living in different cities that demonstrate both certain similar tendencies in the formation and dynamics of communities, and the lack of universality.

### *Russian language and identities*

The Russian language is often seen as an important social marker pointing to the origin or cultural background of a person or as a tool that ties migrants within the country of reception or at a transnational level (Carment & Nikolko, 2017; Harmon-Donovan, 2015; Isurin, 2011; Ryazantsev, 2013). Migrants of both Russian and Non-Russian ethnicity from the former USSR can perceive themselves as a part of the Russian-speaking community, as a bearer of Russian language and particular culture.

Apparently, the understanding of the important features of many Russian-speaking communities abroad is impossible without taking into account the fact that the sending states of migrants were part of the common socio-political space of the Soviet Union in which Russian was lingua franca and keeps being the predominant language of international communication on a large part post-Soviet space (Carment & Nikolko, 2017). In the general Soviet past some modern migrants see the roots of what they view as common cultural features in the Soviet past, including not only the possession of the Russian language, but also the characteristics of the child-rearing practices, relationships in the family, or from what, as it will be shown later, they try to distance themselves.

In some countries, the communities are formed by Russian speaking women, parents or other social groups (Akifyeva & Erashova, 2015). For example, women who have emigrated for the purpose of marriage.

Meanwhile, a number of authors describe acculturation trends related to the fact that some groups of migrants do not always want to transmit the Russian language to their children, form cultural orientation on the host society and begin to identify themselves closer to host culture compared with culture of sending country (Gingras, 2010; Ryazantsev, 2013).

### *(In)/visible community*

Another feature related to the previous one is (un)/willingness of the Russians to consolidate and maintain relations with each other, which are typical for migrants in some cities. Kopnina (2005, 2006) uses the concept of antagonism to describe the distinguishing feature of Russian migrants residing in London and Amsterdam in the late 90s and early 2000s, displayed in reluctance to have close contacts with each other. She concluded that Russian migrants were invisible, and the term “community” was non-applicable to them. A small number of geographically dispersed migrants, the absence of marked phenotypic and stylistic ethnic or racial characteristics make them invisible to locals. Ryazantsev (2013) believes that the reluctance to live close to each other, the choice of the residence area, based on the socio-economic characteristics of the neighborhood, and not on the presence of Russian neighbors, the lack of social organizations that would provide real assistance

and support to migrants are the specific characteristics of many Russians abroad. In particular, he describes the Russian-speaking community in Australia as poorly consolidated and not oriented to the country of origin.

Meanwhile, the literature describes examples of high consolidation of Russian-speaking migrants, such as Russians, who immigrated to Australia from some regions of China at the beginning of the second half of the last century. These migrants settled in certain localities and organized communities (Jupp, 2001). Even within one country and city, the specifics of the Russian communities can change significantly during certain historical periods, sometimes relatively short (Byford, 2014). For example, the increase in the number of migrants in London, digital developments and other processes lead to serious changes that make Kopnina's conclusions about the invisibility of Russian migrants irrelevant for describing the current situation: migrants actively consolidate and redefine their identity (Byford, 2014; Morgunova, 2013). Perhaps, Kopnina's suggestion (2006) that the fewer Russian migrants, the less they love each other, finds an empirical confirmation.

#### *Religion believes and church attendance*

The next feature is the migrant confessional belonging. On the one hand, the Russian Orthodox church can act as an important institution around which certain groups of migrants are consolidated (Harmon-Donovan, 2015). On the other hand, the aggressive secularization processes carried out by the Soviet state, religious repression of various types, the ban on religious practices during the Soviet period led to a significant reduction of the number of those identified with any religion and the colossal decline in church attendance that occurred at the end 20s and was continued until the end of the Soviet Union (Froese, 2008). This trend is reflected in the religiosity of migrants of the Soviet period. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, religious revivals are observed, manifested, among other things, in an increase in the number of those who believe in God and a decrease in the proportion of those who consider themselves an atheist (Borowik, 2002; Froese, 2008). The religiousness of modern migrants can also change and reflect these trends.

Summarising, this working paper focuses on the intergenerational transmission of language in small groups of Russian-speaking migrants living in Madrid, Spain. The research seeks to clarify the role played in these processes by family, "communities", individual factors, social contexts and constraints which migrants face. Studying the language transmission, I pay attention to such components of family language policy as family language practices, language beliefs of parents or ideologies and management - the efforts that parents apply to transmit Russian language.

## Methods and data

The analysis will be based on data collected in Madrid which includes interviews conducted in 2015 (32 interviews) with Russian-speaking parents (including 4 interviews with the Russian fathers), interviews with teachers or organizers of the Russian-language structured programs for children, diaries of observation based on visits to these programs, as well as meetings and taking a walk with parents and children. Many respondents were members of the groups for Russian-speaking parents, organized on the basis of social networking services. The children of the majority of respondents attended some after- or pre-school programs, including a Russian-language program for children (24 interviews).

In 2017, I carried out the interviews with the same parents (17 interviews) which enable to compare the child-rearing practices in different biographical stages and identify their differences which I try to explain not only by the age of the children but also by the experience to live in new country.

During the interview, the parents described all programs involving their children, as well as a typical weekday and weekend, talked about the use of language in the family, how the choice of cultural activities was made, involvement in the Russian-speaking community, beliefs about the language and its use parents have, what language practices are considered as appropriate in different situations, what efforts they make to modify or maintain children's language practices.

I visited the programs for Russian-speaking children as well as spent time outdoors with parents and their children. During these visits and outdoors activities I paid attention to the language that children and parents used, to the types of activities in which they were involved.

The text data was coded into groups and then into subgroups based on various language practices in daily interaction in family, attitudes of parents about the language and its use, efforts aimed at language transmission, the goals they want to achieve; the structured forms of activities in which children are involved and the resources available for families

## Russian-speaking communities in Madrid

The concept of community is one of the most controversial in migration studies. In this study, based on results of empirical data, I conceptualize the community for Russian-speaking migrants in Madrid relying on two classical definitions. According to the first one community is not just a collection of people, it is a collection of institutions, such as the household, places of assembly, businesses, churches, schools, the courts and others (Park, 2002). In this sense, the studied communities are weakly institutionalized, but in the meantime the institutions act as a platform for solidarization or for (not)/regular

contacts of Russian-speaking migrants. The main structure-forming institutions of the Russian-speaking minority groups include various structured programs for children, the church, as well as the groups organized on the basis of social networking services (Facebook, the Russian service Vkontakte and Whatsapp).

The second definition I use is derived from the arguments of Benedict Anderson about two types of communities: “imagined community” and community (Anderson, 2006). The word “imagined” indicates that what is really important for the community is the fact that the community exists in the minds of people rather than personal contacts between people or their personal acquaintance. In fact, these arguments are close to Fredrik Barth's approach to ethnic groups, for which the concept of ethnic boundaries is important, defined as shared beliefs of who is a member of an ethnic group (Barth, 1998). Anderson writes that “all the communities larger than the primordial villages of face-to-face contacts (and probably even these) are imagined”. Thus, he mentions important characteristic of another type of community, namely, face-to-face contacts.

Anderson's definition of “imagined community” is often used in a direct or modified version to describe various modern communities. In the present study, the metaphor of the imagination, apparently, is poorly applicable to Russian-speaking migrants in Madrid. They are very heterogeneous groups of people from the point of view of their country of birth, ethnic identities, terms and causes of migration and other characteristics and for them it is these characteristics that can be the main ones for self-identification. The communities, which they imagine that they belong to, might not be related to Russian-speaking migrants, but at the same time through existing migrant institutions they carry out to some extent virtual or real face-to-face contacts, meeting at various Russian-language events, asking questions in Russian-language online groups, and achieving other goals through the use of Russian-language networks. Russian-speaking parents who are focused on the culture transfer are in particular need in this kind of resources.

Using a super-diversity lens for studying a cultural transmission also enables to pay attention to various combinations of attributes of members of these communities. The length of residence in Spain, legal status, the migration channel, mixedness, employment status, socioeconomic status, both separately and in different configurations, are factors that can determine the cultural repertoires of families included in these communities, as well as the success of the cultural transmission.

I use the concept of communities in the plural form, because there are several groups with overlapping boundaries, such as people who are members of active online groups for Russian-speaking parents or church members who have more resources through cohesion, religious motivation, after-school activities on the basis of the Sunday school and the conditions created in the church, allowing mothers and children spend time in the Russian-speaking environment. However, some members of online groups can both attend church-based classes and be active participants in several online groups.

My previous study found many similarities in child-rearing strategies and practices, in structural conditions that determine the leisure practices of children, regardless of their differences in economic resources of respondents, social niches occupied by their environment, the characteristics of the local infrastructures, as well as the cultural identities of family members (Akifyeva, 2016).

For explaining the similarities, it is advisable in analytical aims to consider these migrant groups as communities of the Russian-speaking migrants in Madrid, defined not through their imagination, but through the migrant practices of consuming the resources of Russian-speaking migrant institutions.

## **Language practices and communicative family environment**

### *Parents - the first-generation migrants*

Communication practices of parents are very diverse in terms of used languages and the presence of language features in everyday communication with each other and children. In mixed unions, the variation of language repertoires is very different. The main language of communication between spouses may be English, since a woman does not speak Spanish sufficiently to communicate, but at the same time English may not be completely fluent. Selected language practices in such families can be caused by the degree of language proficiency at least until the woman learns Spanish to a communicative level, what can take a long time if a woman moved to Spain due to marriage migration without Spanish knowledge:

*Respondent: Speak with children in Russian only, the husband speaks only in Spanish. And with my husband I speak in English. So, we have three languages at home. Interviewer: And do you speak Spanish cautiously, yes? Is it easier for you to speak English? Respondent: It is much easier! Yes, my Spanish is mediocre and poor.*

Even though the language repertoire used in some different families can be the same, they may vary across languages to which they switch in different contexts and in different periods of life. In the following example, English as in the previous one had been also the main language of the spouses' communication, but after the birth of a child, the Russian-speaking wife began to use Spanish in everyday communication with both her husband and with the child if husband is present:

*My husband and me always communicated only in English before the wedding. That is, when I came here, my Spanish level was practically zero (...). And, respectively, when our child was already born, that is, I started to think that it is necessary to include the Spanish speech at home after all. And I asked my husband finally to communicate with me in Spanish.*

However, they continue to use English in a number of situations, such as when there is a need to say something confidentially in the presence of the child or when they want to practice English:

*We communicate at home in the presence of the husband mostly in Spanish. And when a child [is present], if the child is engaged in a game or something else, or we discuss what she does not need to hear, we speak English. Firstly, I need this for practice, accordingly, and my husband for practice. It is due to the fact that during his main working time he speaks English about 85% of time. And, accordingly, when he is going to a trip somewhere or something else to the English-speaking countries, he always asks me: "Let's speak in English so that I will be in the tempo, in the tempo". (...) but otherwise we communicate with each other in Spanish. That is, if I am alone at home with a child, I communicate with her only in Russian.*

There are parents who have chosen the One Person - One Language strategy (Piller, 2001) in some mixed families, according to which each parent always speaks to the child only in his or her native language. However, many women adhere to it inconsistently, as, for example, in the previous example, switching to Spanish, especially in the presence of the husband or Hispanic interlocutors or switching to this strategy after a while when they found out its effectiveness or face the fact that the child begin to have different kinds of difficulties with the Russian language.

In families of Russian-speaking migrants, communication occurs in the vast majority of cases in Russian, but many parents, just as in mixed families, state that in interacting with the child/ren they use Russian language inconsistency. In particular, they have said that it sometimes is easier for them to answer children in Spanish or that they time to time or regularly use Spanish in certain life situations. For example, in one Russian-speaking family, the father switches to Spanish in a situation of discontent with his son's behavior:

*"I scold my husband. While he wants to punish him, he immediately switches to Spanish and starts him ... I say: "Why do you switch to Spanish?" – "I don't know".*

It is significant that according to this quotation, the respondent's husband asserts about involuntary language switching, which he does not consciously control. Another respondent from a mixed family also specifies that exposes the same unmotivated language practices during interaction with a seven-month-old daughter: *"I even sometimes by myself speak Spanish with her, it's easier for me now. I'm still twelve years here, they occasionally slip out from me".*

Thus, to some extent the most families follow communicative strategy when one or both parents mix languages or switch from one language to the other during a conversation and from one situation to another. The teacher of the courses of Russian language and culture points out that for some parents mixing and switching become routine everyday language practices: *"People come here,*

*after six months, even less they speak of the most terrible mixture of Russian or Ukrainian and Spanish*". In her opinion, it especially often manifests itself in using Spanish words in the sentences or in interference, when the pronunciation of Spanish words is distorted in Russian manner. One of the respondents explains this by the fact that people completely work and live for a while in a Spanish environment, for example, live in a Spanish family, doing various kinds of domestic work or caring for a Spanish family member.

Mixed unions are often described as a special type of family in which cultural interchange takes place, assuming various forms (Gall & Meintel, 2015). For example, everyday biculturalism may be inherent in most families to a greater or lesser degree. One partner may adapt the characteristics of a minority culture, not just the dominant culture, as assimilation theory predicts (Vasquez, 2014). Partners can form a unique globalized lifestyle, less connected with national contexts (Collet, 2015). Therefore, such types of unions are often considered with rare exceptions as special units of analysis, differing from unmixed families by the various emerging effects of mixedness. In this study of Russian-speaking migrants, focusing only on such aspect of culture as language, there is also a tendency according to which the language of communication in Russian-speaking families differs from the language of communication in mixed families. The results quite predictably show that for the former the main language of communication is Russian, and for the latter is Spanish or English as the language of international communication. However, taking into account both the ways of using languages by parents among themselves and with children and their degree of mastery of the partner's language in mixed families and the degree of mixing of languages and the frequency of switching between languages, we can say that the majority of the families of respondents in this study are unique in terms of type language communication.

The super-diversity approach (Meissner & Vertovec, 2015; Vertovec, 2017), drawing the attention to the diversity of migration channels, the legal status of migrants, their age and other characteristics, and their intersection and interconnection, makes it possible, in this set of unique family cases, to find and describe a number of patterns in who used one or another language, in which situations and at what stages of the life course. The degree of proficiency in Spanish and the speed of study appear to be caused by the reasons for migration, the length of stay in Spain and the socioeconomic status of women, rather than the mixed or Russian-speaking nature of the family. Most of the respondents who moved to Spain as a result of marriage migration began to communicate with their partner in English, whereas those who were living in Spain at the time of the Spanish partner's acquaintance, as a rule, began communication in Spanish. It is the respondents of the first group who can have very limited knowledge of the Spanish language even after several years of permanent residence, besides women from Russian-speaking families who have moved to Spain because of the employment of their husbands.

The results contribute to the discussion about the integration potential of mixed unions in comparison with migrant unions. In this study, it is shown that mixedness does not always give an integration advantage and is not a condition that contributes to the assimilation process. The degree of proficiency in Spanish and the isolation from the local environment are more closely connected with the migration channel (migration as a wife of a Russian-speaking migrant or a local resident), her employment (lack of employment or employment in the Russian-speaking segment or in certain niches of low-skilled labor). These empirical examples show how the intersection of the social class, the migration channel, gender roles, allows us to understand the diversity of skills in the mainstream language among Russian-speaking migrants, and this confirms the thesis of the diversification of modern migrants, the need to take into account the diversity of other variables to describe this diversity (Crul, 2016).

#### *Children – one-and-a-half or the second generations*

Even more clear tendencies toward acculturation are manifested at the level of intergenerational dynamics, namely, what language migrant children use in daily interaction. All parents, regardless of their language skills and practices, believe (if the child is still small) or state (if the child has started attending an educational institution) that without significant effort on their part, he or she will prefer to speak Spanish. The child may refuse to respond to parents in Russian in certain periods of time:

*Again, what will you do? You're [speaking] with a child in Russian, and he/she answers in Spanish. That's point-blank, and what? This is a constant problem for such families. How many of those have we seen: he understands everything, but does not want to speak.*

However, in many studied cases, even children who communicate in Russian at home prefer to speak among themselves in Spanish:

*Well, it is clear that everyone wants children to be friends, talk to each other in Russian. But in fact, children almost always switch to Spanish. If anybody says a word in Spanish, and all immediately “na-na-na”, and the only thing which parents do is “speak Russian”, “speak Russian”!*

These trends are observed in both mixed and Russian-speaking families and, if the child begins to attend an educational institution, manifest themselves within a short time.

Richard Alba and Jan Willem Duyvendak (2017) distinguish two sets of conditions that continue to provide the dominant position of the native majority in the process of cultural transmission - the institutional and the social and cultural settings. The language transmission studies describe the significant impact of attending such institutional settings as schools and kindergarten on the rapid acquisition of the language of the country of residence even it is not

used in the family and that it becomes preferable for children and they begin to use it for games and spontaneously (Hoffmann, 1985). In addition, the child's transition from home to school is accompanied by socialization among peers and influences the use of language. The case of this study is no exception. The social institutions of the host society, such as the education system, play a leading role in shaping the language preferences and practices of children of Russian-speaking migrants in Madrid. Attendance of kindergarten, school and after-school programs creates a linguistic environment, which can be characterized mainly as Spanish. Children begin to prefer to use the Spanish language, they may refuse to use the Russian and speak with an accent, even if both parents are Russian natives and pursue any of the previously described communicative strategies.

Another set of conditions is “the social and cultural settings, – not just formal institutions – where the members of the native majority, even when they are working class, feel “at home” (Richard Alba & Duyvendak, 2017: 6). This set of conditions shows the existing differences between the majority and minority at the emotional level, at the level of subjective perception and power relations. In this sense, we can probably consider the parents' perception of the hierarchy of legitimate languages and the normality of their use, which is reflected in their linguistic practices. For example, a mother from a mixed family, explains why she switch to Spanish when she speaks to her son in the presence of other children: *“Well, it is not exactly that I was embarrassed ... but somehow it seemed to me that it was inconvenient to talk in another language in the society”*.

The process of losing the Russian language is also facilitated by the specifics of the Russian-speaking communities in Madrid, characterized by weak ties, small size and dispersed settlements. While in communities with strong ties, members can fulfil the function of language transmission, migrants from this study are deprived of such linguistic environment, even if it is in demand.

In a number of families, the language acculturation of parents along with the external conditions listed above contributes to the dominance of the Spanish language:

*Interviewer: But do you always speak to him in Russian?*

*Respondent: I'm trying. Now, when I constantly speak Russian at home, yes, I speak only Russian. And when I had to speak Spanish, or there was a Spanish-speaking woman who worked at home, I spoke Spanish, they [her two children] heard Spanish speech. And plus, Gleb is usually a sly guy, that is, he very often confuses me. That is, I speak with him in Russian, he answers in Spanish. And sometimes, at some point, when I automatically change the speech, I begin to respond in Spanish. And he is very slyly always trying, that is, that I switch to Spanish.*

In this example, not only the six-year-old son prefers to communicate in Spanish at home, but a Russian-speaking mother who tries to communicate with children only in Russian, periodically switches to Spanish inadvertently when she hears Spanish speech.

It can be stated that in some families at the second-generation level, a noticeable trend towards language assimilation is observed, which confirms the model of language intergenerational acculturation (Alba & Nee, 2009). In families in which systematic learning and maintenance of the Russian language is not paid attention, the Russian language is lost.

Meanwhile, in some families, children are bilingual, they speak Russian without an accent. In the following parts of the article, I will consider the reasons that prevent or contribute to language transmission at the level of families and existing communities and answer to the question why in such an unfavorable - for a minority language transmission - the institutional and cultural environment some families succeed in transmission, and other families do not, despite the motivation and effort.

## Language beliefs and ideologies

Family language ideology can be part of the cultural understanding of what good parenting is (King & Fogle, 2006). The majority of respondents in this study share the beliefs about the high value of Russian language proficiency and, moreover, believe that the language transmission is related to the sphere of parental responsibility. It can be concluded that for many parents, the level of the child language proficiency is also a good-parenting indicator. A good parent should perform a certain set of techniques for Russian language transfer.

Members of Russian-speaking communities possess a shared knowledge of how to transmit the language to the child, what they need to do for that, and can exert normalized pressure on those who do not follow this set of rules. For example, when one of the respondents was confronted with the fact that her child refused to respond to her in Russian, she decided that “*maybe it is hard for her*” in the emotional sense and stopped insisting on replies in Russian. She talks about the real and supposed reaction of other Russian-speaking women who knows her in the following way:

*Respondent: Many people condemned me possibly that a Russian girl, you are doing wrong, you need to retain the Russian language.*

*Interviewer: Did they said this, yes? Did someone say?*

*Respondent: Yes, everyone told me that ...*

*Interviewer: Russian-speaking people?*

*Respondent: That I'm a terrible mother: I speak Russian, I am Russian, and I*

*talk to her in Spanish. It was like I am...*

*Interviewer: Does everyone mean “Russian-speaking people”?*

*Respondent: Russian-speaking, Russian-speaking people, yes.*

Therefore, Russian-speaking acquaintances, in her opinion, not only advised her to use only Russian in her communication with the daughter, but also perceived these practices as a characteristic of a “good” mother.

Language ideologies in the family and communities can be determined by the language policy in the country, the official public discourse on how to raise a child in a family in which one or both parents are heritage language speakers. Thus, the official ideology in many countries to date includes the system of ideas about the positive consequences of bilingualism and encourages them. Such attitudes can also be maintained at the level of the official ideology and practices in Spain. Some parents in this study said that they had received information about the positive effects of bilingualism from various representatives of Spanish schools and medical institutions:

*Interviewer: Is that, the Spanish speech therapist teaches a mother to speak only in Russian with the child?*

*Respondent: Yes, yes, yes. This was her first recommendation. That ... she said: “you speak Russian, if there is someone else, a native speaker of some other language, translate, but the first phrase should be necessarily in Russian”.*

The ideas about how children should be reared, which professionals have developed and passed to parents, have been changed with a certain periodicity, and middle-class parents quickly respond to new recommendations unlike working-class parents (Lareau, 2003). However, it has been shown that the views that fostering of bilingualism is a component of “good parenting” gain a wide acceptance. The parenting practices aimed at encouraging of bilingualism are not only exclusively of the middle-class practices, but also mainstream ones (King & Fogle, 2006). Based on the results of this study, we can conclude that the idea of the benefits of bilingualism, as well as certain techniques that provide it, have become widespread among Russian-speaking migrants through various channels available to different groups of the population.

However, bilingualism and its positive consequences are not the goal which every parent tries to pursue through language transmission. A number of respondents perceive this process as part of a general cultural transfer:

*Interviewer: Why does this [language transmission] seem important to you?*

*Respondent: Well, where mom is from Russian culture.*

At the same time, for other women, language transmission is not expressly related to Russian / Russian-speaking culture. Communication with Russian-speaking migrants can be perceived as uninteresting, forced due to the need to transmit Russian to a child:

*I do not need so much Russian communication. Because it again brings me back to our Russian traditions, which don't work here. And I started to communicate, and I found this group because of Katenka, because she will need to communicate with peers, with the Russians, that is, finding children more or less her age, and let her once a month, that she will communicate with Russian children for the language. For everything else she has Spanish.*

Many respondents describe quite rational reasons as important or basic: looking for work in the future, the opportunity to communicate with grandparents and other Russian-speaking relatives and people, the opportunity to communicate with the child at a deeper level, which is accessible only in their native language. In other words, the Russian language is perceived as a valuable resource in terms of life chances and prospects:

*But because now can't get along without Russian. You will not find a job without the Russian language in Madrid. No, well, that is hardly the word, of course. But ... all the shops, everything requires only Russian language.*

This belief that the Russian language is a useful resource that will come in handy in the future relates to the results of other studies, according to which the language transmission can be aimed by instrumental motives such as investing in a cultural capital (Nordstrom, 2016).

At the same time, Spanish culture acquisition by children is seen as a problem only in those families who moved to Spain with school-age children, and at the very first stage after the move. The role of the Spanish father as a transmitter of culture is practically not actualized in the narratives of women from mixed marriages. For example, in one family, even a Spaniard father spoke with a child in English, as “[she] will learn Spanish in college anyway”. Learning Spanish and culture is usually perceived as natural, occurring in the school and in the local environment, whereas everything related to the Russian language and culture is seen as requiring effort. For instance, mother whose daughter has not yet started to speak, believes that it will be very difficult to make that her Russian language will be at the same level as Spanish: *“I wish she speak Russian in the same level as Spanish. Although I know that it will be difficult, it will be very difficult”*.

## **Management: Language transmission as a part of parenting and existing barriers**

Parents need to make efforts to transfer second language to a child (Hoffmann, 1985). In the context of rapid language acculturation, which is observed in the one-and-a-half and second generations of Russian-speaking migrants in Madrid, the transmission of the language becomes part of the regular parental care. For some mothers, the child's linguistic successes are a daily concern, and efforts are aimed at language transmission cut across all areas of life and are an important component of child-rearing practices.

A child's attendance of Russian language courses and other Russian-speaking activities is considered as an important component of the organization of daily life of children. They form a language environment, which for many parents is the main reason for choosing these activities for their children. Despite the fact that there is a need for such lessons, they cannot fully satisfy existing demands. This is due to a number of reasons, most of which are related to the characteristics of the communities.

First, a number of problems are due to the small size of communities and their dispersed settlement. The latter determines that there is no optimal location for a program that would be appropriate for all families. Distance is an important factor in the choice of structured activity programs for Russian-speaking migrants in Madrid with different income levels and other resources (Akifyeva, 2017). Parents prefer to choose among the offers located close to the place of residence. In the case of Russian-language programs, parents are ready to make temporal efforts and pick the child up to class, but face various attendant obstacles

The second group of problems is related to the small number of existing structured activities that have a limited set of programs not covering all age groups. For this reason, children in some cases are forced to attend classes aimed at children of other ages and/or of another level of language proficiency. The programs open and close, the location and range of services are changed: besides Russian language courses, quests for children, cooking classes and others appear. They can be conducted irregularly, canceled, closed for the departure of the organizers and for other reasons. In addition, there are not enough professional teachers and some classes are taught by mothers.

The example of the unemployed Daria from a mixed family illustrates well a number of common problems. In her opinion, there are not enough classes in the city, and, in addition to this, her family lives far from all existing programs for Russian-speaking children. Despite this, her daughter, a half-generation migrant, attended various Russian-language activities at different times, but this was always accompanied by great inconveniences for the mother or the whole family. Initially she spent two years attending classes that they did not like due to their perceived quality, and also because the participants periodically

switched to Spanish in a conversation with each other: *“And the teacher spoke in Spanish, the children spoke in Spanish with each other, with parents, it was uselessness at all”*. After the birth of her son, her daughter began attending lessons in another center. The husband brought the whole family by car every Saturday for a year, and they waited until her lesson was finished to take her home. Since the son, Roberto, was very small, he required attention and care: *“Anya is in class, and we spent two hours and waited [her] with Roberto, run around the streets. We didn’t have an opportunity to sit in a cafe, nor did we walk around for a long time”*. In addition, the daughter did not like classes, since they were mostly attended by *“boys of five years old, but she was almost eight”* years old. A year later, the husband refused to take the family to the center, explaining this by the lack of language progress and the discomfort associated with the need to spend time in waiting her with a small son. The husband, in her words, said: *“The year was exhausted, we dragged along with him to these lesson, but there’s no any results”*. This example is generalized in the sense that it includes various problems that parents face: the remoteness of Russian-speaking lessons from the place of living, lack of offers for children of a certain age, dissatisfaction with the quality of the classes, the use of Spanish in courses for Russian-speaking children, limited support from the husband, the presence of a second child.

Parents use a variety of strategies to compensate for the lack of resources needed to transfer and maintain the language. They organize classes on a formal and informal basis by themselves. For example, in a suburb of Madrid, where middle-class and upper-middle-class families predominantly live, Russian-speaking women began to invite a ballet teacher to conduct classes with a group of children of 5-6 girls. At the time of the interview, they were unsuccessfully looking for a Russian language teacher who would have agreed to come to their suburbs for group lessons with children. Parents who did not have the opportunity to invite teachers at home, organized informal courses on the basis of one of the existing Russian-language center with one of the its teachers. One of the famous and popular place in the city is the Russian-language center, which was organized by a woman in her husband's empty office in order to provide Russian-speaking communication to her son.

Russian-speaking parents specially spend time together, providing children the opportunity to communicate with Russian-speaking peers and other children. However, children can switch to Spanish when they communicate with each other, which causes some parents to doubt the effectiveness of such practices.

They attempt to make up for the lack of the necessary institutional support and other community resources at the level of family interaction. As a result, various aspects of parenting are aimed at the Russian language transmission. There is a certain known set of techniques that many women use. Reading, watching cartoons and other programs in Russian are the most common. To motivate children who prefer Spanish resources, they use different tricks. For example, one mother allows a child to read a book in Spanish, only after reading two

books in Russian. A trip to Russia can be estimated from the perspective of opportunities to immerse the child in a language environment. One of the famous practices during a visit to Russia is to send the child to a kindergarten in order to transmit Russian and culture.

Grandparents are often described not only as native speakers of the Russian language, but also as helpers in its maintaining and acquisition. In some families, grandmothers regularly communicate through online resources with their grandchildren to encourage them to speak Russian. Their staying with children families also promotes linguistic progress of grandchildren, but the possibilities for such participation are limited by the length of their stay, which in most cases is relatively short.

The parents make different efforts. Some parents do not spend a lot of time transferring and maintaining the language, but other parents take quite serious measures that can affect the life of the whole family. For example, one of the participants names that one of the main reasons for the fact that her children did not go to kindergarten until three years was *“to maintain the Russian-speaking family, because in any case they will learn Spanish, that is, they will learn and will know it very well”*.

Language transmission requires material and other resources of the family. Classes take time, community meetings can be expensive, most Russian language courses are paid, and some of them are quite expensive for some families.

Active parishioners of the church have additional resources, since they are included in a more cohesive community, and attend church educational programs, such as Russian-language Sunday school and other church-based activities. The space of the church allows women with children of different ages, even with very small ones, to spend time together, while older children attend different classes after Sunday service.

## Conclusion and discussion

This article presents the results of a study of language transmission in small communities of Russian-speaking migrants living in Madrid. The study focuses on the characteristics of the environment, the resources of small communities and families, as well as the motivation of parents, the barriers and difficulties they face, and the strategies they use to overcome them. The methodological framework of the study draws on several areas: migration studies that examine the success and specificity of the language transmission in the context of general trends that occur with migrants in the country of reception (Alba & Nee, 2009; Gall & Meintel, 2015; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001), as well as the works in which different practices of parenting are highlighted and their specificity is explained (King & Fogle, 2006; Lareau, 2003).

The small size of groups of migrants who, to varying degrees, are consumers of the services of Russian-speaking programs or participants in formal or informal meetings and events, makes it possible to describe the communities of Russian-speaking parents as groups of people who develop of- and online face-to face contacts in order to use resources, which these communities (re)/produce. Members of these communities can both share ideas about a certain cultural similarity of its members, and, on the contrary, can perceive them as heterogeneous groups in a cultural sense. They may have different purposes for including in these Russian-language networks. However, in terms of language transmission, they have a number of general trends.

One of the important findings of the study is formulated within the super-diversity – assimilation debate (Alba & Duyvendak, 2017; Crul, 2016; Vertovec, 2017). Super-diversity approach is usually described and applied as an approach that replaced the assimilationist perspective. From its propositions, in modern societies there have been significant changes that have affected both the environments in which migrants settles and the migrants themselves. In particular, according this approach, the diversification of the environment and migrant groups does not allow researchers to talk about assimilation into a certain mainstream. Going beyond an approach that focuses on ethnic communities and groups, makes it possible to discern other attributes that determine to a greater extent what is happening with modern migrants in cities. This research, aimed at studying such a small aspect of all the cultural changes that occur with migrants, as language transmission, enables to some extent to reconcile these two approaches for explaining the current trends observed in the communities of Russian-speaking migrants.

The study demonstrates that the language practices used in Russian-speaking and mixed families are diverse if we take into account only the peculiarities of the parents' language communication, but there is the tendency to acculturation if we describe the intergenerational dynamics.

Using the super-diversity lens to study the language transmission has made it possible to pay attention to various combinations of migrants' attributes, which ultimately determine the existing diversity in the language practices and communicative environments of first-generation migrants. The length of residence in Spain, the migration channel, the employment of women, the socioeconomic status, both individually and in different configurations, are factors that appear to be related to their language repertoire, the degree of proficiency in Spanish and the language preferences, while ethnicity and the sending country are secondary characteristics, and on this level of analysis confirms one of the theses of the super-diversity approach about the need to go beyond the use of ethnic groups as units of analysis.

In addition, in this context, the results of comparing the language repertoires of mixed and Russian-speaking families are also interesting. In the literature, mixed unions are often described as special types of families that are characterized by unique cultural changes (Collet, 2012; Gall & Meintel, 2015).

Despite the fact that there are obvious and fairly predictable differences in the use of language between representatives of these two types of families in this study, in particular, partners in mixed families do not use Russian when they communicate with each other, there are certain important similarities, which lie across borders of the dichotomy of mixedness - the Russian-speaking-ness of a family. Such important indicator of linguistic integration and type of acculturation as knowledge of the language of residence by parents, will depend on other characteristics. In addition, these families have many similarities in difficulties in the transmission of language, in practices and strategies. Thus, for some research issues, the consideration of mixed families as special due to peculiarities of cultural transmission, environment, and the success of integration is not likely to be relevant.

While the super-diversity framework describes well what happens with the first-generation migrants, intergenerational changes in the practices of the use of language are great and this reflects main conclusions of the assimilation theory. Trends that are observed in many families can be described in terms of acculturation. Regardless of the characteristics of families, their status, mixedness/migrationness etc., children of the second and one-and-a-half generations lose their Russian language if their parents do not make special efforts. The environment can be characterized as unfavorable from the point of view of the language transmission primarily due to the lack of sufficient institutional support from the state, a lack of both institutional and social resources of communities, the smallness and dispersion of Russian-speaking migrants. Spanish is evident in the mainstream language, which begins to dominate mainly during the period when the child transits from the family to a kindergarten or school.

The success of the transmission of the heritage language varies from family to family. Undoubtedly, the different characteristics of families also determine the conditions and possibilities for the transmission. For example, active members of the church community have more resources at the expense of cohesion, religious motivation, Sunday school classes and conditions created in the church that allow mothers to spend time with children in a Russian-speaking environment. However, there is a certain set of beliefs and practices that to some extent are found from family to family.

The second important group of conclusions concerns the parenting practices in the studied families. For some families, the language transmission can pervade different areas of life and determine a variety of child-rearing practices and the organization of the life of the family as a whole. The choice of leisure activities, structured programs, the place where the holiday is spent and what the child do during the holiday can be conditioned by the goals of the heritage language transmission and retention. The task of language transmission is not only related, or for some families not so much related with the desire of a cultural

transmission, but with investment in cultural capital. According to many, the Russian language is a valuable resource, and a good parent should devote it to his or her child.

Parents are partly helpless in their irresistible desire to transmit the language to the child. Many women, on the one hand, share the notion of the importance of bilingualism or the need to transmit the language to the child, or even consider it as an integral part of good parenting, possess a number of techniques that are considered important, but in practice they face a lot of difficulties that they cannot overcome. They can receive recommendations from specialists, but do not always understand how they need to follow them. Despite the efforts made in some families, parents fail or start to be satisfied with the limited result. Given that many studies emphasize the benefits of bilingualism and second-generation research in Spain confirms this conclusion (Portes et al., 2016; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001), the question arises of the need to create and develop programs to help families of migrants from small dispersed communities to achieve the goal of language transmission.

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