

Chapter 10

Unity in Discourse, Diversity in Practice: The One Person One Language Policy in Bilingual Families

Åsa Palviainen and Sally Boyd

10.1 Introduction

When parents with different first languages have a child, the question arises as to what language or languages the new family should use.¹ Most parents wish for their child to learn both their first languages (Tuominen 1999). There exists a large body of literature on language strategies used in raising children bilingually. These include scientific studies (e.g. Döpke 1992; Lanza 1997; Juan-Garau and Pérez-Vidal 2001; Barron-Hauwaert 2004; De Houwer 2009) as well as more popularly oriented literature, such as parental guides (e.g. Saunders 1988; Arnberg 1988; Baker 2000; Harding-Esch and Riley 2003; Cunningham-Andersson and Andersson 2004). Typically, researchers as well as parents seek to find a strategy which optimizes bilingual language proficiency outcomes. A common strategy intended to achieve this is that the parents each consistently speak their first language to their child; this is known as the one person – one language (OPOL) strategy (Ronjat 1913; Leopold 1970).

However, as we will see below, it is rare that families who say they use the OPOL strategy actually strictly adhere to it in everyday life. This fact shows the complexity of the issue, which has also been pointed out by Schwartz (2010, p. 177):

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Å. Palviainen (✉)

Department of Languages, University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä, Finland
e-mail: asa.palviainen@jyu.fi

S. Boyd

Department of Languages, University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä, Finland

Department of Philosophy, Linguistics and Theory of Science,
University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg, Sweden
e-mail: sally@ling.gu.se

“...the declared language ideology of one or both parents does not necessarily coincide with the strategies followed consciously or unconsciously in language practice with children”. The study of family language policy thus needs to take into account not only what beliefs and ideologies the family members have and efforts they make to accomplish certain goals, by e.g. applying OPOL, but also what they do with language in day-to-day interactions (King et al. 2008). Both laymen and researchers who advise using this strategy to achieve bilingualism rarely discuss situations that might lead to departures from this general OPOL rule, as well as the ways children themselves become agents in the family’s language strategy or policy (Luykx 2005; Gafaranga 2010).

This study aims at understanding and describing how a language policy is co-constructed, by its members, within three different bilingual Swedish-Finnish families in a Finnish-speaking part of Finland, i.e. at a certain point in time and space. The parents have different first languages but all are bilingual in varying degrees. The families have a 3–4 year old child at the time of data collection, who is raised bilingually reportedly using the OPOL policy. The aim is not primarily to search for relationships between applications of OPOL and their bilingual outcomes for this child, but rather to analyze how the family members explain, give support for and enact their policies. More specifically, we are interested in identifying the commonalities of the FLP’s as co-constructed by the three families, as well as differences among them.

10.2 FLP as a Semi-planned, Dynamic and Jointly Constructed Enterprise

King et al. (2008, p. 907) define family language policy as “explicit (Shohamy 2006) and overt (Schiffman 1996) planning in relation to language use within the home among family members”. Although language planning is usually seen as something carried out by states, language planning can thus also be performed by individuals and apply to a family context (Piller 2001). Piller (2001, p. 62) uses the term ‘private language planning’ to refer to “language planning practices of individuals, specifically parents who plan the linguistic future of the children”. She is drawing on Grosjean (1982) who talked about childhood bilingualism as “a planned affair” and of a “planned bilingualism in the family” in referring to parents who make a conscious decision to raise their children bilingually.

The word planning indeed implies that policies regarding language use are made explicitly by the parents (or other individuals or states), to achieve a certain goal. However, we suggest, and attempt to demonstrate, that many of the decisions and practices performed as part of the creation and maintenance of an FLP are not necessarily explicit, overt or planned. As Schwartz (2010, p. 180) reports, family decisions of language use within bilingual families “do not always involve clear processes and arise at times spontaneously, without discussion.” Schwartz also refers to Spolsky and Shohamy (1999) who contend that the absence of an explicit

decision concerning initial language choice in communication with the children may be interpreted as the absence of a *conscious and motivated* FLP [our italics]. In this study, we will use the term FLP in a broader sense than in the definition provided by King et al. (2008), and include also less explicit, less overt and less conscious language decisions and practices in a family as part of FLP.

The environment in which the family and its policy are situated has an important impact on FLP and the child's bilingualism in relation to it. Most studies of early simultaneous bilingual language development, from Ronjat (1913) and Leopold (1970) onwards, tend to focus on the unfolding language competence of the individual child. Snow and Ferguson (1977) began a strong strand of research focusing on interaction between parents and children in monolingual development. Lanza (1997) and others have extended this research to early bilingualism. We believe that further research in this area needs to take more consideration of the wider sociolinguistic context of the bi-/ or multilingual child's language development as recent studies of FLP have begun to do (e.g. King et al. 2008). This wider context includes the status of different languages in the national and local area where the child is growing up, the language policy (in the broad sense) of various institutional contexts in which the child may spend time (e.g. daycare, public play environments, religious contexts) and family and private interactions outside of the nuclear family, including both grandparents and other relatives, adult interlocutors, siblings and age peers.

It is also well known that the language use and language policy in the family may change in response to changes in the external context: the move from one area to another, a summer stay in another country (Lanza 1997), the visit of a monolingual relative, the birth of a sibling, new friends (Lanza and Svendsen 2007), starting pre-school (Lanza 1997) or school (Juan-Garau and Pérez-Vidal 2001), the family's changing language proficiencies and preferences (Tuominen 1999; Luykx 2005). It is certainly possible to attempt to describe the FLP of a family at a certain point in time, while FLP's may also remain relatively stable over a longer period of time. However, a FLP is by its very nature dynamic and fluctuating and subject to re-negotiation during the ongoing life of a family. Rontu (2005) shows, for example, how FLP, dominance and code-switching strategies change over time in her longitudinal study of two Finnish-Swedish bilingual families.

In this chapter, space does not allow us to take all these important actors and contexts involved in early childhood multilingualism into consideration in describing the three families' language policies. However, we include a short description of the language situation in bilingual Finland, as well as short descriptions of how the six parents acquired and learned Finnish and Swedish, which provides some context for the bilingual development of the three children who are in focus in this study. Moreover, although research literature, and particularly parental guides, often point to the importance of the parents' decision-making for language use in bilingual families, there are also studies acknowledging the role of children in forming FLP's (cf. Tuominen 1999; Luykx 2005; Gafaranga 2010). In this study, we see the children in the families as important participants and co-constructors of the FLP. Their role will be particularly evident in our analysis of the examples of interaction in the family.

10.3 Language Strategies as Part of FLP

Importantly, language strategies such as OPOL – whether consciously employed or not – are not the same thing as FLP, but a part of it. Cross (2009, p. 28), working within a Vygotskian sociocultural framework, suggests that policy functions as a mediating tool between “a broader macrocontext for human activity that then unfolds within the microcontextual domain as actual, concrete practice”. In other words, certain language strategies may help a family in navigating the language use in everyday practice and are at the same time “manifestations of values, attitudes, and understandings of those who use them” (Cross 2009, p. 30). Despite this inherent dynamism and complexity, Piller (2001, p. 63) contends that the identification of parental strategies has tended to be only a side-issue in literature on childhood bilingualism and “a back-drop against which the child’s bilingualism acquisition occurs”. The very use of the term *parental strategies* also points to a previous focus on strategies employed only by *parents*. Again, it should be pointed out that the mono-/bilingual nature of the parent–child interaction is mutually constructed and not completely controlled by the parent’s choice (Mishina-Mori 2011). Also this thinking tends to neglect the importance of the wider context of family interaction.

Piller (2001), summarizing previous studies, distinguishes between four major types of language strategy that may be employed in a variety of bilingual settings, (disregarding the distinction between native- and non-native speaking parents): One person – one language (OPOL), Home language vs. community language, Code-switching and language mixing and Consecutive introduction of the two languages (see also e.g. Romaine 1995; Grosjean 2010). Clearly, the OPOL strategy is the best-known one among bilingual families as well as among educators and has become axiomatic in recommendations from both professional and lay sources. Parents with different first languages (at least when they come from the middle class and Western society) tend to consider it to be the most natural strategy and the best way to balanced bilingualism in the child, especially, but not only, when the parents have different language backgrounds (Piller 2001, p. 65). Beginning with the classical study of Ronjat (1913), studies on early bilingual language development of children in families employing the OPOL strategy by far outnumber studies where other parental strategies are used (e.g. Döpke 1992; Lanza 1997; Barron-Hauwaert 2004). However, two surveys presented by De Houwer (2009, pp. 110–111), comprising over 1,500 bilingual families in Flanders (De Houwer 2007) and Japan (Yamamoto 2001), showed that strict use of OPOL was rare. Rather, the two most common patterns of language use reported in bilingual families were that both parents addressed children in the same two languages, and a pattern where one parent addressed children using only one language, while the other parent used the same language plus another one. OPOL turned up as only the third most commonly reported strategy. Moreover, De Houwer (2009, p. 109) shows that parents who generally adhere to the OPOL strategy report occasionally switching languages or using mixed utterances. Hence, in practice, it is probably very rare that families strictly apply OPOL (if this is indeed possible), but they may use the strategy as a main principle to follow and a tool to use in the everyday family language practice.

Piller (2001) examined parental arguments and discussions about how to raise a child bilingually by collecting naturally-occurring, written and published data from English-medium parental newsletters and internet sites based in Germany. In addition, she interviewed 51 couples, most of whom lived in a German-speaking or an English-speaking country. She found four major themes in the discourses used by the parents. First, *childhood bilingualism as an investment*, where early bilingual language acquisition was regarded to happen without effort and result in “native-like” proficiency in both languages. Early bilingualism was then seen as a gift, an investment in the future of the children and as an “asset”. Second, *the importance of the consistent application of a strategy*, where the necessity of being strict and consistent in the application of a certain language strategy is pronounced, often by using adverbs such as “always” and “never”. The third issue brought up by parents which is related to the first theme, was *the importance of starting at an early age*. There was a strong belief expressed, that in order for languages to develop “unconsciously” and “naturally”, the children should receive bilingual input from as early an age as possible, preferably from birth. If exposed to language only at a later point, the argument goes that the process of language learning will include much more of conscious effort. Finally, there was a theme of *balanced bilingualism as the expected outcome and measure of success*. The common assumption was that, “if the parents do the right thing, their children will be highly proficient, balanced bilinguals” (Piller 2001, p. 76).

The issues raised by the parents in Piller’s study are commonly recurring discourses in society but the parental views are not necessarily grounded in research. Piller as well as King and Fogle (2006) show how parents draw on the experiences of other families (e.g. family acquaintances, internet sites and newsletters), parental guides and popular literature, but understandably only rarely or very selectively on research literature (Moin et al. 2013). This may lead to unrealistic expectations, disappointment and self-doubt when goals based on popularized views are not achieved, for example, if OPOL does not seem to lead to balanced bilingualism. It was also commonly the case that parents’ own personal experiences with language learning tend to be of importance for how decisions on language use are made (King and Fogle 2006). As we shall see, this was also the case in the families in our study.

In order to describe a family’s language policy, there is thus a need to analyze on the one hand language strategies as a reflex of the language ideology, social context and personal experiences of the family members, and on the other hand, how these language strategies are enacted in interaction. There is need for a structural, but at the same time flexible and dynamic framework integrating the separate components of language beliefs or ideologies, language practices and efforts of language management (Schwartz 2010, p. 172). For this purpose, we use nexus analysis (Scollon and Scollon 2004), which can be regarded as a discourse analytical tool of meta-methodology (Hult 2010), primarily used within ethnographic sociolinguistics. Although nexus analysis has been used in other areas of research, this is the first major attempt at using it for family language policy; we would like to show its potential for research in this area.

10.4 Co-construction of FLP as a Nexus Point

The core of nexus analysis is to identify social actions and, to find the crucial actors carrying out these actions, to observe the interaction order and to determine the most significant recurring discourses in the actions (Scollon and Scollon 2004, p. 154). The social action – the nexus – to be examined in this study is thus the co-construction of an FLP, and especially the role of OPOL in it. The empirical materials to be used are parental interviews in combination with audio-recordings of everyday interaction in the families.

Nexus analysis is about understanding how people, objects, and discourses circulate through a certain identified nexus and how these are linked together (Scollon and Scollon 2004, p. viii). In nexus analysis, social action, i.e. “any action taken by an individual with reference to a social network” (Scollon and Scollon 2004, p. 11), is at the core. However, although a social action may be thought of as a single unique moment, such as a teacher handing over an exam paper to a student in a university class, social action can be interpreted flexibly and in a wider sense, depending on the research perspective and the social issue of interest. The nexus might, for instance, refer to a newspaper debate with many actors (Boyd and Palviainen *under review*), policy implementations (Hult 2010) or a multilingual site (Pietikäinen 2010). King et al. (2008) refer to the bilingual family in the latter sense:

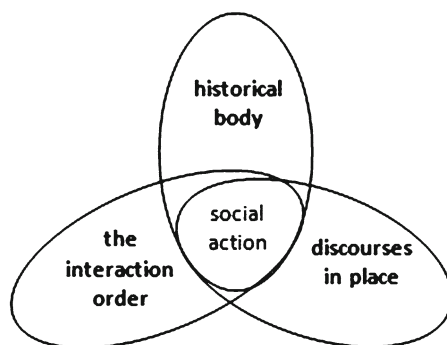
The family unit, therefore, can be seen as a site in which language ideologies are both formed and enacted through caregiver-child interactions. It is within the family unit, and particularly bi- or multilingual families, that macro- and micro-processes can be examined as dominant ideologies intersect and compete with local or individual views on language and parenting. (King et al. 2008, p. 914).

This characterization of the family unit as a site where macro- and micro-processes intersect illustrates very well the idea of nexus: “[B]roader social issues are ultimately grounded in the micro-actions of social interaction and, conversely, the most mundane of micro-actions are nexus through which the largest cycles of social organization and activity circulate” (Scollon and Scollon 2004, p. 8).

The nexus of this study is a joint social action, rather than a site. This means that we analyze the acts of negotiating FLP among individual family members. The joint social action – the nexus – is thus referred to as the *co-construction of FLP by the family members at a certain point in time and space*. Importantly, a nexus is built up by many social actions and aggregates of discourses and is in that sense multi-layered. For all nexuses and social actions it is the case that that they occur at the intersection of *the historical body* of the participants, *the interaction order* and *the discourses in place* (see Fig. 10.1).

The *historical body* refers to the history of personal experience, beliefs and attitudes within an individual engaging in a certain action. In our study, this refers to all members of the family, including the children, and may be previous experiences of and beliefs about language use and learning. These are not necessarily linguistically encoded, explicitly formulated or even conscious, but play a role for how the social

Fig. 10.1 The three elements of social action (Scollon and Scollon 2004, p. 154)



action is carried out. The concept of *interaction order* is based on Goffman's work (e.g. 1983) and will in this study refer to family language practice, such as interactional rules, expectations and norms, e.g. who speaks what language, when, where and how. The use of OPOL as a language strategy is an example of an interaction order which the participants may follow or reject. The environment – the home, the daycare center, the supermarket etc. – is part of the interaction order, as well the participants in the interaction and whether the talk takes place around the dinner table or while playing a game. The *discourses in place* (henceforth DIP) refer in Scollon and Scollon's terms to all types of discourses circulating through a nexus (including for instance materials, tools, pictures) but we will use discourses in a more linguistic sense in this study. DIP in this study refers to explicit discourses about strategies (i.e. about the interaction order) and beliefs (historical body). The parental discourses provided in Piller (2001) and Schwartz et al. (2011) seem to be examples of DIP in this sense.

10.5 Finland – A Bilingual State by Constitution

In order to understand the context of the study, it is important to know that Finnish- and Swedish-speakers have lived in what today is Finland since at least the twelfth-century (McRae 2007, p. 14). The area was an integral part of the Swedish realm for six centuries, until it became an autonomous Grand Duchy under the Russian czars in 1809. Finland gained its independence just over 100 years later, in 1917, in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution. Swedish was the language of administration during the long period of unity with Sweden; during the century of Russian domination, Finnish developed into a modern all-purpose language prior to independence. Although Swedish was the first language of only about 13 % of the population, by the time Finland gained independence, Swedish and Finnish were given equal status in the first Finnish constitution of 1919. The original Language Act, which regulates the use of the two languages, dates from 1922 and the equal status for Swedish and Finnish was confirmed in the renewal of the Language Act of 2004.

Each individual in Finland is assigned a linguistic affiliation (in terms of ‘mother tongue’) by his or her parents shortly after birth (or reported by the individual when settling in Finland, in the case of immigration). The population as a whole is currently about 90 % Finnish-speaking and 5.4 % Swedish-speaking (Statistics Finland 2012).² These numbers however must be interpreted with caution, since each person is only allowed to report one language. Although the proportion of Swedish-speakers has decreased over time in the census, the number of bilingual Finnish-Swedish speakers, i.e. persons growing up in families where the parents officially have different mother tongues, has increased (Tandefelt and Finnäs 2007). The census also serves as a base for the language policy of municipalities. If the proportion of Swedish-speakers is above 8 % in a town or municipality, it is categorized as bilingual. If the proportion falls under 6 %, it is categorized as monolingual Finnish. The rights to use language and to be given service in one’s preferred language are guaranteed in bilingual municipalities and towns, while these services are limited to the majority in monolingual ones. Currently only the Åland islands and three small municipalities on the west coast are monolingual Swedish-speaking, whereas 30 are bilingual and the remaining 287 of Finland’s 336 municipalities are monolingual Finnish.

The municipality where the families in this study live is situated in an officially monolingual Finnish-speaking community, with a very low proportion of Swedish-speakers. Despite this low proportion, there is Swedish-medium daycare available, as well as a Swedish-medium compulsory school (through grade 9). This means that the curriculum specifies that instruction should be in Swedish only; in practice, Finnish is used to varying degrees in Swedish-medium pre-schools and schools. The option of education in Swedish is thus available, not only in Swedish and bilingual communities, but also to some extent elsewhere. However, the area where the study takes place is very much dominated by Finnish and everyday contact with municipal service, such as e.g. healthcare or service in shops and so on in Swedish is very limited. To reproduce a discourse often heard: “you never hear Swedish in the streets here”.

The system of “parallel monolingualism” (Heller 1999) in Finland, and the bilingual policy on the state level aiming at maintaining the two languages in Finland and allowing monolingual life styles on the individual level, means that the Swedish-speaking minority in Finland enjoys a high level of institutional completeness, to use Giles, Bourhis and Taylor’s (1977) term. The maintenance of this situation is due to the constitutional protection of both languages’ equal status; details of the language policy are debated with regular intervals, but the basic rights of both groups are only rarely seriously challenged. No political party has as part of its platform to make Finnish the only official language, although a couple of right-wing parties question some current policies such as the obligatory study of Swedish for Finnish-speakers and requirements of bilingualism for some civil service jobs (see e.g. Palviainen 2013; Hult and Pietikäinen 2014). In sum, it can be said that both

²Here and later, “Swedish-speaker” and “Finnish-speaker” refer to persons who have registered themselves as such in conjunction with the Finnish census.

languages enjoy relatively high status and bilingualism is, in general, positively valued, particularly among the better educated and among Swedish-speakers. At the same time, Swedish-speakers feel uneasy about the long-term future of their language in Finland, due to the steady decrease in the number of persons who register as Swedish-speakers in the census, the steadily decreasing number of Swedish monolingual or bilingual municipalities and the perennial challenges to the high level of institutional support for the Swedish-speaking minority.

10.6 Method

10.6.1 *Data Collection Procedures*

The families in this study were recruited through the Swedish-speaking daycare center in the city. The criteria for participation in the study were that there should be one child in the age of 3–4 years, one of the parents should have Swedish as his/her L1 and the other Finnish and they should express the goal of raising their child/children bilingually. Three families accepted to participate in the study. The data collection took place in two steps: first, an interview and second audio-recordings of everyday situations in the home setting.

Parents were interviewed by two researchers (Lehtonen and Valli 2012), in the homes of the families. Both parents in each family participated in the interviews and they could decide themselves which language to use in the interview; one family chose to perform the interview in Swedish and the other two in Finnish. The interview was semi-structured and had three major themes: background of the parents and their own language identities; the use of Swedish/Finnish in the family and in the environment; and the parents' beliefs on language identities of their child and the child's future. The children were also present in the interview situation but they were not actively involved in the interview. The interviews lasted for approximately 1 h and were tape-recorded and later transcribed. After the interview, tape-recorders were provided for the families and they were asked, during a 2-week-period, to record typical everyday situations at home. They were instructed to record at least two different types of situations; one by the dinner table with the whole family present and one play situation where the child was playing with a sibling or a friend. Besides these recommended situations, the recordings also covered situations of the families' own choice, such as book reading with a parent, playing board games, a family party and visiting grandparents. The number of recordings was evenly distributed among the families: 12 from family I, 10 from family S, and 13 from family L. The recordings varied in length, between 1 and 49 min, and in quality. Approximately 6 h of recorded interaction was analyzed. For the purpose of this chapter, one transcribed example of interaction from families I and M each, and two examples from family S, were selected to illustrate negotiations of interaction orders and child agency.

Table 10.1 Characteristics of the families by the time of the data collection (Data on target children in boldface)

	Children (Name of target child)	Age of children (years; months)	Start in pre-school (years; months)	Mother	Father
				L1	L1
Family I	girl (Ida) boy	3;4 5;0	3;0 4;8	Swedish (and Finnish)	Finnish
Family S	girl (Sara) boy	3;9 2;0	1;6 1;6	Swedish	Finnish
Family L	boy (Luka)	4;0	3;0	Finnish	Swedish and Finnish

10.6.2 *Participants*

By the time of the data collection, the target children were between 3 years and 4 months and 4 years old and two out of the three had a sibling (see Table 10.1).

The parents of the families had different backgrounds. Ida's mother grew up in a municipality on the west coast of Finland, where Swedish-speakers were in the majority. She reported two first languages – Swedish and Finnish – but the home language was Swedish as the father did not speak Finnish. Most of the extended family members were also Swedish-speakers. They spoke a dialect which differs in many respects from standard varieties of Finland-Swedish. She went to a Swedish-medium school, taking Finnish as a foreign language from Grade 3, at 9 years of age. Ida's father grew up in a monolingual Finnish-speaking area, in a monolingual Finnish-speaking family where Swedish was rarely heard or used. He attended a Finnish-medium school and studied Swedish only as a mandatory school-subject from Grade 7 (at 13 years of age). At the time when Ida's parents met, they moved together to a Finnish-speaking city and started their university studies. Ida's mother improved her Finnish skills considerably during this period. The parents then moved to another European country for a couple of years, where Ida's big brother was born, and then returned to the Finnish-speaking municipality where they live now. Ida was born soon after their return to Finland. The mother stayed home with the children until Ida was 3 years old and the brother about to turn 5, when both children started at the Swedish-speaking daycare center.

Sara's mother grew up in western part of Sweden in a Swedish-speaking environment³ and before meeting Sara's father she had no particular connections with Finland or with Finnish-speakers. Sara's father grew up in a monolingual Finnish-speaking municipality and environment, and attended a Finnish-medium

³The variety of Swedish spoken in western Sweden and the standard variety of Swedish spoken in Finland are fully mutually intelligible. Both varieties have relatively high status. One of the varieties spoken by Ida's mother, however, is quite different from these varieties, and many speakers of other varieties of Swedish would find it difficult to understand it fully. It still enjoys high status, however, as a "genuine" dialect of Finland Swedish.

school. He studied Swedish as a school subject for 6 years but before meeting Sara's mother, but he did not actively use Swedish. After Sara's mother and father met, they moved to Sweden and stayed there for about 5 years. Sara was born during this period and she was about 1 year old when the family moved to Helsinki in Finland – officially a bilingual municipality – for half a year, before they moved to the current monolingual Finnish-speaking municipality. Sara's little brother was born soon after moving to Finland. Sara attended the Swedish-speaking daycare from the age of one and a half years, part-time, and eventually, by 3 years of age, full-time. Sara's little brother attended the same daycare.

Luka's mother came from a Finnish-speaking family and attended a Finnish-medium school. She studied Swedish as a foreign language from Grade 3 (at 9 years of age) and had bilingual friends, but she reported that the language of her childhood was mainly Finnish. Luka's father grew up in a bilingual home. The mother in the family – Luka's grandmother – had Swedish as her mother tongue and the father – Luka's grandfather – Finnish. In Luka's father's home, the parents used Finnish with each other but both used Swedish with the children. The siblings used Swedish with each other. Luka's father attended a Swedish-medium school and took Finnish-classes intended for mother tongue-speakers all the time he attended school. He had Swedish-speaking friends at primary school, and although the friends often used Finnish when talking to each other, he always used Swedish. Luka was born when his parents still lived in this village and when Luka turned three, the family moved to the monolingual Finnish-speaking city where the study was carried out. By the time of the study, Luka had attended the Swedish-speaking daycare there for 1 year.

10.7 Results and Discussion

The results of the nexus analysis will be presented in three parts. First, the language practices of the families, as the parents explicitly reported on them in the interviews, will be presented. The analysis also includes the parents' reports on how and why interaction orders have changed over time. Second, the discourses the parents used in the interviews to motivate the interaction orders are analyzed as discourses in place (DIP). These DIP's are analyzed as a reflex of the historical bodies (including beliefs, attitudes and personal experiences and ideologies). Third, the negotiations of interaction orders are analyzed through transcripts of tape-recorded interactions between family members. In particular, the children's active role in the negotiation of interaction orders is examined.

10.7.1 *Interaction Orders as Described by the Parents*

The analysis of the current OPOL interaction order in the families need to be seen in the light of the fact that four of the six parents in the study – all except for Luka's

father and to a certain extent Ida's mother – grew up in families where only one language was used as the means of communication. At the same time, all except for Sara's mother (who grew up in Sweden) came in contact with both languages to some extent during childhood. When they met their spouses, there were thus at least two shared languages in two of three families – Swedish and Finnish – and for all three families, over time, the proficiency in the less dominant language improved for all parents. Ida's as well as Luka's parents reported that the joint language mostly used in their communication was Finnish. However, Swedish was reported to be used occasionally, in certain situations and for certain purposes. Since Sara's mother did not know any Finnish when she met her spouse, the interaction order between her and Sara's father changed considerably over time: The common language in the beginning of their relationship was English, which later became Swedish mixed with English when they moved to Sweden and Sara's father needed Swedish at work. After moving to Finland, Sara's mother reported that she actively worked on learning Finnish (taking some courses, using Finnish at work and with friends) and by the time of the study, the parents reported to use “about 70 % Finnish and 30 % Swedish” in their joint communication.

It should be noted that we did not explicitly ask in the interview for a description of possible changes in the joint communication habits over time. But the parents themselves were eager to explain that their use had shifted its nature over time, depending on factors such as where they lived, their own and the spouse's language proficiency and the shifting language requirements at work. The interaction order over time had thus been organic, changing its shape due to individual factors, dynamics within the relationships of the parents and outer circumstances. Although the interview aimed to find out what the current interaction order of the families was, the parents all seemed to have a need for explaining and describing its historical body. Moreover, except for Sara's mother who made an active decision to learn Finnish when moving to Finland and therefore deliberately introduced Finnish in the joint communication with Sara's father, the agreements of language use between the parents seem to have appeared automatically and with no major discussion or planning of language use (for similar findings, see Okita 2002).

The birth of the children introduced further dynamics into the interaction orders. In Ida's and Luka's families, where the joint language of the parents was Finnish, Swedish enjoyed a more prominent role than before. All three families were explicit about making use of a principle which demanded that one parent speak Finnish to and with the child and the other Swedish. In other words, they applied an OPOL policy. In Sara's family, the parents reported that they strictly adhered to this policy, using the adverbs found by Piller (2001; see above): “and n-e-v-e-r that we have mixed the languages, we have been really strict with that” whereas Luka's parents reported that they basically followed the OPOL principle, but with some exceptions, for example that Luka's Finnish-speaking mother sometimes read books for Luka in Swedish. In Ida's family, planning and use of languages had been a more complex issue, since Ida's mother had to make a conscious decision on whether to speak her dialect or standard Finland Swedish with the children. As with Luka's parents, they sometimes deviated from the OPOL policy, for instance when reading books.

They also reported on changes in their language strategies over time; they reported being more strict in applying OPOL when the oldest child Mattias was born, whereas they were more flexible with the younger one, Ida. The mother said she used to be very consistent in repeating a word in Swedish if Mattias said something in Finnish, but that she found it a too exhausting strategy when the second child, Ida, was born: "It's too much trouble now" (in Finnish: "Nyt ei enää jaksa"). Moreover, she explained the changes in strategies as a result of the OPOL principle being easier to stick to when the family lived abroad where there were neither Finnish-speakers nor Swedish-speakers around. When they moved back to Finland and the Finnish-speaking environment, and Ida was born, the mother sometimes used Finnish in speaking to the children: "For instance, in the playground, it often happened that I switched to Finnish if there were only Finnish-speaking children around". After Ida's mother became a bit worried about Ida's Swedish competence, she said that she started to be more consistent in her use of Swedish with her. She thus made an explicit decision to change the interaction order as she felt it was necessary for Ida's language development.

Ida was, according to her parents, "well on her way to becoming as proficient in Swedish as she is in Finnish". She was reported to mix the languages to a great extent. By the time of the study, Ida had only recently started to speak Swedish in response to her mother. Sara's parents reported that Sara's proficiency and use of the two languages had varied over time. Her strongest language used to be Finnish but her use of Swedish had recently increased and improved. Sara could sometimes switch to Finnish when speaking Swedish, but parents reported that she never switched in the opposite direction. The oldest child in the study, Luka, spent his first 3 years in a language environment dominated by Swedish and his Swedish was very strong. During the year in the Finnish-speaking municipality, Luka's Finnish proficiency had improved and Finnish then enjoyed a more prominent role in the whole family. Luka's parents reported on Luka himself being strict on the OPOL principle: "He doesn't like at all if I [the mother] speak Swedish with him. Mother ought to speak mother's language and father ought to speak father's language." This is in accordance with what Baker (2000) refers to as the child creating *language boundaries* where a language is associated with certain individuals, contexts or situations and that the crossing of these boundaries may cause the child to react. Code-switching was, according to the parents, rare in Luka's speech; it only occurred when Finnish- as well as Swedish-speakers were present in the speech situation, and for some vocabulary items, which he knew better in one of the languages.

Ida's and her brother's play-language was usually Finnish. Sara and her brother, in contrast, typically spoke Swedish when playing together. Both pairs of siblings were however reported to change the language of play communication sometimes, and even mix languages. All families also reported on communication with extended family members, which basically followed the OPOL principle. However, in the main, the uses of languages were in all three families reported to be flexible and pragmatic depending on the physical and social speech context (see also Doyle 2013; Kopeliovich 2013), and as the example given above of Ida's mother changing and adapting her language strategies in interaction with her daughter, the language

practices also changed over time. All participants in the study – parents as well as children – were flexibly using both languages in their everyday context, challenging and contesting the static notion of one person speaking only one language.

10.7.2 Discourses in Place about Interaction Orders

The DIP's brought up by the parents were basically of two types: on the one hand, motivations behind the interaction orders of the families and, on the other hand, discourses around the advantages of the child being bilingual. Notably, although the parents admit that there were challenges involved in raising their children bilingually which they had to face, they all took it more or less for granted that the interaction orders employed would lead to bilingualism in the child.

There were three recurring discourses within the first strand of discourse: motivations for applying the OPOL principle. The first of these was that many parents expressed the idea that the application of OPOL from the birth of the child was a completely natural and basically unconscious process. The OPOL principle was thus not explicitly planned, discussed or decided upon in connection with the birth of the children. Sara's parents said that they deliberately made use of the two languages but never made an *explicit decision* on the strategy. Luka's mother expressed it as "I think that it has been just like a *natural thing* to do. That if there are two languages present they should of course be used". Ida's father pointed out that "it was not a decision made [that the mother speaks Swedish and the father Finnish], but it came *automatically*". Ida's mother agreed saying that the OPOL principle came naturally, "*by itself*". In all three families, the interaction orders being applied after the birth of the children were thus not about explicit and overt language planning, but something that they parents found natural (Schwartz et al. 2011). Notably, what felt most natural to all the parents was to use their mother tongue with the children, regardless of their pattern of language use with other interlocutors, including their spouses.

The second discourse connected with motivations concerned the language ecologies and dominance relations, more specifically the quantity of language input available in the local community. The parents were aware of and concerned by the dominance of Finnish – the majority language – in the surrounding environment and therefore made active choices so as to increase the amount of Swedish the child heard in her/his daily life. Thus, efforts to assure sufficient interaction with and in Swedish outside the home, were intentionally made (cf. Schwartz et al. 2011). For example, regular contacts with Swedish-speaking relatives were considered important. The parents had particularly strong beliefs on the importance of Swedish as the medium of daycare and (in the future) school. They had actively chosen the Swedish-medium daycare center instead of Finnish-medium alternatives closer to home. Luka's parents even said that if there hadn't been Swedish-medium daycare available, Luka would have stayed home with his Swedish-speaking father, in order to develop his Swedish skills. Sara's mother pointed out that "the daycare is the only

place here where the kids can use Swedish outside the home". Ida's mother expressed her concern that the Swedish skills of the children would weaken if they attended a Finnish-medium school, instead of a Swedish-medium school. Ida's father confirmed the importance of daycare in Swedish: "In any case, living in a Finnish-speaking area now, Finnish won't disappear in any case. If it's possible to get Swedish into the picture, that's just good." All three families entertained the possibility they may move (back) to Swedish-speaking areas in the future in order to increase the contacts with Swedish and improve their children's proficiency in Swedish. Considering that the parents discussed the importance of interaction in both languages at length and that they saw a potential risk that the minority language (Swedish) should not develop as well as the majority language (Finnish), it may come as a surprise that none of them questioned that the language used between the parents in all families, in the home, was currently the majority language (Finnish). In one family, it had even changed from Swedish to Finnish.

A third type of discourse regarding motivations concerned references to social networks, expertise and other sources of information about bilingual development (cf. Piller 2001; King and Fogle 2006). The families expressed the belief that the social environment – including the extended family members – supported their OPOL policy. Sara's mother had experiences from working in a Swedish-medium preschool in another part of Finland and there she learned "how important continuity is in raising bilingual children" (cf. Piller 2001). She also "read somewhere that there is no limit to how many languages a child can learn simultaneously". Luka's parents and their OPOL policy had been appraised at the early childhood health clinic but they also had experiences of people warning them that raising children with two languages simultaneously may result in stuttering problems. Further, Ida's mother had heard from others that applying the OPOL strategy may result in delay in language development. Ida's mother referred to choices of other families as 'negative' examples (in this case, Swedish-speaking families choosing Finnish-medium schools for their children): "I know of Swedish-speaking families where Finnish has taken over completely". Similarly, Sara's mother had noticed that "Swedish-speaking parents who start to speak Finnish will forget their mother tongue and as a result, the children won't learn that language [Swedish]." The contrasting of one's own approaches with those of other families in order to motivate one's own practices was also found by King and Fogle (2006).

The second major theme of the DIP's was to argue for child bilingualism. Within this theme, there were three distinct discourse cycles appearing in all families. First, childhood bilingualism was seen as *a gift*, that it was a *natural and easy thing to learn two languages* at an early age and that the child *receives* two languages *for free*. Discourses like these were also found in Piller (2001). Within the same discourse cycle an often (in Finnish contexts) repeated expression was also reproduced: *bilingualism is richness* (in Finnish: "kaksikielisyys on rikkaus"). Second, and related to the first discourse cycle, was the belief that bilingual competence *facilitates learning other languages* at a later age. Finally, the parents found bilingualism an important key and door-opener to the future. The child would be able to choose between different schools and educational programmes,

having advantages in applying for jobs, and be able to choose where to live (Finnish-speaking, Swedish-speaking or bilingual parts of Finland or in Sweden). Thus we can see a combination of arguments based on current lay thinking ('bilingualism is richness', i.e. intrinsically good) with arguments based on research ('facilitates the learning of other languages') with arguments based on future economic and educational advantages.

10.7.3 *Interaction Orders Enacted*

In the interviews the interaction orders and historical bodies of all family members – including the children – were reflected on and represented only by the parents. In the following part of the nexus analysis, the interaction orders as they were *enacted* by the families will be analyzed, with particular reference to child agency (Tuominen 1999; Gafaranga 2010). The analyses of family language policy enactments and child agency will here be presented for the three children in turn: *Ida*, *Luka* and *Sara*.

Ida In Example 10.1, Ida is reading a book written in Swedish together with her Finnish-speaking father. The father uses both Finnish and Swedish, as does Ida.

The dialogue reveals that Ida is very familiar with the text in the book (cf. lines 03, 05 and 07). Ida gives a reprimand to the father as he changes the wording and after he corrects himself, she confirms his correction (lines 10–13). The father then admits that it may be that Ida's Swedish-speaking mother "knows this [book] better" (line 14). The contextual speech in the dialogue is completely performed in Finnish, by the father as well as by Ida. The embedded use of Swedish in the dialogue is instead used for a specific purpose. This pattern confirms what the parents reported in the interview: that Ida rarely reacts if the parents use "the wrong language" – i.e. a violation of the OPOL strategy. However, in contexts of reading books, she can correct parents if they "read incorrectly". The interaction further illustrates that Ida occasionally switches from Finnish to Swedish (see for example line 03), something which the parents reported never happens (in contrast to switching from Swedish to Finnish). The switching of languages may be due to the parallel and co-existing policies: the language used with the father is usually Finnish, whereas the book is in Swedish and usually read by the Swedish-speaking mother. The use of the word *pinteliä* (spider) in line 17, which is the word *spindel* in Swedish, phonotactically adapted to and inflected in Finnish, also shows how Swedish appears in a Finnish utterance by Ida. The Finnish word is *hämähäkki*. She also uses the Swedish word *ankunge* (duckling) in an otherwise Finnish sentence (line 18), but without adapting in to Finnish.

Luka In the interview with Luka's parents, the principle of OPOL was reported to be quite strictly adhered to and the parents said that Luka himself was dedicated to following the interaction order. In Example 10.2, Luka is playing a game with his Swedish-speaking father.

Example 10.1 Ida is reading a book with her Finnish-speaking father (in the English translation: underlined text = Finnish, boldface text = Swedish)

-
- 01 Ida: isi, missä isi on? missä tämmöinen toinen on? tuo toi... toinen on puussa,
toinen lentää!
dad, where is this? that, the...one is in the tree, the other one is flying!
- 02 Father: toinen lentää
the other one is flying
- 03 Ida: missä te näin... **där kommer en mus. inte där. men där!**
where you like this... **there comes a mouse, not there, but there!**
- 04 Father: mikäs toi juttu on?
what is that thing?
- 05 Ida: piip piip! se on isi tämä! **inte där, inte där, men där. piip piip! no niin!**
piip piip! this is the father! **not there, not there, but there!** piip piip! all
right!
- 06 Father: ai niin!
oh right!
- 07 Ida: äiti voitetaan niinki. **det kommer en liten mus.**
the mother will win anyway. **there comes a little mouse.**
- 08 Father: ai tääl?
oh here?
- 09 Ida: **men, mutta sano vaan.**
but, but just say it
- 10 Father: aha, '**där kommer en liten mus**'
aha, '**there comes a little mouse**'
- 11 Ida: **mä mä, sano 'inte däääär'**
but but, say 'not theeere'
- 12 Father: **'inte där, inte där men där'! pip pip!**
'not there, not there, but there'! pip pip!
- 13 Ida: no niin!
right!
- 14 Father: ai niinkö? no joo, äiti osaa sen paremmin.
okay that's right? oh well, mum knows this better
- 15 Ida: missä tämmöinen, isi on?
dad, where is this thing?
- 16 Father: tuolla
there
- 17 Ida: ne on vaarallisia, muumilaaksossaki on pinteliä, joku sanoi siellä 'ääää'!
they are dangerous, spiders can be found in the Moominvalley too, someone
said there 'wooooo'!
- 18 Ida: kato kato **ankunge!** täältä isi voi mennä tää.
look look **a duckling!** dad, this can go from here
-

As was also the case with Ida and her father (Example 10.1), Luka and his father use both Swedish and Finnish in this activity (Example 10.2), following certain principles. Finnish is here used primarily in a game-based formula – *in the hat of the wizard is found* – whereas Swedish is used for most other communication between Luka and his father. The use of Finnish for the game's formula probably lead them

Example 10.2 Luka is playing a board game with his Swedish-speaking father (in the English translation: underlined text = Finnish, boldface text = Swedish)

-
- 19 Father: **hur många steg får du flytta?**
how many steps can you move forward?
- 20 Luka: **ett, två...**
one, two...
- 21 Father: **ett, ännu ett steg.**
one, then another one
- 22 Luka: **två**
two
- 23 Father: **så, nu är det min tur.**
so, now it's my turn
- 24 Luka: **jag sku vilja ge den åt dig.**
I would like to give it to you
- 25 Father: **oj**
oh
- 26 Luka: 'taikurin hatusta löytyy'... punain... 'taikurin hatusta löytyy' punainen Pikku
Myy
in the hat of the wizard is found...re... In the hat of the wizard is found a red
Little My
[the game continues for several minutes]
- 27 Father: taikurin hatusta löytyy... sininen taivas. du får ännu prova, efter mig. det
kan bli tasapeli. en, två, tre. nu om du får två eller mera så blir det
tasapeli. snurra, kasta tärningen. man kan inte vinna varje gång.
in the hat of the wizard is found... a blue sky. you should try once more,
after me. it may be tied. one, two, three. now, if you get two or more it
will be tied. spin, throw the dice. you cannot win every time.
- 28 Luka: äitiiiiii
mummyyyyy
cries
- 29 Mother: sitte ei voi pelata jos ei...
then one cannot play if not...
- 30 Father: **Luka, då kan vi inte spela om man ska vinna varje gång. pappa tycker**
inte spela.
Luka, then we cannot play if you have to win every time. dad doesn't
like to play.
- 31 Luka: äitiiiiii
motheeeer
cries
- 32 Father: **nu plocka vi bort, du vann första spele hör du!**
now we put the game away. hey, you won the first round!
- 33 Luka: **jag vill vinna ännu en.**
I want to win one more
- 34 Father: **men Luka, man vinner inte alltid. så är det, när man spela så vinner**
man inte varje gång.
but Luka, you can't always win. that's how it is, when you plays you
can't win every time.
-

to continue their utterances in Finnish (lines 26 and 27). This may also have an impact on the father using the Finnish word *tasapeli* (tied) rather than the Swedish word *oavgjort* in line 27. The OPOL principle comes in conflict with other principles which may be part of this family's FLP, such as that of using the language of the game for the game formula and that of completing a sentence in the same language as you began the sentence in. When Luka loses the game, he starts crying and calls for his Finnish-speaking mother, in Finnish (lines 28 and 31). The mother and the father then express the same content (*one cannot play if...*), the mother in Finnish (line 29) and the father in Swedish (line 30).

Sara In the interviews, Sara's parents declared that they have been very strict about separating the languages in speaking with the children. The mother pointed out that "it's important too that it is not about a conscious choice that the child makes [in using the respective languages]. The child cannot herself decide when she speaks Swedish or Finnish but it comes automatically." The utterance is part of the same discourse cycle which presented bilingualism as something natural and automatic (see above) and not necessarily conscious (Schwartz et al. 2011). However, the mother also told Sara to be able to differentiate between the languages, referring to them as "mother's language" and "father's language", respectively. The dialogue in Example 10.3, between Sara, her mother and her father, indeed shows that Sara is very aware of the two languages, about the principle that her father speaks Finnish and her mother Swedish and puts her father in his place when he is not following the expected interaction order, i.e. that Finnish is "father's language".

The key utterance in this interaction is when Sara's Finnish-speaking father says *åtta* (eight) in Swedish (line 38). Sara does not accept this and does not let him back into the dialogue until she had prompted her Swedish-speaking mother to utter the word in Swedish (line 52) and declared to her father, in a teacher-like tone, that *åtta* (eight) is mother's language: "mother says..." (line 53). Sara's father then admits that he made a mistake, provides her with the word in Finnish (line 54) and confirms the rule of the interaction order by stating "father counts..." (line 55) in Finnish. In this passage, Sara efficiently makes use of non-verbal means, such as body language and intonation, as well as explicit statements, to establish, discuss and confirm the rules of the interaction order in the family, OPOL. This is a nice example of child agency in that Sara effectively confirms her adherence to the interaction order of OPOL.

As the interviews revealed, Sara's parents showed substantial changes over time concerning the joint language used. Only recently, Sara's Swedish-speaking mother had started actively to speak Finnish with her husband as she wished to improve her own skills. The dialogue in Example 10.4 illustrates the undergoing change of the FLP regarding the father's and mother's joint language and that the interaction orders are being negotiated. This re-negotiation includes not only the parents, but also Sara.

From this short exchange of utterances it becomes evident that Sara finds it awkward (lines 70 and 72) that her mother speaks Finnish to her father (lines 64, 66 and 69). She does understand her mother's utterance in Finnish (line 69), but still

Example 10.3 Sara is counting together with her Swedish-speaking mother and Finnish-speaking father (in the English translation: underlined text = Finnish, boldface text = Swedish)

-
- 35 Sara: **sex sen va kommer efter sexan?**
six then what comes after six?
- 36 Mother: **sjuan**
seven
- 37 Sara: **sjuan**
seven
- 38 Father: **åtta**
eight
- 39 Sara: **näe**
no
turns down father's contribution
- 40 Sara: **mamma vilken kommer före den som...**
mum what comes before the one that...
turns to mother, leaves father (who acted inappropriately) out
- 41 Mother: **före vilken?**
before which one?
- 42 Sara: **före den**
before that one
- 43 Father: seitsemän jälkeen tulee kahdeksan.
after seven comes eight
- 44 Sara: mhm
huh-uh
reacts negatively to father's speech turn
- 45 Father: mitä? tulee tulee!
what? sure it does!
- 46 Sara: **mamma**
mum
turns to mother
- 47 Mother: **mm**
mhm
- 48 Father: et usko isiä niikö?
you don't believe father, do you?
- 49 Sara: **säg vad det heter ... kaheksan**
tell me what it is called ... eight
to mother (ignores father)
- 50 Mother: **efter sjuan menar du?**
after seven you mean?
- 51 Sara: **mm.**
mhm
- 52 Mother: **åtta.**
eight.
- 53 Sara: äiti sanoo että 'åtta'!
mother says that 'eight'!
turns to father to declare that 'eight' (in Swedish) is the word in her mother's language
-

(continued)

Example 10.3 (continued)

-
- 54 Father: nii minäki sanoin ensin että 'åtta' ... mutta 'kahdeksan'.
yes I also first said 'eight' ... but 'eight'.
confirms the breaking of the rule and corrects himself
- 55 Father: isi laskee yksi, kaksi, kolme, neljä, viisi, kuusi, seitsemän ja kahdeksan.
father counts 'one, two, three, four, five, six, seven and eight'
confirms the rule
- 56 Sara: mhm.
mhm
rejection
- 57 Father: mitä 'mhm'! laskenpas!
what 'mhm'! now count!
annoyed
- 58 Sara: yks kaks kolme neljä viisi kuusi
one two three four five six
- 59 Father: seitsemän
seven
- 60 Sara: kaheksan
eight
- 61 Father: yhdeksän
nine
- 62 Sara: neljä
four
- 63 Father: kymmenen
ten
-

Example 10.4 Sara's mother talking about a purchase with Sara's father (in the English translation: underlined text = Finnish, boldface text = Swedish)

-
- 64 Mother: mä ostin tämmösen eilen.
I bought that kind of thing yesterday
- 65 Father: ai mistä?
oh, from where?
- 66 Mother: Life kauppa semmonen.
Life shop that kind of
- 67 Father: aijaa
aha
- 68 Sara: **jag tycker inte om Life.**
I don't like Life
- 69 Mother: maksoi seitsemäntoista.
it cost sventeen.
- 70 Sara: **vad sa du mamma?**
what did you say mum?
- 71 Mother: **att det kostar ganska mycket, den här...**
that it costs quite a lot, this...
- 72 Sara: **hahahaha!**
hahahaha!
laughs
- 73 Mother: **mmmh. vi ska köpa...**
mhm. we will buy...
amused
-

asks her mother to repeat it, in Swedish (line 70). Sara thus manages the discourse and directs her mother to use Swedish. Her laughter (line 72) is probably meant as a comment on the awkwardness of her mother speaking Finnish. The mother then abandons her newly introduced policy to speak Finnish with her husband, when she continues in Swedish (line 73).

The parental interview situation where Sara was present provides a further illustrative example of child agency: a 3-year-old girl negotiating family language policy. The topic of discussion was language use in the family, and the father turned to Sara and asked her in Finnish: *Which language do you speak with father?* (“Mitä kieltä puhuu isän kanssa?”). She then responded, in Swedish: *The same language as you.* (“Samma språk som du.”) Although it may appear as a violation of OPOL that she used Swedish as a response to a Finnish utterance by her Finnish-speaking father, she seems to follow one of the other principles in the family’s FLP, namely to adapt to the socio-linguistic context and the language policy of the interview: the interview situation as a whole was performed in Swedish.

10.8 Conclusions

The parental discourses used for explaining and motivating the interaction orders in this study provide evidence for the FLP’s being a result of clear explicit and overt language planning (cf. King et al. 2008) as well as of unconscious and non-planned practices. We therefore argue for a re-definition of FLP, including also less explicit and less overt decisions on how language is allocated in a family. Whereas the families had made explicit decisions regarding for example the Swedish-speaking daycare center and, in the future, a Swedish-speaking school alternative to strengthen the children’s proficiency of the minority language (cf. Schwartz et al. 2010; Schwartz 2013), the OPOL strategy was reported to have appeared automatically, naturally and without any explicit or conscious decisions. In contrast to the study by King and Fogle (2006), which focused on families attempting to achieve additive bilingualism for their children and which in many cases require parents to actively use and teach a language that is not their first language, this study concerned families aiming at simultaneous bilingualism for the children where parents used their first language more or less consistently with their children. It was thus not about actually *choosing* to speak a certain language, but a natural and “automatic” thing to do, according to the parents.

It is interesting to note that these parents consider it natural to raise their children bilingually, although almost all of them were raised in only one language. On the other hand, they may consider it “natural”, because they are raising their children in the language they themselves were raised. The parents did not have first-hand personal experience of growing up in a family using the OPOL principle to achieve simultaneous bilingualism. The OPOL strategy can be seen as based on a monolingual norm; the aim is for one person to speak only one language. Indeed, four of the parents grew up in monolingual families and environments, and although two of the

parents had either a bilingual parent or a parent having the other language as his first language, there was only one language used with the children. The situation of the three families is a win-win one: the parents can do what they are best at, i.e. using their first language with their children and at the same time they hope to achieve what they unambiguously see as something positive for their child, simultaneous bilingualism.

Another result of the nexus analysis was the evidence for FLP being in constant flux. The current FLP's were set in historical, language ecological and sociolinguistic perspectives by the parents and they explicitly said that the policy had changed its nature over time. There were certain milestones given as explanations for adjusting the FLP's, such as conditions surrounding how the parents met, when and where the children were born, moving house between countries or areas within Finland, the children's or the spouses' language development and proficiency, new jobs, starting daycare etc. Moreover, principles for language use among the family members were reported to be pragmatic and to be flexible depending on sociolinguistic, situational and interpersonal factors in unique moments of interaction. FLP's are thus non-static in their nature and should be studied as such. Schwartz (2010, p. 186) acknowledges this fact and states that an important object for further study would "... concern the longitudinal consequences of FLP and the manner in which it changes over time and possible directions in modifying the FLP as the children grow older."

The analysis of the audio-recorded interactions between the parents and the children showed that the interaction order was mutually constructed and negotiated upon. Tuominen suggests that bilingual children "may determine not only the language they will speak, but also that which their parents will speak" and that the children in the long run are able "to change the rules, setting new ones" (Tuominen 1999, pp. 71–72). The examples of Sara, who was 3 years and 9 months old, showed rather that she acted as a "language police" when the father challenged the OPOL interaction order by saying a word in the "wrong" language (see Example 10.3) and when the Swedish-speaking mother unexpectedly used Finnish with her spouse (Example 10.4). In the latter case, Sara seemed not to have yet been accustomed – or perhaps gently protesting against – the change-in-progress regarding the policy of language use between her parents.

What Piller stated in 2001 is to some extent still true: "It is important to note that most of the research literature on childhood bilingualism is mainly concerned with the processes and patterns involved in bilingual acquisition rather than the parents' role and perspective. In particular, there is comparatively little consideration of their language planning activities." (Piller 2001, pp. 65). We agree that further work is needed regarding how parents shape family language policies. Moreover, although there has been a great deal of research on children's meta-linguistic awareness, in monolingual as well as bilingual pre-school children, we know very little about the role of the preschool child as a co-constructor of family language policies. This is an important area where much yet remains to be explored and which also may require methodological re-considerations and innovation. If child agency is to be investigated, we need to develop new methods to do so, (in addition to analyzing interaction in different contexts), such as quasi-experimental methods in order to

gain access to children's conceptions of language and bilingualism as well as the principles that underlie language choice. The rewards will potentially be great, as we in this way can begin to see the child as an active participant in her/his bilingual development and the development of language policy in her family, institution and community.

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