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INTENTIONALITY AND ADAPTABILITY IN FAMILY LANGUAGE POLICY

Annotation. Heritage language maintenance is affected by many different factors. Particularly for families in subtractive bilingual environments, it is crucial to have a well-defined family language policy (FLP). Even with an established FLP, major disruptions and changes, as well as smaller shifts in families' lives, can significantly affect children's multilingual development and threaten heritage language maintenance. These shifts can be sudden or gradual. This study focuses on the importance of bringing the need for a FLP into multilingual families' awareness and explores the challenges of sustaining it. More specifically, this study uses two parents' reflections regarding their own families' language policies to gain a better understanding of the challenges and to make recommendations to other families. It is guided by the following questions: To what extent are parents aware of their family's multilingual habits and policies? How can parents support their children's heritage language development in the face of significant disruptions or even subtle life changes? Two linguists raising multilingual children in different contexts agreed to become accountability partners to gain a better understanding of their own dynamic situations and support each other to become more intentional in their family multilingual development. Data were collected over a six-month period. Findings suggest that intentionality increased due to the accountability partnership. Furthermore, this study challenged several of the researchers' assumptions, particularly regarding the amount of heritage language spoken, how transitions affect the family, what it takes for linguistic changes to occur, and the ease of tracking one's own family's linguistic habits. This study suggests that having a FLP is not sufficient, but that it requires periodic updating, and changes need to be implemented to match the evolving plan.

Keywords: disruptions; family language policy; heritage language; intentionality; minority language; multilingual parent reflections.

Introduction

Family Language Policy (FLP) refers to how a family perceives and manages language use. It takes a bottom-up approach to planning and includes ideologies, goals, practices, and outcomes related to language use at the micro, family-level (King, Fogle, & Logan-Terry, 2008). In today's global world, where political, social, and economic forces push families to move from one country to another, top-down approaches to heritage language maintenance are not

necessarily in line with the FLPs of individual families. Oftentimes, the heritage language(s) of multilingual families is/are simply not – or barely – present in their host society. As a result, and because displacement inevitably causes changes in family dynamics, these families may be confronted with new choices to make and changes to implement in their FLPs.

The focus of this paper is on family language policy and the role of parents' intentional observations and reflections about their families' language habits and patterns. Specifically, this article presents a case study on the efforts made by two multilingual families to maintain the use of a minority language (i.e., a language that is not represented in the family's social environment) by becoming more aware, intentional, and responsive in their language choices as they adapt to new family dynamics.

Review of Literature

Families raising their children multilingually are confronted with decisions regarding the language(s) they use at home and in various family settings. Such decisions, should they be taken consciously or not, shape their FLP, affecting both the children and the family as a whole (Hollebeke, Struys, & Agirdag, 2020). In the past two decades, researchers interested in studying the beliefs, practices, and management efforts associated with the languages present within a family have adapted Spolsky's (2004, 2012) language policy framework to the family domain (King et. al, 2008; Spolsky 2004) and thereby bridged a gap between language policy and child language acquisition. This work revealed that FLPs can range from strategically planned policies to highly flexible ones (Caldas, 2012). Caldas notes in this respect that "somewhere in between are found the pragmatically inspired language strategies employed by families who are confronted with real choices that have real consequences for their children" (p. 352).

Research on the effects of FLP on child language development has produced a large body of evidence indicating that practices and management efforts connected to language exposure are crucial to linguistic outcomes. Among other factors, higher quality or quantity of input in the target language has been associated with earlier and better language acquisition (Blom, 2010;

Hoff et al., 2012; Paradis, 2011; Place & Hoff, 2011; Quiroz, Snow, & Zhao, 2010). Without questioning the crucial role of input in multilingual acquisition, studies have revealed, however, that input in the target language is not always sufficient for children to be able to regularly use their minority language. Research by De Houwer (2007), for instance, suggests that parental attitudes and discursive strategies can affect children's language use (De Houwer, 1999; 2007). In her 2007 study, the questionnaire data collected in 1,899 families in which at least one of the parents spoke a language other than the majority language (i.e., Dutch) revealed that the children did not necessarily use their minority language even when the parents used the "one parent-one language" strategy.

Research in FLP by Lanza (1992; 1997; 2001) has indeed shown that parental discursive strategies and management efforts also have a significant influence on their children's active bilingualism and tendency to codeswitch. Since then, many studies have found corroborating evidence that the way parents negotiate language use with their children can significantly affect language use and development (Hollebeke et al., 2020).

Researchers have also explored socio-emotional effects of FLP on linguistic well-being (i.e., the positive and negative emotions of both parents and children regarding language acquisition) and general socio-emotional well-being (i.e., the emotions related to family relationships, identity issues, and the feelings pertaining to general well-being, as defined in Hollebeke et al. (2020)). Findings from these studies concur to indicate a positive correlation between FLP, linguistic well-being, and overall well-being. Specifically, several studies revealed a link between heritage language loss, negative feelings towards the heritage language and culture, and deterioration of family relationships (Cummins, 2001; Kouritzin, 1999; Parks, 2013). Conversely, other studies indicate a link between the preservation of the heritage language and congruent language use and proficiency in the family, positive emotions towards cultural values, and family cohesion (Okita 2002; Schwartz, & Verschik 2013; Tannenbaum, 2005; Tannenbaum & Howie, 2002; Wong Fillmore, 2000).

Another aspect to keep in mind in the context of family language policy and multilingual development is its dynamism. There are a number of ways

that a family's changing situation can have an effect on its linguistic makeup.

One predictable and significant change that families deal with is the children's transition from home to being immersed in the majority language through schooling. Even families with a well-developed language plan can struggle to maintain the minority language due to the children's sudden strong preference for the majority language of their schooling. In a study by Surrain (2021) on Spanish-speaking families in the United States, once children started preschool in an English-speaking environment, changes were observed in the families' attitudes and beliefs, as well as responses to the children's preference for English. Whether sudden or anticipated, predictable or not, these changes and disruptions are identifiable. However, it does not often take much of a change or disruption for the long-term effects on the language development to be significant. It is not hard to get caught up in the busyness of life and operate from a place of default, routine, and staying with the familiar. Changes can be gradual, and it is perhaps when shifts in the family dynamic are small that awareness, intentionality, and attention to family language policy need to be in constant review.

Before moving to the next section in the paper, we would do well to address the concept of "success" in family language policy. While many families have a strong desire to pass on their heritage language and culture, parents often feel pressure to meet other people's expectations that their children attain a certain level of proficiency or reach certain benchmarks. When the attention shifts from what is realistic in the family at a given time to what other people expect, the well-being of the family can be negatively affected. It is our hope that with this study, we are transparent about the difficulties involved in maintaining a heritage language and that we invite parents to a place of confidence. From such a place, they can better make the right decisions in their families yet feel that they have the freedom to adapt as needed. Smith-Christmas et al. (2019) advocate for a holistic approach to family well-being rather than measuring success by the children's linguistic output.

The purpose of this study was to place two families' FLP through the process of intentionality and adaptability to develop best practices that encourage heritage language maintenance. This study was guided by

the following research questions: To what extent are parents aware of their family multilingual habits and policies? How can parents support their children's heritage language development in the face of significant disruptions or even subtle life changes?

Methodology

This study was conducted by two linguists, one in Ireland, the parent of two French-Italian-English trilingual children, and one in the United States, the parent of three Hungarian-English bilingual children. They agreed to put themselves in the center of this study in order to track their own habits, behaviors, and potential challenges.

Family Profiles

In Family 1, the mother grew up monolingually in France. She moved to the United States (US) in 2013 to complete her Ph.D. in French/Second Language Acquisition. In addition to French and English, she also speaks fluent Italian, which is the native language of the father. He grew up monolingually in Italy and also moved to the US in 2013 to complete his Ph.D. In addition to Italian, Chinese, and English, he also speaks fluent French. The couple lived in the US for 8 years before moving to Italy in December 2020 and to Ireland in September 2022. Their children are E and I. E, a boy, was 6 years, 5 months at the time of the study and fluent in French, Italian, and English. He was born in the U.S., moved to Italy in winter of 2020 at age 4 years, 4 months, and then moved to Ireland in September 2022 at age 6 years, 1 month. I is a little girl who was 2 years, 3 months at the beginning of the study, understood French and Italian equally well, and used a mix of French and Italian words. (Due to the stage of her language development and similarities between French and Italian, it was often difficult to tell for sure which language she was using). She was born in the U.S., moved to Italy when she was 2 months old, and then moved to Ireland in January of 2023 at age 2 years, 3 months. This was also the time she started attending daycare in English.

The family mostly uses a mix of the “one-parent-one-language” approach (OPOL) – where each parent speaks their own language with the children – and the “time-and-place” approach – where language use depends on the time and place of the interaction. Specifically, within the family, the mother speaks and reads consistently in French to the children, and the father speaks and reads consistently in Italian to them. However, when engaged in a conversation with relatives or friends, the parents tend to address their children in the majority language as it feels more socially appropriate. The children communicate with each other in French and Italian. During their time in the U.S. and since their arrival in Ireland, English has had the status of community language (as well as daycare/school language). In the U.S., French and Italian were fairly evenly distributed as home languages. E started being exposed to English consistently at age 2 when he started daycare. By the time he was 2 years, 6 months old, he mastered the three languages without the clear dominance of one or the other. However, during the family’s 18-month stay in Italy, Italian took on a more dominant role compared to French, which the parents attribute to E attending an Italian preschool and speaking Italian daily, as well as an increase in social interactions where it felt more appropriate to the mother to address her children in Italian. In the summer of 2022, while visiting family in France, the mother noticed that E’s vocabulary choices, though understandable, sometimes drew more attention from family members than she would have liked. It also seemed that E lacked some vocabulary associated with collective play. While these initial lexical mismatches appeared to have faded two weeks later, this trip made her wonder whether she was still doing enough to support her children’s language development or whether French was starting to drift. The intention discussed in this study is the family’s desire to increase the children’s proficiency level and linguistic well-being in French by enhancing the amount of input and conversations in that language.

In Family 2, the mother grew up in a Hungarian-Romanian bilingual household in Romania. She attended a German preschool and school and moved to the U.S. in 2000 to get her Ph.D. in Linguistics/SLA. She has native or near-native knowledge of Romanian, Hungarian, English, and German. The father grew up monolingually in the United States. He speaks fluent

English, German, Romanian, and French and has limited knowledge of Hungarian. Their children are H (female, age 14 years, 10 months at the beginning of the study), D (male, age 13 years, 1 month at the beginning of the study), and L (male, age 10 years, 9 months at the beginning of the study). All three children were born in the United States, and the family lived in Romania for one year (2016-2017) where the children attended a Hungarian school. The family uses the OPOL approach, where the mother consistently speaks Hungarian with the children and the father uses English with them. It is important to note that both mother and children code-switch with English when they speak to each other. With the exception of the year in Romania, the community language has been English, and the dominant language of all three children has almost always been English. Nevertheless, the family found that the transition from the school year to summer can cause a notable change, enough to affect the family's life rhythm and to affect the children's language use. Another major factor in the family linguistic dynamics is the children's transition to teenage years and increased independence. The intention for this study is the family's desire to maintain Hungarian as a heritage language and maintain the children's proficiency level and comfort with speaking Hungarian.

Instruments

The data collection included keeping a shared online journal, monthly meetings, and regular assessment of language development. Data were collected over a six-month period.

The shared journal. The shared journal was initially a google doc, but as the linguist accountability partners started entering information, the format of the document was perceived to be too restrictive. They switched to Google Sheets. The intention set at the beginning of the data collection period was to start by entering information into the shared document daily. However, both linguist parents found it challenging at first to enter information regularly. It became easier after about three weeks. During the second meeting, they discussed the challenge of remembering and committing to entering information on a regular basis, and they decided to switch to a format that was

better suited for this journaling work. There was no outside time limit for how long they were going to journal. There was also no prescriptive or expected way that the shared journal was going to be used.

Monthly meetings. The monthly meetings took place over Zoom and were scheduled roughly once per month. The meetings served the purpose of discussing the logistics of the accountability system, reporting about the researchers' respective experiences, and giving each other support, feedback, and suggestions for the upcoming weeks.

Reflections. The two linguists took time between meetings and jotted down reflective notes based on patterns noticed in the journal and changes or lack of change in family habits. These reflections were recorded in the shared journal on a weekly basis.

Results

By the end of May, there were 35 reflection entries in the journal. Between January and June, there were twelve Zoom meetings, averaging one hour per meeting. As the journaling progressed and monthly meetings took place, the following system emerged: tracking, reflection, planning, implementation. The initial phase of journaling was dedicated to tracking what was happening in the two families. This tracking exercise served the purpose of mapping language use. While the tracking continued for the duration of the study, after three to four weeks, patterns were becoming noticeable, and the linguists moved into the reflection phase. Once, through these reflections, it became clearer what was occurring, they transitioned to the planning phase. Lastly, they implemented the changes that addressed some of the issues noticed.

Both researchers found that, despite their motivation as mothers and linguists, recording daily was challenging, since they had to maintain their work mindset, or at least take on the role of an observer, while engaged in family interactions. They were also both surprised by how difficult it was to develop the habit of recording in the shared journal. The prospect of an upcoming Zoom meeting, which involved an interaction and also implied a deadline, served as

a useful reminder and motivation for the researchers-mothers to continue their efforts. They switched to Google Sheets after the first three weeks and their first check-in on Zoom, as this tool appeared to allow for more clarity and flexibility in the organization of their notes. In what follows, we present the main realizations, adaptation efforts, challenges, and rewards emerging from the researchers' notes and discussions as they tracked, reflected upon, planned, and implemented changes in their FLP.

Realizations, adaptation efforts, challenges, and rewards in Family 1

The initial tracking of Family 1's language use revealed that the number of interactions in French within the family was quite small, except for moments during the day when the mother was alone with one of the children on their way from/to school and daycare. This confirmed the drift the mother had started to fear during the family's trip the previous summer, upon which, caught up in the business of moving and helping E adapt to schooling in English again, she had not acted. Beyond this realization, what surprised the linguist-mother most was the high frequency of French-Italian code-switching in the family's interactions, and especially how difficult it had become for her to not switch to Italian as soon as the father was present. Lastly, she noticed that E's vocabulary choices in French often involved a homonym to the Italian equivalent, where a different word would have been more contextually appropriate (e.g., E would say "*c'est similaire*" ("it is similar") where "*c'est pareil*" ("it is the same") would be considered a better choice). Because this amount of code-switching appeared to be detrimental to the use of French in the family, the parents decided to become more intentional about creating an opportunity for all of them to speak French, which materialized into the commitment to try to speak only French at the dinner table. While the idea initially came from the mother, the father was very enthusiastic about it, as he saw this "dinner in French" as an opportunity not only to support the children's multilingualism but also as an investment for their long term linguistic, socioeconomic, and general well-being on the long term. Lastly, this was also an opportunity to further improve his fluency in French.

The initiative was explained to the children, who seemed to immediately accept it. In practice, however, the children displayed some forms of resistance to interacting in French with the father over the first three weeks that the “dinner in French” was implemented. Used to the OPOL approach, I would sometimes cover her ears and either show amusement or clear annoyance when addressed in French by her father. E did not have the same reaction to his father’s language switch. However, he disliked having to use French when specifically addressing his father (and not the entire family) to talk about what he appeared to consider a father-and-son topic, and when evoking memories created either with his father exclusively or when in Italy. The mother too, despite her motivation, struggled to consistently use French, especially when addressing the father, or after a longer workday. Staying mindful of which language she was using and refraining from code-switching was quite unnatural to her, and required a considerable effort. Along with this effort came a little bit of frustration when she acknowledged her struggles in speaking her own language. Interestingly, the family member displaying the greatest ease to adapt was the father. He seemed to adjust very well to the new FLP and was often the first to enforce it. The only difficulties he seemed to encounter were when evoking childhood memories in Italy and talking about specific Italian dishes. He was thus somewhat surprised, and occasionally slightly irritated to see the mother struggling more than himself.

Because the family found it particularly unnatural to maintain the entire conversation in French when eating a typically Italian meal, the parents decided to alter their plan: the family could speak Italian when eating the corresponding cuisine. This occurred perhaps once a week. They also decided to not pay particular attention to their language use on one additional weekly occasion: the one weekday when the mother would come home particularly late, and everyone was more tired. Lastly, they decided to allow occasional, brief father-and-son side conversations in Italian when talking about people or events directly related to an Italian context. In other words, the plan was adapted to the needs of the family and what made sense for them according to their lifestyle and life experience, so that French would be the language used five nights per week, about 95% of the time.

With the family’s continuous efforts, the difficulties encountered by

the mother and the children subsided gradually. After about three weeks, I stopped resisting being addressed in French by her father. She also started saying more and more words in French. While we suspect that the “dinner in French” might have contributed to her French development, we acknowledge that her progress could be related to language development alone, considering her age (2 years, 3 months) at the beginning of the study. Interestingly, after about four months, I appeared to start playing with the expectation to speak French, using Italian on purpose to get attention after a request made in French was not immediately fulfilled. E too seemed to not only have accepted the new linguistic expectations, but to also have gained agency. About six weeks after the study started, E would regularly sit at the table, reminding everyone that “we speak French at the table” (even at breakfast or lunch) before starting his meal and when he would catch anyone (it was often the mother) code-switching. He appeared to become more aware of, and intentional in, his occasional code-switching, announcing in French that he wanted to say something in Italian to his dad. He also spontaneously suggested that the family keep using French for the entire evening. Furthermore, while E would occasionally have to ask how to say a specific word in French at the beginning of the implementation, this need seemed to have almost disappeared by the end. In addition, his vocabulary choices became more idiomatic. As for the mother, it gradually became much more natural for her to only speak her native language in this context. From six weeks after the beginning of the study, her notes show that she, her son, and her husband were catching her speaking in Italian less and less frequently, and her language mixing had diminished drastically after another six weeks. Lastly, while the father never obviously struggled to use only French, his speech became notably more fluent and accurate, especially in terms of vocabulary use and pronunciation.

Overall, the experience became more and more enjoyable and natural for the entire family, who unconsciously started to extend it to other mealtimes and after-dinner activities. It was also very rewarding for the parents to see that they succeeded in creating a context for their family to use French and to acknowledge the improvements in I, E and the father’s accuracy and fluency in French.

Realizations, adaptation efforts, challenges, and rewards in Family 2

As mentioned before, the first point of reflection was the struggle with keeping the daily journal. It was clear that the struggle was not one of lack of interest or motivation. It took acknowledging the fact that something was not working and the linguists giving themselves time to develop the habit that helped get over this struggle. Once the researchers changed the format from Google Docs to Google Sheets and several weeks passed by to allow for habit formation, it was much easier to keep up with the journal on a regular basis.

The initial tracking revealed to the mother in Family 2 that, though she never spoke English with her children, she was spending very little time speaking Hungarian to them. Coincidentally, around that time, she had several informal conversations about her family language policy and reported a fairly consistent OPOL approach. What became very obvious to her was that consistency has little meaning if there is not a significant amount of time spent in the heritage language. In their daily routine during the duration of the study, the father and mother took turns driving the children to and from school. As a reminder, the children in this family speak English to each other and only rarely (sometimes spontaneously, other times when encouraged) do they speak Hungarian to each other. If one child addresses a sibling in Hungarian, that sibling usually answers in Hungarian, but the conversation does not tend to last very long. During the drive, they generally spoke to each other and listened to music. The mother's questions inquiring about school did not lead to long conversations. When at home, the children either did homework, read, or played outside with friends. The one-on-one interactions were brief. At the dinner table, the conversations were predominantly in English between children and father. The mother was certainly not excluded from these conversations, since everybody knows that she has a native-like command of English. Therefore, the children did not repeat information in Hungarian for her, knowing that she can follow everything that is being said. When they addressed her directly, it was in Hungarian, and they did respond to her in Hungarian (not without elements of code-switching). The journal and raised

awareness about the family dynamics and language usage uncovered to the mother the reality that, while consistency was there, quantity of input and output were not. The times when a child would spend more time in Hungarian was when occasionally during the week – and more so during the weekend – one or two children would take walks or go grocery shopping with their mother.

This realization led to the mother becoming intentional about creating additional opportunities for Hungarian moments throughout the day. Without making interactions unnatural, she became more purposeful about conversations with the children during drives and dinner time, code-switched less and encouraged the children to do the same, increased the number of walks with two of the children, and created one-on-one times with the youngest. They tried a few other things: listening to Hungarian music in the car, listening/watching short Hungarian nursery rhymes at the dinner table, and introducing regular reading in Hungarian. The first two changes did not stick, but the one change that worked was setting aside time on Saturday mornings for Hungarian reading. The children's initial reaction was one of opposition. To them it felt like one more "chore" that they had to do on the weekend before they were "free to play." Among the three children, the oldest one resisted the least. The book the mother researcher chose to read was short and familiar to the children, so after the initial resistance, they quickly "accepted" the reading time. After one or two weeks of the mother reading, the oldest suggested that they be the ones reading. The family transitioned to having the children take turns reading, and they did that all the way until the data collection period ended. Also, as the family's summer break began, the Saturday reading changed into almost daily reading. The children's reading fluency increased over time, and on several occasions, they praised each other.

As a result of the mother's intentionality surrounding the usage of the heritage language in the family, several positive patterns could be observed. The children started speaking Hungarian more frequently to each other. The older ones sometimes take walks by themselves, and the daughter reported proudly one day "*Mámá, a tegnap mikor sétáltunk végig magyarul beszélünk!*" ("Mommy, yesterday when we walked, we only spoke Hungarian to each other!") They were also overheard saying to each other "*Beszélj magyarul!*" ("Speak Hungarian!"). The youngest child, whose vocabulary is the

smallest of the three and who mixes the most English words in his speech, started paying more attention to keeping the conversation as much as possible in Hungarian. One notable example was regarding his breakfast. For a while, he ate toasted bread with butter, cinnamon, and sugar for breakfast, and when he'd ask his mom to prepare it, he would say "*Mámá, csinálsz kérlek fahélyas kenyeret sugarral?*" ("Mommy, will you make me cinnamon toast with sugar?"). While before this study, the mother would have simply agreed to make the breakfast since there had been a successful communication exchange, with the raised awareness and intentionality from the study she paused and asked "*Mivel?*" ("With what?"). He needed to be reminded that the word for sugar in Hungarian was "*cukor*." The next time, he paused before using the English word. After a few more instances of him hesitating, he was able to ask the entire question without hesitation in Hungarian.

Discussion

Overall, the results of this small-scale case study indicate that pausing to observe one's own family language patterns can be beneficial for multilingual development. The results presented above indicate, first of all, that tracking language use was quite difficult, as it required that a new habit be adopted. This tracking, however, had a crucial consciousness-raising effect, allowing the mothers/researchers to realize that the linguistic input for each family member in a certain language was much smaller than they would have thought. The tracking also helped identify a large amount of code-switching when all family members were together and there were insufficient opportunities to use the minority language. There are many anecdotal reports in FLP studies that indicate that parents started to be more adamant about the use of the minority language when they started to fear that their child might lose this language and the cultural heritage coming with it (e.g., Lanza, 1992; Slakov, 2015). Further research on the effects of families tracking and reflecting upon their language practices could bring useful insights into what can cause a drift or an increase in minority language use.

The realization that the minority language was much less present in the families' interactions than they thought it was, in turn, led

the mothers/researchers to become intentional not only in their consistent use of the minority language, but also in creating new opportunities for the family to use it meaningfully. While they were prompt to think of activities to do in the target language, our results show that implementing changes in their FLP required efforts from each of the family members and necessitated some negotiation (e.g., authorizing the use of the dominant language at dinner time in specific types of interactions in Family 1) and adaptability (e.g., letting go of listening to Hungarian music in Family 2). This finding suggests that sometimes the intention to use a minority language might very well be there, but if the expectations are not realistic for the family members at a given time in their lives, then language maintenance or development attempts may not be met.

Our results also indicate that for the families in our case study, engaging in developing the habit of using the minority language consistently in the context of an existing activity (dinner time in Family 1) or a new activity (reading time in Family 2) soon led to positive outcomes for all in terms of language use, proficiency, attitudes, and agency. Certainly, the amount of time spent in the minority language (French in Family 1 and Hungarian in Family 2) may still be a small proportion of the time they spend speaking the dominant language (English and Italian in Family 1 and English in Family 2). Yet the setting of contexts in which the children use the target language led to increased time spent in that language, and after six months, the children were able to initiate and maintain conversation in the minority language, which is what the parents were aiming for. Consistent with prior FLP research (Blom, 2010; Cheung et al., 2018; De Houwer, 1999; 2007; Hoff et al., 2012; Mishina-Mori, 2011; Paradis, 2011; Place & Hoff, 2011; Quiroz et al., 2010), this increased use of the minority language (and the decrease in language-mixing in Family 1) appears to have allowed the children to develop their proficiency in the respective target languages. They became better able to recall words or use the most appropriate ones, narrate events, articulate their thoughts, and in the case of Family 2, read more fluently. In terms of the children's attitudes towards the minority language, our notes show a trend moving from acceptance to enjoyment over time (interrupted by a few instances of resistance in Family 1). Lastly, throughout the study, and perhaps more clearly

after a few months, the children articulated more and more often the need and desire to use the minority language, demonstrating their enthusiastic engagement in the family language policy. In this way, our findings are consistent with research indicating a link between family cohesion, heritage language maintenance, use and proficiency in the family, and positive emotions towards the minority language and cultural values (Okita, 2002; Schwartz & Verschik, 2013; Tannenbaum, 2005; Tannenbaum & Howie, 2002; Wong Fillmore, 2000).

The results discussed above show that FLPs can be adapted to new situations and needs in order to help maintain and develop the use of a minority language. Our reflections converge to suggest that, even when fully endorsed, creating new habits in terms of FLP takes time and dedication. Yet adopting new habits also appears feasible and rewarding, at least when the FLP is negotiated with the family members, adapted to the needs of the family, and implemented in a way that is enjoyable for all. There is no doubt that, had the children not been willing to go along with the proposed use of the minority language during the selected specific activities, we would not have been able to see the improvements we observed in their minority language use, proficiency, and attitudes towards French/Hungarian.

From a researcher's perspective, conducting this case study was particularly eye-opening as it allowed us to experience first-hand the challenges and rewards that come with analyzing and acting upon our own FLP by attempting to implement changes. While previous FLP research has largely explored factors of multilingual development (Blom, 2010; De Houwer, 1999; 2007, Hoff et al., 2012; Lanza, 1992; 1997; 2001; Paradis, 2011; Place & Hoff, 2011; Quiroz, Snow, & Zhao, 2010) as well as links between FLP and attitudes (Cummins, 2001; Kouritzin, 1999; Parks, 2013, Okita, 2002; Schwartz & Verschik, 2013; Tannenbaum, 2005; Tannenbaum & Howie, 2002; Wong Fillmore, 2000) based on an analysis of FLPs through questionnaires and longitudinal observation of family practices (Hollebeke et al., 2020), adopting a more dynamic approach to the study of FLP allowed us to better understand how life changes, both small and large, can negatively or positively affect multilingual development.

Even though this study is limited to two families with unique contexts,

there are several implications for other families. This study was a deep dive into what lies underneath habits, patterns, and behaviors. While the structure of each family's language policy may be unique, the underlying difficulty that is part of this work is common to all families. It may also be encouraging to families where parents are not linguists to know that going through this process was hard for the authors of this study. The work also revealed where more can be done to help maintain the heritage language.

As with all case studies, the limitations of this study lie in the fact that readers can get a glimpse of only two families with their particular stories, languages, personalities, and goals. While other families can find some takeaways from this case study, there needs to be an adaptation to their needs and unique situations. Another limitation is the fact that the authors of this study were simultaneously playing the roles of mothers and researchers. In other words, they were the picture in the frame. To step outside the "frame," they added the role of accountability partner, and that certainly contributed to having both an insider and outsider's view of the situation.

Conclusion

This study focused on parents' reflections in family language policy. The two researchers started out this study from a place of curiosity regarding their own families' multilingualism. They collected data by keeping a daily journal, meeting regularly, and journaling reflections. These three instruments led to the following structure in the study: tracking, reflecting, planning, and implementing. The findings revealed several interesting and unexpected things. Keeping daily track of linguistic patterns is difficult. The difficulty came from initial limitations imposed by the format of the journal and the need to allow for a new habit to form. Consistency of language use alone, even when one parent only uses the heritage language with the children, can give parents a false security in their family language policy. Effective FLP should go beyond this. In the present study, it took paying close attention to the amount of time spent in the minority language to reveal that the time was insufficient. It took intentional changes in the families' habits and routines to introduce new activities in the minority language. The activities that were successfully

introduced were the ones where the children were also on board. This corroborates the importance of children's agency in family language policy. Lastly, the awareness of the importance of intentionality and adaptability can be higher in times of clear disruptions and change but go unnoticed when families simply drift with a prior established family language policy. Significant linguistic changes can occur in these cases that can decrease the children's minority language proficiency. An intentional attitude, heightened awareness, a collaborative approach, and persistence can all positively contribute to minority language maintenance.

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ŠEIMOS KALBŲ POLITIKOS TIKSLINGUMAS IR PRITAIKOMUMAS

Anotacija. Paveldėtosios kalbos išlaikymui įtakos turi daug įvairių veiksnių. Ypač šeimoms, gyvenančioms subtraktyvioje (angl. *subtractive*) dvikalbėje aplinkoje, labai svarbu turėti gerai apibrėžtą šeimos kalbos politiką (ŠKP). Net ir esant nustatytai ŠKP, dideli trikdžiai ir pokyčiai, taip pat ir mažesni pasikeitimai šeimų gyvenime gali smarkiai paveikti vaikų daugiakalbystės raidą ir kelti grėsmę paveldėtosios kalbos išlaikymui. Pokyčiai gali būti staigūs arba laipsniški. Tyrime akcentuojama, kaip svarbu, kad daugiakalbės šeimos įsisavintų poreikį sukurti ŠKP, ir nagrinėjamos problemos, susijusios šios politikos palaikymu. Tiksliau, tyrime remiamasi dviejų tėvų apmąstymais apie jų šeimų kalbos politiką, siekiant išsiaiškinti iššūkius ir pateikti rekomendacijas kitoms šeimoms. Tyrimas grindžiamas šiais klausimais: Ką tėvai žino apie savo šeimos daugiakalbystės įpročius ir politiką? Kaip tėvai gali palaikyti savo vaikų paveldėtosios kalbos raidą, susidūrę su dideliais trikdžiais ar net nežymiais gyvenimo pokyčiais? Du kalbininkai, auginantys daugiakalbius vaikus skirtingomis aplinkybėmis, susitarė būti atsakingais partneriais, kad geriau suprastų savo dinamiškas situacijas ir padėtų vienas kitam tikslingiau plėtoti daugiakalbystę šeimoje. Duomenys buvo renkami šešis mėnesius. Išvados rodo, kad tikslingumas padidėjo dėl atsakomybės partnerystės. Be to, tyrimas paneigė kelias kitų tyrėjų prielaidas, ypač dėl vartojamos paveldėtosios kalbos apimties, dėl to, kaip pereinamieji laikotarpiai veikia šeimą, ko reikia, kad įvyktų kalbiniai pokyčiai, ir dėl to, ar lengva stebėti savo šeimos kalbinius įpročius. Šis tyrimas rodo, kad nepakanka turėti ŠKP, bet reikia periodiškai ją atnaujinti ir įgyvendinti pokyčius, atitinkančius besikeičiantį planą.

Pagrindinės sąvokos: trikdžiai; šeimos kalbų politika; paveldėtoji kalba; tikslingumas; mažumų kalba; daugiakalbių tėvų reflektavimas.