

FAMILY LANGUAGE POLICIES AND CHILDREN'S BILINGUALISM AND MULTILINGUALISM

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Abstract: *this article mentions that bilingualism and multilingualism originate from the family. It also discusses parents' views and world outlook as their children's interest in language learning.*

Keywords: *multilingualism, bilingualism, language, implicit strategies, explicit strategies, children, parents.*

Research on bilingualism and multilingualism in families has provided a wealth of information on parents' perspectives, using interviews and questionnaires to investigate parents' language planning decisions and their conceptions of how to promote children's bilingual development [1], [2] thus connecting parental decision-making with wider societal and political policies and ideologies. Lately, several studies have highlighted parents' views on bilingualism from emotional and cognitive perspectives and the impact of these perspectives on parents' decision-making [3]. Relatively little work, however, has been devoted to looking at the ways in which parents' and children's goals and beliefs regarding language are realized as concrete efforts to shape language use and learning outcomes [4]. Studies focusing on how bilingualism and multilingual families' language strategies shape young (1- to 3-year-old) children's bilingual development have highlighted the importance of social interactional context [5] and the quantity and quality of exposure to the heritage language [6]. For instance, in the one-parent, one-language approach, the extent to which parents attempt to promote their own language through their conversational style, that is to say, explicit or implicit interactional constraining strategies aimed at the child's use of another language, is significant in creating a so-called monolingual versus bilingual interactional context for parent-child conversations. "Implicit strategies," such as parents' repetitions and recasts of the child's utterance into parental language, are considered ambiguous, and they do not constrain the child's language choice (i.e., children do not interpret that their language choice is deemed inappropriate) . "Explicit strategies" used with young children involve requests for translation and clarification, and parents' "feigned lack of comprehension". It is by following explicit strategies, which unambiguously index the inappropriateness of the child's language choice, that children are more likely to use the parental language . However, studies have reported that parents may need to engage in 'insisting' in order to achieve the child's compliance with the requested language choice. Moreover, by constraining the child's language choice, parents can hinder the flow of conversation.

Ethnographically informed studies show that parents may have difficulties in following through with their intentions to use the heritage language with their children on a daily basis [7]. While parents aim to apply particular language practices, they also have to juggle the complex task of both providing input in heritage languages and managing everyday tasks. The tensions that characterize bilingual parenting also involve a conflict between the parents' wishes to raise their children bilingually and their wishes to "form emotional attachments" and to accommodate their children's choices . Children's age is also an important factor in family bilingualism/language policies, though the relations between language management and children's age, that is to say, children's shifting communicative needs over time, are rarely conceptualized. Studies on interactional strategies mostly concern young children's (aged 1 to 3 years) bi- /multilingualism, and how such language maintenance practices are realized with school-aged children is less well-charted territory, although it is suggested that "rigid adherence to language policy appears to impede communication particularly in school-aged children"[8].

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