



*Invitation to all faculty, staff and students*

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## **Family language policies in Quebec: How and why parents raise multilingual children**

**Presented by Ruth Kircher**

Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning / Fryske Akademy, Leeuwarden, Netherlands

**Wednesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022**

**11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.**

The Quebec population consists not only of a French-speaking majority but it also comprises a sizeable English-speaking minority and a multitude of heritage language speakers. Many Quebecers thus raise their children with multiple languages in the home. In recent years, family language policy has emerged as an effective lens through which multilingual child-rearing can be studied. Like language policy research more generally, the study of family language policies focuses on language beliefs, language practices, and language management. This talk will center on two studies of family language policies. In the first study, interviews and focus groups were conducted among 27 parents in Quebec's urban center, Montreal, who were raising an infant/toddler with multiple languages in the home. This study yielded qualitative data pertaining to parents' language beliefs, language practices, and language management (and more specifically, their needs with regard to resources to facilitate language transmission). Based on the findings from the first study, a questionnaire was designed and used to collect qualitative as well as quantitative data from more than 800 parents across the entire province, all of whom were raising infants/toddlers with multiple languages in the home. The results from the second study provide a broader overview of family language policies in Quebec as well as more nuanced insights regarding language beliefs and language management. The discussion of the results will shed light on how this research contributes to theory as well as laying the groundwork for the development of appropriate measures to support families who wish to raise their children multilingually.

Ruth Kircher (PhD, Queen Mary University of London) is a researcher at the Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning, which is part of the Fryske Akademy in Leeuwarden, Netherlands. Her research focuses on societal multilingualism, with a particular interest in language attitudes and ideologies, language practices, and language policy and planning – especially in relation to minority language communities.