The 2nd Symposium of Language Policy in the Family, the Preschool and the School. Heading for the future!

University of Jyväskylä

April 7-8, 2017
Program

April 7: 2017 – How far have we reached?

8.30-9.30  Registration and morning coffee (Agora entrance hall)

**Invited talks and discussions (Agora Gamma auditorium)**

9.30-9.45  Introduction and welcoming words (Åsa Palviainen)

9.45-10.45  Åsa Palviainen and Mari Bergroth, University of Jyväskylä: *Seeing the child while engaging, navigating and changing the nexus: Experiences from the 4-year project Child2ling*

10.45-11.45  Mila Schwartz, Oranim College of Education: *Enhancing children’s willingness to use L2 (Arabic) in a bilingual kindergarten in Israel*

11.45-13.00  Lunch (at own expense in Piato restaurant)

**Invited talks and discussions (Agora Alfa auditorium)**

13.00-14.00  PhD-student İrem Bezcioğlu-Göktolga, Tilburg University: *Whose family language policy is it? Active agents in shaping the FLP of Turkish families in the Netherlands*

14.00-15.00  Dr. Cassie Smith-Christmas, University of Limerick: *Family language policy and endangered languages: Commonalities and conundrums*

15.00-15.30  Coffee break (included)

15.30-16.30  Taina Saarinen, University of Jyväskylä and ReCLaS: *Wibbly-wobbly, timey-wimey: Language policy as a fluid concept*

Dinner and get together in the city center (at own expense)
Program (cont.)

April 8: Which are the theories and methodologies for 2017 and beyond?

Poster exhibition (9.00-10.00, Agora entrance hall)

- Altinkamis, Feyza: Family Characteristics of Turkish-Dutch Bilingual Children in Flanders
- Ansó Ros, Judith: Finnish-Spanish bilingual children attending maintenance courses. Family characteristics and the role of parents in the transmission and acquisition
- Connaughton Crean, Lorraine: The Family Language Policy of Polish immigrant families in Ireland-Issues of ideology, practice and management
- Hirvonen, Pia: A Family Language Policy Perspective on Swedish Immersion Education in Finland
- Kingelin-Orrenmaa, Zea: Language politics on the macro and micro level: The case of the Swedish school of Tampere (SST)
- Nyman-Koskinen, Paulina & Pauliina Sopanen: Language diversity and language awareness in the national core curriculum for Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) and Basic Education (BE)
- Pratt, Sara: Parental attitudes to bilingualism and support in international families in Finland
- Roberts, Tim: Linguistic trajectories, ideologies and repertoires of multilingual families in Sweden
- Sjöberg, Sannina: Family Language Policy in Bilingual Families Including Three Generations

Invited talks and discussion (Agora Gamma auditorium)

10.00-11.00  Prof. Kutlay Yağmur, Tilburg University: Resources are more important than ideologies: Dynamics of FLP in Immigrant Families

11.00-12.00  Dr. Lyn Wright, The University of Memphis: Rethinking “family” in family language policy: New kinships, genders, and language socialization processes

12.00-13.00  Lunch (at own expense in restaurant Piato)

Invited talk and round table discussions (Agora Gamma auditorium)

13.00-14.00  Dr. Xiao Lan Curdt-Christiansen, University of Reading: Building new methodological and analytical framework

14.00-15.30  Round table discussions (including coffee and tea)

15.30-16.00  Concluding discussion
Abstracts of invited talks

(in chronological order)
The research project “Language conceptions and practices in bilingual early childhood: Swedish-Finnish bilingual children in Swedish medium pre-schools in Finland” (Child2ling, Academy of Finland) was launched in 2013 against the backdrop of different prevailing language ideologies on early childhood bilingualism and the steadily increasing number of children growing up in bilingual families and attending early childhood education in Swedish. The project had an ambitious and truly multi-layered objective: to provide a deeper understanding of how conceptions of language, bilingualism and bilingual development are manifested and negotiated in communicative practice, policy documents, media debates, bilingual children and their families, and Swedish-medium preschools in three different geographical sites in Finland. A large body of ethnographic data was collected in order to respond to the research objective and its related research questions. In order to unpack the complexity of layers we applied nexus analysis (Scollon & Scollon 2004), a comprehensive methodology that brings together a variety of data sets in order to trace how discourses in place are constructed, negotiated and resisted.

First we will discuss the trajectory of the project and especially focus on the central activity of navigating complex research data in order to understand what it says. We will present some concepts that have helped us in this process and present some crucial findings. Working with complex FLP data and trying to bring it together in a manageable form results however inevitably in simplifying the complexity to smaller chunks of information and there is also a tendency to forget the voice and the role of the young child in the family. In the latter part of this presentation we therefore place one child, Ester, in the center of our attention. We relate her everyday experiences in preschool to the complex data we have collected and analyzed in order to show what kinds of discourses on bilingualism and bilingual development surround her and how these discourses enable her bilingual agency in preschool and home.

Reference:

Enhancing children’s willingness to use L2 (Arabic) in a bilingual kindergarten in Israel

Mila Schwarts
Oranim Academic College of Education

Bilingual education can take different forms (Baker, 2011). In this talk, my focus will be on the dual language form of bilingual education in the bilingual Hebrew-Arabic speaking preschool in Israel, which was defined as a two-way language model of bilingual education. This model is aimed at increasing inter-group communicative competence and cultural awareness. This is the case of bilingual programs in the USA for English speakers and speakers of other minority languages (e.g., Spanish) and in Israel for Arabic and Hebrew speakers. In this type of language program, the purpose is to reach a language balance: in the 50:50 model, the majority and the minority languages are used for equal amounts of time throughout the day.

In reality, there is a tendency for overusing the majority language by children and even by teachers as this language becomes, due to its superior status, the “common denominator” (Baker, 2007, p. 138). In the context of the target bilingual Hebrew-Arabic speaking preschool, a clear discrepancy in L2 use between the majority (Hebrew) and minority (Arabic) children was noticed (Schwartz, Moin, & Klayle, 2013). This resulted in slow progress in minority language development among majority language children. This staggering progress was attributed to a relatively low motivation of the Hebrew-speaking children to use L2 (Arabic), which in turn is due to the fact that they are understood in Hebrew by the Arabic-model teacher.

In this talk, I will present a research project focused on bilingual teachers’ attempt to both a) promote the status of the minority language, Arabic, and b) strengthen its presence in the bilingual preschool space. Specifically, I will address the following questions: 1. What is the role of teachers' agency in encouraging and empowering children to use L2? 2. Which teaching strategies are conducive to L2 use? 3. Which contextual factors are favorable to the children's’ willingness to produce oral output in L2?

References:


Whose family language policy is it?

Active agents in shaping the FLP of Turkish families in the Netherlands

İrem Bezcioğlu-Göktolga

Tilburg University

In this paper, I will discuss the family language policy among second-generation Turkish families in the Netherlands. Based on the language policy model of Spolsky (2004, 2007), I will illustrate the language ideology, practice and management strategies of parents, children who are in the early years of primary school, and their classroom teachers. During my PhD research, adapting an ethnographic approach, I collected data from 20 second-generation families and 5 primary school teachers through observations and interviews. I utilized grounded theory data analysis techniques to derive major beliefs, practices and management strategies employed by families and teachers. Analysis of the data reveals that all of the families try to maintain Turkish at home to be able to preserve their identity and culture in addition to symbolic values associated with Turkey. Children, on the other hand, shift to Dutch in their daily lives despite their Turkish skills, and they manage linguistic interactions within the family though their language choices. Moreover, parents put a lot of effort to improve Dutch skills of their children to gain access to opportunities in the Netherlands, which is why the professional advice given by the teachers for children’s school achievement is of great value. Interviewed teachers have diverse opinions regarding the role of home language use of immigrant parents, the relationship between first and second language skills, school achievement and socialization of immigrant children. The role of parents, children and teachers as active agents in forming the language activities in the families will be discussed.

References:


Family language policy and endangered languages:

Commonalities and conundrums

Cassie Smith-Christmas

University of Limerick

This paper will draw on previous work on a Gaelic-speaking family on the Isle of Skye, Scotland, as well as new comparative research on families in the Western Isles of Scotland and the Irish Gaeltacht, in exploring how FLPs involving an endangered language may play out differently from FLPs involving relatively ‘healthy’ languages. Using an ethnographic approach, the paper explores how language policy at the wider level filters down to the microlevel of the family and in turn, how individual children situate their own particular language experiences in a wider sociocultural milieu, and the implications of these orientations in terms of language planning efforts. The paper also discusses the methodological challenges of taking a very child-centred approach to FLP research and the potential value of multimodal methods. The paper concludes by considering the commonalities, and potential conundrums, of research involving endangered languages when compared to other situations, such as the OPOL context, and offers perspectives on how this can guide future research.
Wibbly-wobbly, timey-wimey:
Language policy as a fluid concept

Taina Saarinen
Centre for Applied Language Studies & ReCLaS Research Collegium for Language in Changing Society
University of Jyväskylä

We generally define politics as activities intended to promote action or ideology, while exerting power over others. A narrow definition of politics would be this kind of activity taking place in institutional settings. A broad definition, in turn, is that politics implies use of, or submission or resistance to power in any field of life, as long as the goal is to have an impact on individual or society. Policy, then, is the set of principles and courses of action that leads us to those ideological and power-related decisions.

But what are the limits of this kind of understanding of “politics” and “policy” in this way? Is all power use politics? Are we all somehow implementing politics and policies in our interpersonal and societal activities?

Research problems in the area of language policy and social structures are typically phenomenon based "wicked problems” that take place in a complex setting of social, economic, ethnic, political, environmental, health, security, or learning contexts (to name just a few). Thus, the nature of language policy problems is thematic rather disciplinarily or theoretically motivated. Research that focuses on formal policies and policy structures (be they at macro, meso or micro policies, or local, national or global levels of action) thus fails to take into account the temporally and spatially fluctuating networked contacts between different actors (human or institutional), and the dynamics between those contacts. We need to develop the understanding, analysis, and development of language policy as situated and multi-sited; i.e. temporally and spatially fluctuating. (Halonen & al. 2015.)

Often, as a consequence of the complex links between different policy sectors, measures and levels, policies end up appearing unsuccessful and haphazard; hence, the “wibbly-wobbliness” (to quote the Tenth Doctor from the science fiction series Doctor Who) of policy is our real challenge. This presentation tackles this temporal and spatial wibbly-wobbliness of language policy.

Reference

Resources are more important than ideologies: Dynamics of FLP in Immigrant Families

Kutlay Yağmur

Tilburg University, the Netherlands

In line with Spolsky’s model of family language policy (2004; 2012), researchers investigate parental language practices, ideology and management. The focus usually falls on the linguistic interactions of family members in immigrant families. Using conceptual frameworks of language maintenance and shift (e.g., Clyne, 2002; Edwards, 1992; Fishman, 1991) home language use, choice and preference of immigrants are described mostly in an intergenerational perspective. In FLP studies, focusing on language beliefs, practices and management strategies are certainly important. However, beliefs alone cannot explain the complicated nature of FLP dynamics. There are a number of crucial dimensions to be taken into consideration. First of all, other having the right beliefs and strategies immigrant parents need to have the necessary resources. By resources, I do not only suggest the materials necessary for language development. Awareness of linguistic and cultural differences, socialization practices and being able to be involved in the schooling process of their children are some of the issues facing immigrant parents. Child rearing practices and socialization beliefs need to be discussed in more detail. Nevertheless, immigrant parents do not make their language use-choice decisions in isolation. Acculturation orientations of both the immigrant group and the mainstream society, as well as the dominant language ideology in the host society have strong impacts on the parents. Moreover, most of the actions-decisions are motivated by deeply embedded cultural values and identity issues. In the Dutch context, for instance, how the families construct and re-construct the social boundaries between their 'community' and the mainstream Dutch community lead them to make strategic decisions about their practices. Investigation of social and cultural as well as religious boundaries are crucial in taking further steps in FLP studies. Finally, for more comprehensive and deeper study of family language policy in immigrant families, the possible effects of receiving society policies, educational practices and ideologies of immigrant integration need to be documented. How the minority group is perceived by the receiving society members is a crucial dimension.

References


Rethinking “family” in family language policy:
New kinships, genders, and language socialization processes
Lyn Wright
University of Memphis

“Family” is at the heart of family language policy, and the dynamic processes of identity construction, kinship formation, and the negotiation of gender roles central to family life influence language learning and use (Fogle, 2012; King & Lanza, 2017; Ochs & Kremer-Sadlik, 2015; Zhu Hua, 2008). Few studies in FLP, however, critically examine the definition and conceptualization of family. This gap has both theoretical and ethical implications. A myopic focus on dual-parent, heterosexual families excludes a wide swath of postindustrial and transnational parenting configurations. Further, greater focus on a wider variety of families, including single-parent, transnational, and LGBTQ-identified, can lead to new understandings of family interaction and the ways in which kinship, gender, and language are intimately intertwined. Such “rethinking” of family entails an understanding of FLP as dynamic, negotiated, and contingent in relation to fluid family formation processes.

This presentation will survey language and literacy socialization in a variety of family types and the implications for multilingual FLP studies. In addition, I will draw on two different studies of Russian speakers in the US, a collective case study of Russian adoptive families (Fogle, 2012) and ongoing research with Russian-speaking mothers, to discuss the construction of child agency and family identities associated with FLP in single-parent and transnational adoptive families in particular. Rather than taking family to be a fixed context within which FLP processes occur, this presentation will see FLP as a process of meaning-making that coincides with family formation and transformation (King & Lanza, 2017). By centering the periphery in family language policy studies (Cashman, 2012), we can gain new ground in understanding how family language use and development intersect with larger forces of transnationalism, ideologies of gender and sexuality, and postindustrial parenting.

References:
Family language Policy

Building New Methodological and Analytical Framework

Xiao Lan Curdt-Christiansen

University of Reading

Family language policy (FLP) has received increasing attention in recent years. Of central interest is why some children growing up in a bilingual environment become monolinguals while other children growing up in a monolingual society become bilinguals. Over the past decades, researchers in this field try to understand the role FLP plays in bi/multilingual development by examining interactions between family members, investigating parental language ideologies, as well as studying parents’ conscious choices in their discourse strategies. While these studies have shed much light on our understanding of intergenerational linguistic transmission in transnational families, we need to go beyond the current juncture to:

1) conduct multi-level, cross-context and multi-type family research to transform the scope of the research with both a ‘wide angle’ and a ‘long-focus’ lens to capture the national, the community and the family level of language practices,

2) build new methodological and analytical frameworks that are valuable and transferable to a wide range of disciplines beyond the field of sociolinguistics and education, and

3) conduct cross-disciplinary research to develop theoretical understandings of FLP.

In order to see how we can establish new theoretical understandings of FLP, I will use a comparative study of three ethnic communities in the UK – speaking Chinese, Italian and Urdu respectively – to look at FLP in a new methodological and analytical framework.