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This capstone is a study of the language dynamics between a mother and her daughter in a family where Polish is the home language and English is the dominant language in the community. This research examines what factors affect the mother's and daughter's attitudes and practices regarding home language maintenance over a year. A key influence for this capstone is Lily Wong Fillmore (1991 and 2000), who has discussed the negative consequences of children losing their home languages. This researcher collected data by interviewing the mother and daughter and collecting audio-recordings of home language interactions. The data showed that over a period of one year, the daughter's preference for English continues to grow and her use of Polish continues to lessen. The main factors affecting home language use are the priority the family places on English and the value they still give to Polish.

HOME LANGUAGE USE:

A CASE STUDY OF A MOTHER AND HER DAUGHTER

by

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requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in English as a Second Language.

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This capstone is dedicated to
my husband, Todd, and my children, Sam and Abby,
for their patience, support, and love during this project

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The Source of my Interest

My four-year-old daughter was ready to start preschool, and I had found a program to enroll in through the local school district. The school was unique because it met twice a week, but one of those days a parent attended as well. On these parent/child days, we had time to do art projects, read, and play with our child followed by a parent discussion time while our children continued playing and learning in the early childhood education room.

When my daughter and I walked into the classroom on the first day, one of the first mothers I met was Stefania. I recognized immediately that she spoke fluent English but also had a lovely accent. I also ascertained quickly that her daughter, Ela, spoke fluent English as well with no accent. I learned that Stefania and her husband are originally from Poland. She works as a nurse practitioner in a medical center and he is employed as an engineer at a local company. Ela is their only child and they are raising her with Polish as their home language.

I wanted to pepper her with so many questions about their bilingualism and experiences with Ela. How was it going with the home language? What approach did they use with their Polish at home? Did Ela like speaking Polish? How had she learned English? What struggles were they experiencing with her emerging bilingualism? What

did they know about the benefits and research on bilingualism? What was their experience of being bilingual in this community and this country?

This mother and daughter are the subjects in my case study exploring the rewards and challenges of raising a bilingual child and specifically striving to preserve the family's home language. Through interviews with the mother and daughter and audio recordings of their home language use, I investigated the factors that affect Stefania's attitudes and practices about maintaining their home language of Polish with Ela. The factors that affect how Ela reacts to these attitudes and practices and how she feels about Polish is a focus of the capstone as well. This study was carried out over a time period of a year, so I was able to study any changes that occurred regarding these issues with their home language.

Through an in-depth look at this mother and daughter and their experiences with their home language of Polish, I hoped to add to the knowledge on the complexities and the challenges of raising children bilingually in this community and this country. Raising a child with more than one language is a worthy pursuit as there are many advantages to being bilingual or multilingual in today's world. There are professional, cognitive, personal, and cultural benefits of bilingualism (Cummins & Swain, 1986).

In today's global economy, it is clear that being bilingual can give an individual a professional advantage as there are needs in so many areas for employees who are proficient in English and another language (Cummins, 2000). The cognitive benefits of bilingualism include the ability to transfer academic skills between languages and the possibility of enhanced metalinguistic awareness (Cummins & Swain, 1986). Finally, the

impact of maintaining the home language as part of being bilingual is an essential component of strong family relationships and ties to one's culture and community (Wong Fillmore, 2000).

Supporting home language maintenance in a bilingual family is a worthy goal that more than just the family should be concerned about. English language teachers and teachers in general are on the front lines when it comes to advising families on this issue and educating others about bilingualism and language acquisition (Cummins & Swain, 1986). These teachers should be knowledgeable about the benefits of bilingualism for their students and be prepared to meaningfully advocate for home language use with their students and their families.

While this study is narrow in focus, it can offer insight into the importance of this issue. My hope is that my case study will be informative to teachers and inspire them to become advocates for home language use. My own inspiration for this topic stems from both my personal language experiences over the years and my professional experiences as an English as a Second Language teacher.

My Personal Language Experience

My fascination in this topic has a very long history. My first language is English. I was raised as an English monolingual in various small towns in Iowa that were rather homogeneous culturally and linguistically. But, since a young age, I have been passionately drawn to learning more about other people, cultures, places, and languages. A central focus of this has been my devotion to learning Spanish. I have been trying to perfect my Spanish for over twenty years now. I have studied earnestly, traveled to other

countries to learn and practice, utilized it in my professional life when it was helpful, and generally tried to take advantage of opportunities to improve it. Still, I am not fluent. There was a time when I was quite proficient after spending four months in Costa Rica, but that has faded as opportunities to use and practice my Spanish have lessened increasingly. Why do I keep trying? I love the magic of another language, the entry it allows you into another culture, place, and people. I am grateful that the proficiency I do have has allowed me to travel competently and confidently in Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, and Spain. Still, I want to be so much better in this language.

I consider people who are raised bilingually or multilingually to be very lucky. Considering how much I have struggled to learn a second language, I marvel at the opportunity children have who come from a family with the ability to raise them with two or more languages. What a gift. If the native languages of my husband's family and mine had been preserved, we would be able to raise our children to be multilinguals in the languages of German, Italian, and English.

I do not mean to suggest that growing up bilingually or raising children bilingually is always an easy path. There are definite challenges for both children and parents pursing the path of bilingualism in the United States (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996). Immigrant parents who assume they will continue speaking their native language at home with their families are often surprised by the challenges they soon come to face. These challenges can come from their own children who, desperately wanting to fit in and be more American, begin to prefer English and show resistance to the home language. The challenge can also come from a society that often sends the message that immigrants

need to assimilate as fast as possible, and speaking only English is one of the best ways to do so. Children also feel conflicted as they struggle to negotiate their home language and culture as well as the language and culture outside their family unit.

Professional Background and Connections

I have seen families struggle with these language issues often in my years as an ESL teacher. While I am committed to helping non-native speakers become proficient in English and full participants in American society, I also strongly believe that there is great value in preserving native/home languages, and I am concerned that immigrants in the U.S. today are experiencing struggles in this area with their children. I will be exploring these very issues in my case study.

When I started teaching adult ESL in a Family Literacy program, I discovered that our own staff was unwittingly putting the children in our program at risk for losing their home languages. In this program, the mothers would bring their young children to the school with them. It was great for the children to have this rich exposure to English, and often it resulted in the children needing less ESL services when they went to kindergarten. However, each day of the program began with a parent and child interaction time, and I realized after a while that some well-meaning staff were encouraging the mothers to practice their English with their children during this time and at home.

This advice resulted in a lot of silence, awkwardness, or stilted conversation during what should have been a time of very rich conversation in the families' home languages. I was concerned that the mothers were getting the message that their home

languages were not as important or valid as English. In addition, most of them were not proficient enough in English to be able to communicate in the manner that mothers need to be able to communicate with their children.

Proficiency is probably not even the most critical issue in this situation, but rather how strange it must have felt for the mothers to speak to their children in anything but their home language, pointed out Andreas Schramm. Schramm is a professor in the Hamline University Center for Second Language Teaching and Learning and native speaker of German who raised his own children in the United States. Schramm commented, "There is a whole psychosocial level where it is unnatural and foreign to use another language when much of the parent-child identity is in the other language. To this day, I find it extremely unnatural and uncomfortable to speak English with my kids and rarely do so unless entirely unavoidable" (personal communication, August 20, 2011).

Finally, the majority of the program day was complete immersion in English for both the mothers and their children. I felt confident that they had ample time to practice and use their English during the program day, and at the same time I felt very uneasy about this subtle taboo of using the home language during a very short parent-child interaction time.

However, some staff were skeptical when the idea of encouraging home language use during parent and child interaction time was introduced. Shortly after this issue emerged, we all attended the yearly Minnesota Family Literacy conference. Patton Tabors (1997), author of <u>One Child, Two Languages,</u> was the keynote speaker and she

passionately discussed the importance of children maintaining their home language in the family even as they are learning English and expected to become proficient in English.

I will never forget the selection she read from Hunger of Memory, Richard Rodriguez's (1981) autobiography. He describes what occurs in his family after the children's teachers advise them to stop using Spanish in the home. The parents do not know English well and the result in the family is truly heartbreaking. Rodriguez explains how the dynamics in the family start to change:

> My mother and father, for their part, responded differently as their children spoke to them less. She grew restless, seemed troubled and anxious at the scarcity of words exchanged in the house. It was she who would question me about my day when I came home from school. She smiled at small talk. She pried at the edges of my sentences to get me to say something more. She'd join conversations she overheard, but her intrusions often stopped her children's talking. By contrast, my father seemed reconciled to the new quiet. Though his English improved somewhat, he retired into silence. At dinner he spoke very little. One night his children and even his wife helplessly giggled at his garbled English pronunciation of the Catholic Grace before Meals. Thereafter he made his wife recite the prayer at the start of each meal, even on formal occasions, when there were guests in the house. Hers became the public voice of the family. On official business, it was she, not my father, one would usually hear on the phone or in stores, talking to strangers. His children grew so accustomed to his silence that, years later, they would speak routinely of his shyness. But my father was not shy, I realized, when

> I'd watch him speaking Spanish with relatives. Using Spanish, he was quickly effusive. Especially when talking with other men, his voice would spark, flicker, flare alive with sounds. In Spanish, he expressed ideas and feelings, he rarely revealed in English. With firm Spanish sounds, he conveyed confidence and authority English would never allow him. (1981, pp. 24-25).

Listening to this story made a very firm impression on me that has been a major contributor to my interest in this topic. From this conference and additional trainings, we were able to get everyone on board with the philosophy of encouraging home language maintenance and use of the home language during parent and child time. This became the program's official philosophy. We still stressed that the mothers were learning English during their class time, and the children were learning English during their own class time. But, there was definitely a place and a time for the use of the home language.

I continued to think about these issues both in my job teaching adult ESL in the Family Literacy program and in my next position teaching in an evening program for adult ESL students. I knew from a lot of conversations with my students that they were having difficulty maintaining their home languages with their children. Many of the parents reported that their children were starting to strongly prefer English and refusing to use the home language.

I remember having a lengthy conversation with a group of Hmong women in my class about what a shame it was that they didn't have time in their fast-paced lives in America anymore to teach their children their art and skills in sewing and needlepoint.

They told me they did regret the loss of this art, but all agreed that was the least of their problems with their children in America.

They proceeded to explain quite eloquently in their beginning-level English how their children wouldn't speak Hmong to them anymore and how this affected the family and their ability to parent effectively. They talked about how this process happened before they even truly realized the gravity of what was occurring.

The Hmong mothers told me, "The kids want to be American, you know. They want to wear American clothes, listen to American music, and only speak English". They laughed and joked as they commiserated about this problem, but I felt their anxiety and sense of loss as we talked and wondered about the state of their family relationships when the language dynamics seemed to be so dysfunctional. After all, these women were placed in a beginning level ESL class with me. They could not yet communicate sufficiently in English in a way that parents need to be able to communicate with their children.

The two examples I just described of struggles immigrant parents have in maintaining the home language with their children are my own anecdotal evidence on this topic. However, this is not a new problem and many researchers in the field have examined these issues.

Subtractive Bilingualism

In some cases, as children learn English, they begin to lose their home language. This process has been referred to as subtractive bilingualism. Wallace Lambert (1977) first talked about subtractive bilingualism when he studied the language situation with

immigrants in Canada (as cited in Wong Fillmore, 1991). As these immigrants became more fluent in English, their native languages began to weaken or disappear.

Immigrants have always experienced some issues of subtractive bilingualism in the United States, but it used to occur at a slower pace and was generally not complete until the third generation (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996). Few second-generation immigrants can describe themselves as true bilinguals in the U.S. today (Lopez, 1982, as cited in Wong Fillmore, 2000). Furthermore, the loss of home languages is now even occurring among first generation immigrant children (Lambert, 1977, as cited in Wong Fillmore, 2000).

What are the reasons for this accelerated problem of subtractive bilingualism? I will discuss this in more detail in the literature review chapter but there can be subtle and not so subtle pressure for families to forgo their home languages (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996). The subtle pressure comes from well-meaning but misinformed teachers and others who simply want children to succeed and learn English quickly and assume that the best way to do this is to use English all the time. The more hostile pressure comes in the form of the current heated political debate about immigration, which usually involves assertion of the dominance of the English language in our country. The notion that to be American, you not only need to learn English very quickly but also should forget about your native language is sometimes implied and often stated directly. These subtle and direct types of pressures can have a great impact on parents' confidence and ability in preserving their home language with their children.

The Role of Teachers in Promoting Home Languages

In my work in the Family Literacy program, it struck me profoundly how influenced the mothers were by our staff's subtle and not-so-subtle messages to them on this issue of which language to speak to their children. They trusted the teachers and assumed that they knew best.

English language teachers and all teachers who work with families speaking languages other than English at home have considerable influence concerning how the home language is perceived. They have the power and expertise to make it clear to families that English can be learned and mastered while the home language is also being developed. Parents get confusing and mixed messages about using a language other than English. It is imperative that teachers stress the importance and value of both languages.

ESL teachers need to be attentive to this topic when considering the families they are working with. It is their responsibility to provide quality information, resources, and encouragement to parents aiming to raise their children with a language or languages in addition to English. ESL teachers are frequently the staff the parents of ESL students most trust and respect in the school system. The messages they send about home languages really matter.

This topic is essential for mainstream educators to understand as well, because many of our schools are becoming increasingly linguistically diverse. Mainstream teachers need to understand the second language acquisition process and that becoming proficient in English doesn't have to mean losing the native language. I have spoken to the director of the K-12 ESOL program in my school district and she stated that

educating mainstream teachers about ESOL issues including the home language issue is always a concern and goal.

Home Languages and Family Relationships

I have discovered through conversations like the ones I had with the Hmong women in my class how vitally important this issue of home language preservation can be to immigrant families and families wanting to raise their children bilingually. In her research on subtractive bilingualism, Lily Wong Fillmore has discussed how this issue can affect family relationships. She wrote:

> I contend that the school cannot provide children what is most fundamental to success in life. The family plays a crucial role in providing the basic elements for successful functioning. These include: a sense of belonging; knowledge of who one is and where one comes from; an understanding of how one is connected to the important others and events in one's life; the ability to deal with adversity; and knowing one's responsibility to self, family, community. What happens in families where parents cannot communicate easily with the children? What happens when the major means of socializing children into the beliefs, values, and knowledge base of the family and cultural group is lost? It is not easy to socialize children in a language one does not know well. (2000, p.206)

Arguments can be made about the value of bilingualism for economic and professional reasons, but Wong Fillmore is reaching back to an even more basic component of our society when she discusses how language affects the family unit. If

teachers can validate the use of languages other than English, it can serve to maintain and strengthen family bonds and ultimately the community in which they operate.

As I have mentioned, the mother in my case study speaks English fluently, so perhaps one could argue that nothing would be lost to them in family intimacy and cultural understanding if Ela started to just use English. Stefania can communicate competently to her daughter in English as well as Polish, right? In my discussion chapter, I will discuss Stefania's feelings and opinions on this subject. Consider also, that extended family can play a crucial role in our children's development and not all of the extended family in this unit speaks fluent English. In fact, Stefania's mother still lives in Poland and speaks only Polish. Yearly trips are made between the two households in the United States and Poland. What would happen to this grandmother and granddaughter relationship if Ela gradually lost her ability to communicate in Polish?

Of course, these issues of home languages are not just prominent in school settings. Language has become an important and often controversial issue in both my local community and in the United States. Families working on maintaining home languages can easily find themselves involved in and influenced by these controversies.

Immigration and English on the Local Level

In the fall of 2007, I attended a public discussion on immigration in my community. There was heated and polarized debate about many issues related to the topic, and the issue of language came up several times. A few in the audience complained about using taxpayer money to translate official documents into languages other than English and demanded that this practice be stopped; they were applauded. A local state

representative responded that he was interested in pursuing "English as the Official Language" legislation when asked about his priorities concerning immigration. Many people at the meeting spoke on the other side of these issues, but the controversy was strong. Perhaps fueling some of these strong opinions is the fact that the community that I live in has experienced much change in recent years as a result of immigration.

The 2000 Census shows that 10% of the population of the city is foreign born with over half of those having arrived between 1990 and 2000 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000). In 2005 more immigrants arrived in the state than in any of the previous 25 years on record ('Minnesota State Demographic Center", 2006). The percentages of these foreign-born individuals are: 43.6% from Asia, 20% from Africa, 19.4% from Europe, 11.6% from Latin America, 4.7% from North America, and .07% from Oceania (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000). The nine largest minority groups in the community are African American, Bosnian, Cambodian, Hmong, Mexican, Native American, Somali, Sudanese, and Vietnamese. ("RISE Informational Booklet", 2004). The number of immigrants from African countries continues to increase. In 2005 two of every five immigrants were from Africa. The country of Somalia has the most immigrants and is the largest minority group in the local public schools ("Minnesota State Demographic Center", 2006).

With these shifts in immigration, there is a growing amount of linguistic diversity in the community and in the schools. Since 1990, minority enrollment in the county's public schools has increased by 125%. In the census the percentage of individuals over five years old who speak a language other than English in the home is

12.2%. (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000). Approximately 2,150 students are in the public school's English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program. This accounts for 13% of the total enrollment in the district. These students come from 66 different countries and speak 65 different languages. ("English for Speakers of Other Languages", 2003).

A non-profit organization in the community commissioned a study to explore local attitudes about race in the county. This survey was administered in both 1990 and 2006. Issues of immigration were explored in the survey. In a summary report on the survey, Kunkel (2007) stated, "Qualitative data suggest significant anti-immigrant sentiment –largely expressed in fears about jobs, taxes, crime, and concern about schooling and English-speaking adaptations."

The community I live in has and will continue to experience huge changes because of immigration. It is vital that the issues of English language learning and preservation of home languages be better understood and accepted by this community. Teachers of English language learners can and should play an integral role in imparting this information to their students, the families, and the community at large.

Immigration and English on the National Level

On a larger scale, the issue of immigration and language is a key one in the Congress right now and among the candidates hoping to be elected as president of the United States in 2008. On December 4, 2007, the Democratic candidates for president debated in Des Moines, Iowa on National Public Radio. The following excerpt is taken

from a transcript of the debate (National Public Radio, 2007). Steve Inskeep, one of the moderators, introduced the topic of immigration:

> We mentioned that we've been taking questions from listeners in recent weeks about this debate, and one is on a small issue that, I think, points to a large concern. It comes from Tally Wilson of Boone, North Carolina, and her concern has to do with those voicemail automated messages that you get if you call a government office or a business office; the ones that say for English press one, para espanol, oprima numero dos. She says, "Suddenly we're asked what language we speak in our own country. Will you remove the question about what language we speak when we call any U.S. government office?"

I really find this type of question troubling and that it reflects the public's lack of understanding of the issues surrounding learning English and the preservation of home languages. The need for the American public to gain more knowledge on the subject is dire. Although my study is of a single mother and daughter, I believe that it will give a personal glimpse into the complexities of this issue. Often personal narratives have the power to transcend politically charged rhetoric and debates. I hope that by telling their story, it will open the door to wider understanding and knowledge on this subject.

Research Questions

The questions I am exploring with the mother and daughter in my study are:

- What are the factors that affect Stefania's attitudes and practices regarding maintaining the home language of Polish with her daughter Ela over a time period of a year?

- What are the factors that affect Ela's attitudes and practices regarding maintaining the home language of Polish over a time period of a year?
- Are there changes in the mother's and daughter's attitudes and practices with Polish over the year?

Summary

Being bilingual or multilingual is an asset and valuable resource in today's world that should be encouraged. I am very concerned that as our new arrivals dedicate themselves to the important task of learning English, a troubling by-product is that many are losing their home languages. I have first-hand experience with the causes and the results of this in my professional life teaching English language learners.

Subtractive bilingualism can occur because of well meaning but not well-informed intentions, ignorance, inattention, and sometimes pressure and hostility.

Teachers of English as a Second Language have expertise in the area of language acquisition and can be valuable resources for anybody who needs to better understand the issues of bilingualism and second language acquisition.

Mainstream teachers who work with English language learners need to be educated about these issues. Many students and their families themselves need guidance and assurance as they navigate the complex world of two or more languages.

Finally, none of these issues take place in isolation. The impact is felt well beyond a single family's home or a single classroom. The context in which these families are living is important, and so if their home languages are going to survive and thrive, the public is going to have to be educated about the topic as well. This is evident

in how much the use of English has become a hot button topic in debates on immigration, both in my community and the nation at large. We are in a critical period in history with these issues.

By studying one mother who wants her daughter to both master English and maintain their family language of Polish, I am hoping to make a compelling case for greater understanding of and attention to this issue. I will show the rewards, challenges and complexities of raising a bilingual child in this community and hopefully inspire teachers and others to take a clear stand and be advocates for the mastering of English while allowing the home language to grow and strengthen as well.

In the following chapter I will outline the research and studies on this topic of home language maintenance. I will discuss the research and facts about bilingualism and children. I will further examine the problem of subtractive bilingualism. I will describe the results of other studies examining the attitudes of various parents aiming to raise their children bilingually and the strategies they use as they attempt to do this.

I expect the answers I find to these questions will contribute to the field of English language teaching by further highlighting the complex issues of raising a child bilingually in our society. English language teachers will have additional understanding of why they need to be giving clear messages about home language use to the families they are working with, to mainstream teachers, and to their communities.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter I will outline and discuss research that is connected to my topic. I am studying the factors that affect the attitudes one mother has about preserving her home language of Polish with her daughter and the practices she uses to promote home language use. I am also writing about the factors that affect the daughter's reactions to these attitudes and practices and her feelings about the home language. Changes in these issues over a time period of a year and the factors that impact home language use are also investigated. My hope is that teachers of English language learners will find this story compelling and be able to draw lessons from it that will encourage them to help protect and promote the home languages of their students. ESL teachers will be able to see their valuable role in encouraging home language use with their students, the parents, other mainstream teachers, and the public in general.

In this chapter I will define and discuss both individual and family bilingualism. I will also discuss various myths about bilingualism and what language researchers have said about these myths. Finally, I will highlight the benefits of bilingualism.

I will outline the phenomenon of subtractive bilingualism. I will define this issue, trace some of the history of it in the United States, describe why it occurs, and make the case for why we should be concerned about it.

Finally, I will address how bilingualism is working in some families in the United States today. I will describe the common methods families use to maintain bilingualism in their homes as well as some strategies parents use when difficulties arise with maintaining the home language. Two specific studies on families and bilingualism will be described to show the wide variation in parents' thinking about home language use and what some do to establish and promote it.

All of these areas that I discuss here are topics I will be exploring with Stefania and Ela as I paint a detailed picture of one mother-daughter experience with their home language of Polish. This single picture will add to the knowledge on home language preservation and provide an in-depth and personal view into this very complex issue.

Defining Bilingualism

Individual Bilingualism

Mackey and Weinreich both simply state that a bilingual is someone who alternates use between two languages (as cited by Harding & Riley, 1986). However, this definition does not satisfy many language researchers, who are often interested in the degree of proficiency achieved in both languages.

Another definition, which seems to be reasonable at first glance, is that a bilingual individual is "traditionally someone with a native or native-like control of two languages. Bilinguals in the traditional sense must then be qualified as '*balanced bilinguals*'; as 'ambilingual' or 'equilingual'; or as 'full', 'true', 'ideal' bilinguals. (The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Linguistics, 2007). However, these terms "ambilingual" and "equilingual" are difficult to define and measure.

Even among language researchers, it is difficult to find a consensus of how to measure the level of proficiency in two different languages. (Snow & Hakuta, 1989). Some have suggested assessing bilingualism in a very functional manner (Grosjean, as cited in Snow & Hakuta, 1989). The variety of tasks an individual may complete in a typical month can be considered, such as shopping, watching television, communicating with a doctor, having professional conversations, reading the newspaper, etc. Then the language demands associated with these various tasks can be evaluated. If an individual can accomplish them in more than one language, he/she is a bilingual. The more tasks one can perform in two languages, the higher the level of proficiency as a bilingual.

Joshua Fishman (1971) has written extensively about bilingualism and also cites the desire to measure the degree of language proficiency in bilingual individuals. He states, "Bilinguals vary with respect to the number and overlap of domains in which they habitually employ each of their languages" (p. 305). Fishman goes on to say that bilingual proficiency often shifts throughout life. At times, the domains in which an individual is operating in two languages will expand and at times these domains may become more restricted. How the two languages are used and accepted in different domains will vary greatly depending on the context of the situation.

The exact definition of what it means to be bilingual will continue to be studied and investigated. In my study, I will describe Ela's bilingualism in detail. I will discuss how, when, where, and why Ela uses her two languages of English and Polish. How her bilingualism has been established and how her home language is maintained will also be investigated in this family since there are many ways for families to achieve bilingualism.

Family Bilingualism

Bilingual families may be categorized into five main types, according to the parents' native languages, the dominant language in the community, and the strategies the parents use with the child (Harding & Riley, 1986).

#1. The parents have different native languages. The language of one of them is the community's dominant language. From birth, they each speak their own native language to the child.

#2. The parents have different native languages. The language of one is the dominant community language. The non-dominant language is used by the parents with the child; the child is exposed to the dominant language outside of the home, specifically when formal schooling begins.

#3. The parents have the same native language, which they speak to their child. The dominant language is different than the parents' language.

#4. The parents have different native languages and they each use their own language with the child. Neither of their native languages is the dominant language of the community.

#5. The parents have the same native language, which is also the dominant language of the community. One of the parents always communicates with the child in a second language, which is not the parent's native language.

The family in my study falls under category #3. The mother and father share the native language of Polish; the dominant language in the community is English. It is

interesting to note that even within each category, there is wide variation in how families operate with language.

Stefania has lived in the United States for twenty years, speaks English fluently, and her daughter Ela was born in the U.S. Stefania reports at the beginning of the study that she aims to use Polish as much as possible in the home but at times uses a mix of English and Polish. My study is only with the mother and daughter, but Stefania remarked that Ela's father, Ales, speaks 99% Polish in the home and is stricter than she is about exclusive use of Polish. When they have Polish visitors or visit other Polish families, Stefania tries to speak only Polish with Ela. When they are around English-speakers, they tend to use only English. Stefania says she speaks both Polish and English in public with Ela; it just depends on the context and what types of speakers are around. The dynamics of their bilingualism will be explained in even more detail later.

Myths about Bilingualism

Families that fall into these various categories generally have the goal of raising their child to be bilingual. For some, this means preserving a home language. There are many myths about home language and bilingualism with children, but fortunately much research has been conducted on these topics in recent years (King & Fogle, 2006). This research can be helpful to parents, educators, and the general public in better understanding the realities of bilingualism.

One common myth is that it is too difficult for children to learn two languages at such a young age and this might cause language delays. (Genesee, 2006; King & Fogle, 2006). However, no scientific evidence exists currently which proves that the use of two

or more languages in a child's environment causes delays or disorders. Growing up with two or more languages is the norm for many children throughout the world (King & Fogle, 2006). Early exposure to two languages at the same time does not cause delays in either language a child learns with respect to the semantic and conceptual features of languages (Petito & Holowaka, 2002).

Another myth is the idea that children will become confused when expected to regularly communicate in two languages. Proponents of this notion may point to the instances when bilingual children combine the two languages in the same conversation. (Genesee, 2006; King & Fogle, 2006). In fact, research by Lanza (1992) shows that this switching back and forth, known to many as code-switching, shows that children have mastered two language systems, not that they are confused. (as cited in King & Fogle, 2006).

How much code-switching children do can also be a consequence of the adult language models in their lives and the amount of code-switching they employ. It is considered quite normal for bilingual adults to mix their two languages. In fact, research has shown that those bilinguals who are the most proficient tend to mix their languages in the most complicated and advanced ways and they do not confuse the rules of either language. It logically follows that the children growing up in these kinds of environments would also code-switch extensively as they are mirroring their language models. (Genesee, 2006)

Finally, some parents believe that bilingualism will make their children smarter and give them better and bigger brains. (King & Fogle, 2006). This notion has been

overstated and oversimplified in the popular press and especially to parents. This is still an area to be investigated more extensively, but the advantages of bilingualism are most likely associated with gains in specific areas such as metalinguistic awareness and cognitive processing (Bialystok, 2001). Parents and others should be careful to not exaggerate the impact of bilingualism on intelligence in general or in relation to high academic performance (King & Fogle, 2006). However, it is still worthwhile to note that some advantages such as the ones mentioned, do seem to exist. There are also many practical benefits to being bilingual.

Benefits of Bilingualism

There are many obvious benefits to being bilingual in today's world. Being bilingual can increase one's professional opportunities and by extension put an individual at an advantage in our global economy. Proficiency in two or more languages opens the door to travel, adventure in other countries, and greater cultural understanding.

As stated earlier, there are some cognitive benefits to bilingualism. In addition, many academic skills can transfer between languages (Cummins, as cited in Giambo & Szecsi, 2005). In the scenario where parents are raising the child with a home language, which is not the community's dominant language, promoting this home language can actually help the child learn the dominant language (Giambo & Szecsi, 2005). Children learn general rules for language that they can transfer to other languages. Literacy skills can also transfer between languages; children learn about concepts such as letters, symbols, words, sentences, paragraphs, and which direction to read. Even if some of

these details are different in the dominant language, children are still mastering the concepts.

Finally, an extremely important benefit to bilingualism, particularly in minority/home language preservation is the issue of family connections and cultural belonging. "Communicating with children in the native language helps to promote a sense of connectedness among the child, the family, and the heritage culture and community" (Giambo & Szecsi, 2005, p. 164). Children who begin to lose their home language may not be able to communicate well with their parents, greatly impacting parental authority and guidance in the home. Children may not only lose their closeness with their parents but their connections to the extended family and their language community may suffer as well.

Language is a sign of group membership (Wong Fillmore, 2002). It is difficult to quantify the loss that occurs when a child gives up a home language, but it amounts to much more than simply the loss of a language system. Valuable ties to both family and the larger culture may be severed, which is another reason why parents should be encouraged to promote home language use with their children.

I will be exploring many issues with Stefania and Ela related to bilingualism. I hope that my study of this family's experience with bilingualism will be a compelling personal story on the complex issues of raising bilingual children in this community and country. While the study is just with one mother and daughter, it can be instructive to teachers and others dealing with bilingual families and inspire a drive and commitment to preserve home languages.

In the study, I will be interviewing Stefania about her attitudes and practices with the home language and her daughter. I will interview her twice, a year apart in order to study any changes or shifts that occurs. She will be able to reflect on how being bilingual impacts her life since she is bilingual in Polish and English. She can also discuss how she believes being bilingual affects her daughter, Ela.

Subtractive Bilingualism

In this section, I will define the issue of subtractive bilingualism, provide some history of this phenomenon in the United States, discus what some researchers believe contributes to this trend and outline some reasons to address it.

Since the United States is a country with a high rate of eliminating non-English languages (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996), the daughter in my study could be at risk for losing her home language herself. The challenges and pressures the mother experiences with maintaining their home language of Polish in an English-dominant community will be explored in my study.

Defining Subtractive Bilingualism

The process of people gradually losing their first language as they acquire the new language is referred to as subtractive bilingualism. This issue was first defined when Wallace Lambert was examining the experiences of French-Canadian and Canadian immigrant children in the late 1970s (Wong Fillmore, 2000). He discovered that as the children gained more proficiency in English, the results were not bilingualism but rather the deterioration or loss of their native languages.

Various researchers have traced the high incidence of subtractive bilingualism in the United States. The language situation with immigrants in the United States is striking for its high rate of eliminating non-English languages (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996). A study by Lieberson in 1975 (as cited in Portes & Rumbaut, 1996) examined the rate of language shift towards using only the dominant language in thirty-five countries. No other nation approached the speed of the shift that occurs in the United States (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996).

The History of Subtractive Bilingualism in the United States

The loss of native languages has long been an issue in the United States, but in earlier times of immigration, it was generally a slower process (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996). The native language was commonly lost between the second and third generation, with the process of losing the native language generally completed by the third generation. Mostly the first generation would maintain their native languages and learn enough English to survive in the community. In the second generation, children were raised speaking the native language at home and English in all other domains- domains which were important to their education, professional opportunities, and upward mobility. Finally, with English seeming so beneficial, the third generation was generally raised with English as their home and native language.

For today's immigrants in the U.S., the phenomenon of subtractive bilingualism has accelerated. There are few second-generation immigrants today who are true bilinguals (Lopez as cited in Portes & Rumbaut). In his 1973 study, Lopez conducted detailed research with native Spanish-speaking Mexican couples on the patterns of

language shift across three generations. He concluded that among the women, English monolingualism was complete by the third generation of immigrants. The results for the men in the study were similar, except that the rate of shifting from Spanish to English between the first and second generation was even more rapid. A few years after this study, it was discovered that the loss of home languages is even occurring among first generation immigrant children (Lambert as cited in Portes & Rumbaut).

In the United States today, debates about immigration often involve discussions of language and there are many who believe in the need for immigrants to shift to English as fast as possible (Crawford, as cited in Portes & Rumbaut, 1996). This belief has become an organized movement since the 1980s, often contributing to the phenomena of subtractive bilingualism. Groups such as U.S. English and English First have been formed to advocate for the exclusive use of English in this country. The efforts of these groups have added to the pressure and confusion that parents experience as they attempt to cope with the issues of more than one language in their families (Crawford, as cited in Portes & Rumbaut, 1996).

"Bilingual parents who try to educate their children in their mother tongue confront immense pressure for cultural conformity from peers, friends, teachers, and the media. In the absence of a sizeable and economically potent ethnic community to support language maintenance, fluent bilingualism in the second generation is likely to prove an elusive goal" (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996, p. 230).

Why have parents, educators, and the public allowed this loss of home languages to occur?

Causes of Subtractive Bilingualism

What are the factors that contribute to subtractive bilingualism and specifically to the loss of home languages? There are many, but some that continue to emerge in the literature include: influence by people not knowledgeable in the issues of bilingualism including teachers (Lee & Oxelson, 2006), children attempting to assimilate in the United States (Wong Fillmore, 2000) and the hostility that emerges against other languages in connection to issues on immigration (Crawford, 1992).

Lack of information and education. A study was conducted with K-12 teachers in California public schools regarding their attitudes towards maintenance of heritage/home languages among their students (Lee & Oxelson, 2006). Their data revealed two positions taken by teachers. First, teachers who were not trained and knowledgeable in ESL and bilingual education issues tended to have negative or indifferent attitudes on the issue of home languages. Second, teachers who had previous experiences or proficiency in other languages tended to show more concern and motivation to deal with the language issues of their students beyond just learning English.

The first finding was discussed at length in the research. There were three main reasons that teachers gave for the negative or indifferent attitudes concerning home language preservation. First, they believed this home language issue was something personal for the family or the specific cultural group to worry about. The next reason given was that they were so concerned with what they needed to accomplish in their own classroom, they did not feel they had time to pay attention to home language

preservation. Finally, these teachers simply did not have any knowledge of what to do to support the home languages among their students.

In contrast, teachers who were trained in ESL or bilingual education felt that encouraging home language maintenance was part of their job. These educators appeared to view the students in a more holistic way as can be seen in the following quote from an ESL teacher in their study: "If the school is going to help each student reach their greatest potential, maintaining their home language is part of that. It is part of teaching the whole student" (Lee & Oxelson, 2006, p.461).

While ESL and bilingual educators have great influence in promoting home language use among their students, the need for mainstream teachers to have a better understanding of these issues is essential as well. If students' home languages do not seem to be valued in an environment, such as school, students are more likely to dismiss and ultimately lose their home languages (Wong Fillmore, 2000). More teacher education on home language maintenance and more requirements for foreign language study among mainstream educators are needed as well. It is essential that both teachers and parents work on the issue of home language maintenance together with the ultimate goal of children being proud of their native cultures, languages, and identities (Lee & Oxelson, 2006

Pressure for immigrants to assimilate. There are strong forces operating on language minority children in our society (Wong Fillmore, 2000). These children understandably want to be seen as normal, be included, and be able to communicate with their peers. They do not want to be seen as different and will reject whatever it is about

themselves that they perceive as separating them from the mainstream. Things such as dress, music, and names may be altered, but often the home language is the first to go. Immigrant children often learn that the more they speak English, the more they will seem like true Americans. Of course, their parents are often experiencing the same pressures (Olsen, 2000).

Often this issue is not identified until it is too late and children are already well on their way to losing their home language (Wong Fillmore, 2000). Parents are often dismayed that this can even occur. They may realize that their children are acquiring English and acting more "American", but they tend to believe that if required to do so, their children could still speak the home language. They are shocked to realize that perhaps their children can still use the home language in some capacity, but it is not at a level appropriate for their age.

Hostility and discrimination in the community. Learning English is at the heart of the national debate on immigration and what it means for this society to be diverse (Crawford, 1992). The issue of language is the most controversial and politically charged element concerning immigrant life in the United States (Olsen, 2000).

It appears that the research behind second language development has little bearing on this national debate. Students learn best in a language they can comprehend and literacy skills in a home language can transfer and aid in acquiring literacy skills in the new language (Krashen as cited in Crawford, 1992). Still, the idea of other languages besides English being maintained in our society seems to have caused much controversy in the United States, particularly in the last twenty years (Crawford, 1992). This

controversy seems to stem from public fears about diversity and results in a misplaced emphasis on immigrants learning as much English as fast as they can in order to become socialized into this society (Olsen, 2000).

These fears are at the center of "Official English" and "English Only" movements and legislative initiatives throughout the country (Crawford, 1992). Members of these movements explain that they are concerned about immigrants adapting to and succeeding in our county and this is why it is necessary for English to be dominant ("US English", 2008; "English First", 2008). They contend that English unites Americans and multilingual services will promote linguistic enclaves in our communities, delay immigrants' assimilation into society, and possibly lead to racial and ethnic conflicts. Members of these movements also cite that government should not be responsible for duplicating services in languages other than English and emphasize that it is not a good use of taxpayers' money.

The first legislation concerning this issue was offered in 1981 as the "English Language Amendment"; it never came to a congressional vote (Crawford, 1992; Olsen, 2000). Since then 26 states have legislated and enacted some type of Official English laws and other states continue to pursue similar legislation. During the congressional session of 2008 a state representative where the mother and daughter in my study live authored a bill to make English the official language in the state; this bill did not make it out of committee (HF4161 Status in House for Legislative Session 85, 2008).

Authors and supporters of "Official English" legislation cite similar motivation as explained above, such as controlling government costs with multilingual services,

encouraging English language learning and unity, and promoting assimilation (Crawford, 1992; Olsen, 2000). However, it is often unclear what these bills will accomplish other than limiting the use of other languages in the United States. In addition, the rules about language use in much of this legislation are vague, which could result in varied interpretations in communities.

While it can be agreed that becoming proficient in English and adapting to U.S. society are worthwhile goals, the way these groups address the issue reflects a lack of understanding of how a second language is acquired and often a disdain and hostility towards the native language (Crawford, 1992). In addition, the money and advocacy behind these groups centers on limiting languages other than English, not promoting English proficiency by directing funding towards the many adult educations programs across the nation with long waiting lists.

Finally, in many cases these concerns are truly not about language, but about the immigrants themselves (Crawford, 1992; Olsen, 2000; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996). Language issues seem to be a safer and more acceptable way to express prejudice toward immigrants. Many of these fears stem from a level of discomfort or hostility about people who are different. In addition, many fears stem from anxiety about competition in the economic, academic, and professional arena.

This controversy impacts immigrant families greatly in the United Sates today, and home languages are often the first casualties. This country is “a veritable cemetery of foreign languages where mother tongues brought by hundreds of immigrant groups have rarely lasted past the third generation” (Lieberson, Dalto, & Johnston, 1975 as cited

in Portes & Hao, 1998, p.2). These researchers contend that the United States has experienced an accelerated process of language assimilation and shift to monolingualism they have not seen in other countries they have studied.

Subtractive Bilingualism and the Family

Why is it important for parents, educators, policy makers and anyone who is concerned about the issue of subtractive bilingualism to take measures to stop this trend? After all, as stated earlier, there are advantages to having bilinguals in our country. They provide a workforce that can operate in two or more cultures and languages. There are economic advantages to this for both the bilingual individual, and in our current economy these individuals can make our country more competitive in the global market.

However, some of the most important reasons for parents, educators, and policy makers to encourage children to maintain their home languages have to do with connection to family and cultural identity.

When children begin to lose their home languages, it is easy for ties to be severed between them, their families and their homeland cultures (Wong Fillmore, 1991). If children cannot communicate with their extended family, if they can't write letters in the home language to those still back in the native country, if they can't read the literature of their homeland, they are at risk of losing rich connections in their lives (Olsen, 2000). When home languages are preserved, children have stronger ties to their culture, which in turn tends to result in higher self esteem (Lee (2002), Stalikas & Gavaki (1995), and Vadas(1995) as cited in Lee & Oxelson, 2006).

This loss of connection between generations can cause stress and problems with mental health in immigrant families (Rumbaut (1995) as cited in Olsen, 2006). Wong Fillmore (1991) adds that there can be grave concerns about the development of a child who gives up the home language, specifically in situations where the parents only speak the home language and do not speak English well at all. When this occurs, how do the parents then socialize and teach their children? How do they impart their values and culture to the children? When children lose a home language, they are not simply losing the linguistic ability to communicate in a language. They are losing part of their connection to their family and community and part of their ethnic identity. And, in losing this bilingualism and biliculturalism, they are losing part of their future potential in today's world (Lee & Oxelson, 2006).

Many of these issues have been explored with other families in other situations, but my goal is to provide an understanding of the complex language issues that are experienced by this mother and daughter in this particular setting.

I will explore these issues of subtractive bilingualism with Stefania in my research. I will be investigating how she views the development of Ela's Polish and if she sees any signs of home language loss in her six-year-old daughter. I will question her about the messages and influences on home language by teachers, family, and the community in general. I will explore Stefania's perceptions of Ela's feelings on using both English and Polish. I will question her about Ela's social interactions with other children and how that seems to shape her language use. I will ask Stefania about her views on the status of languages other than English in her community and any perceived

prejudice or experiences with discrimination concerning home language use. Finally, I will ask Stefania to reflect on what would be lost if Ela were to lose her Polish.

Bilingualism In Families Today

It is difficult to summarize or paint a single picture of parental attitudes concerning bilingualism (Parsons, 2005). There are many ways for families to be bilingual. Parents have varying knowledge, opinions, and feelings about raising children to be bilinguals. Parents also employ a multitude of strategies in encouraging bilingualism and/or home language maintenance. In addition, the family's language, culture, education level, particular community they live in, and their socio-economic level can impact these parental attitudes and strategies.

In this section, I will describe the most common approaches used by parents to promote bilingualism and/or home language maintenance. I will outline some techniques parents utilize to keep their child motivated to use the home language. I will also discuss two specific studies done on parental attitudes and strategies regarding bilingualism/home language maintenance to provide an example of how some parents view and cope with this issue.

Methods Families Use to Achieve Bilingualism

There are several different strategies that parents can use in helping their children to become bilingual; any one or a combination of these strategies has the potential to result in success (Parsons, 2005). These methods are the one person- one language approach, minority language at home approach, and a mixed strategy approach.

Parents who are native or non-native speakers of the target home language can use the one-person one language approach. Degrees in strictness with this method may vary, and a switch to the majority language may be done when speakers of that language are present (Barron-Hauwaert, 2004 as cited in Parsons, 2005).

Another method parents might use is the minority language at home, also referred to as one language, one location. This is most common in immigrant families where their home language is not the dominant language in the community. Mixed language couples sometimes also utilize this method if they want to be sure to preserve the minority language (Barron-Hauwaert, 2004, as cited in Parsons, 2005).

There is also a mixed-strategy approach in which one or both of the parents codeswitch. This codeswitching could happen during conversations at home with the family, or it could be done based on location. For example, mixing of the languages could occur when in a public place where the dominant language is spoken. This approach is a common one in bilingual and immigrant communities (Barron-Hauwaert, 2004, as cited in Parsons, 2005).

Strategies Parents Use to Encourage Bilingualism

There are various ways in which children may demonstrate resistance to a language approach and multiple strategies parents typically utilize to cope with the issue. Children may respond in the dominant language to parents, avoid speakers who share their home language, give one-word answers in the home language, or only use gestures in response. These can be quite natural responses on the part of children when faced with choices about languages (Barron-Hauwaert as cited in Parsons, 2005). At an early age,

children discover that the dominant language works with most everyone in their community, while their home language only works with a few. It may seem logical to children to begin to more exclusively use the dominant language (Taeschner, 1983 as cited in Parsons, 2005).

There is a simple strategy to employ in order to encourage continued home language use. The technique is saying, “What?” in the minority language if the child speaks in the dominant language. This would be a signal to the child to switch back to the home language. This can be helpful but should not be used when the child is not motivated to talk, is tired, rushed, or the experience he/she wants to describe has occurred in the majority language (Taeschner, 1983 as cited in Parsons, 2005).

Other common parental strategies include pretending not to understand the dominant language (naturally, this method will only work until the child is old enough to understand if the parent truly does not understand the language), questioning continually in the home language, or scheduling a time period each week that will be solely devoted to home language use by everyone in the family (Saunders, 1988, as cited in Parsons, 2005).

Other strategies to employ include maintaining connections with others who share the home language as well as exposing the child to music, art, and books in the home language (Parsons, 2005). A language that is written as well as spoken may carry more prestige for children (Christian, 1977; Saunders, 1988 as cited in Parsons, 2005). It would be important to give children access to written materials in the home language and make developing literacy in the home language a goal.

Taking part in playgroups or other activities with children where the home language is used can also be a boost to the child's motivation to use the home language (Barron-Hauwaert, 2004). This interaction with other children who share their home language can alleviate the problem of feeling different and increase self-confidence (Barron-Hauwaert, 2004; Saunders, 1988 as cited in Parsons, 2005). Travel to the home country or having visitors from the home country can be very helpful and motivating to the child (Hoffman, 1985 as cited in Parsons, 2005).

As parents, teachers, and others use different strategies to encourage bilingualism, there are several principles that should be kept in mind (Genesee, 2006; King & Fogle, 2006). There should be awareness that acquiring two languages is a normal and common experience in childhood that should be encouraged. Bilingual acquisition is best accomplished through continual, rich, and varied interactions in both languages with the people in the children's lives. Over-reliance on computers and television for language learning should be avoided. Parents should keep in mind that the dominant language in the community will get a lot of support and practice outside of the home. They should focus on the quality and quantity of use of both languages with particular attention to creating a comfortable place for the minority language to thrive.

Two Studies of Bilingualism in Families

There are likely countless approaches, techniques, challenges, and issues associated with raising a child to be bilingual. I will discuss two different studies of parental attitudes and strategies. Neither is a wide-scale study. My discussion of them is

meant to give a glimpse into the various issues parents experience in striving for bilingualism and/or home language maintenance.

First Study

The first study of families I will discuss was based on interviews with sixteen Latino immigrant parents with children in the upper-elementary grades. All of these reported that Spanish was their home language and in many cases the parents did not speak English proficiently. There was wide agreement among the parents in the value placed on English, Spanish, and bilingualism for their children. (Worthy & Rodriguez-Galindo, 2006).

The parents' attitudes about English were explored during the interviews. The parents felt that being proficient in English was a necessity for their success and their future lives in the United States. They believed English was essential to help their children to be successful academically and economically. Despite their own limited English, these parents were very interested in and concerned about their children's development in the language. They seemed to have an excellent grasp on where their children were developmentally and monitored their progress and challenges with English. They understood bilingualism as a benefit, another factor that would help their children in many ways such as getting better jobs and higher pay.

The parents' feelings about their native Spanish language were also discussed in the research. Even as these parents watched their children's improvement in English, many worried about the development of their Spanish and over half of the participants reported definite signs of erosion. Parents viewed Spanish as an important way for their

children to maintain connections with both their family and their culture. Many of the parents were reporting signs of Spanish language loss and some were experiencing difficulty in getting their children to use Spanish.

Some of the specific problems the parents experienced with the use of the Spanish language in their family were reported during interviews. The parents said that sometimes the children were speaking to each other in English, so the parents could not understand them. Parents also reported experiencing pressure from family and teachers to use more English.

Various strategies were mentioned by the parents to encourage use of Spanish. These strategies included attending church services in Spanish and strictly speaking only Spanish at home. They reasoned this home practice was acceptable because the children were getting many opportunities to practice their English at school. Another strategy parents used was to visit the home country frequently. Lately this had become increasingly challenging to do with increased border security; many families were limiting their visits.

The authors of the study remark that it was admirable that these parents worked on employing the strategies they did, given that many were living in poverty and working multiple jobs. There was plenty of stress and pressure in the family and certainly not sufficient time to concentrate on issues like home language maintenance. Yet, the families seemed to persist in this challenging endeavor of preserving their home language.

In the closing discussion on this study the authors refer to the research of Cummins (1977), Hakuta (1986), and Rumbaut (1995) in reflecting that bilingualism and biliteracy have the ability to offer individuals strong advantages in academic, linguistic, personal, occupational, and social domains. They conclude by stating, "While many people have to work hard to learn a second language, the deterioration of a language one already knows is a shameful waste of a child's potential" (Worthy & Rodriguez-Galindo, 2006, p. 598).

Second Study

Another interesting study on parental attitudes and methods to promote bilingualism was done by King & Fogle (2006). Twenty-four families were interviewed. All of these families had the goal of raising their children as Spanish-English bilinguals. In contrast to the previous study, the group was not composed of all native Spanish speakers. There were only some parents who regularly used Spanish at home; most of them were native speakers. The other families consisted of native English speakers hoping to add Spanish as a second language through social interaction and special programs. There were also families where one parent was fluent and using Spanish with the child at home. As a whole, the group was highly educated. Over one-third of the participants were employed in traditional working and middle class jobs and also lived in working class areas of the city.

The findings of the study showed that parents were careful consumers when it came to the methods and strategies they chose to encourage bilingualism with their children. The parents generally cited the popular press, parenting literature, family

networks, and formal research as influences in their bilingual parenting. However, they asserted that mainly their opinions were shaped by their own experiences with language learning. The parents viewed raising their children to be bilingual as a "gift' and another way to be a "good parent". However, most families were not very optimistic about their children becoming "fully bilingual". The authors of the study concluded that there is not enough quality, consistent information for parents on the challenges of bilingualism and the techniques parents could utilize to support this endeavor.

These studies provide insight into the wide variety of ways that parents raise their children to be bilingual or maintain the home language. Many different attitudes, strategies, and results were described. Understanding the complexities of how families achieve bilingualism will assist teachers and others as they interact with bilingual families. My study will be a detailed exploration of the many issues a mother can experience in the arena of raising a child to be bilingual.

In my research with Stefania and Ela, I will explore what language approach has been used in the home since Ela's birth, what approaches have been used during her five years of life, and what current approach is being used. I will investigate any struggles Stefania has experienced with Ela and the home language. If there have been struggles, I will explore what techniques Stefania employs in dealing with them and how Ela tends to respond to these strategies. I believe that that these findings will provide other ESL teachers with a detailed picture of the issues of bilingualism in this mother and daughter's life. Hopefully, teachers can draw lessons from what they learn from my study, apply

them to the families they are working with, and be thoughtful and purposeful in encouraging home language use.

My hope is that this study of one mother and her daughter will be instructive to teachers in particular and help them focus their attention on encouraging home language maintenance. I also believe their will be implication for parents and communities with diversity in home languages.

Summary

Many different definitions of bilingualism exist but in essence, it can be defined as the use of two different languages. There are different arrangements for raising children to be bilingual. The situation that I am interested in is when the two parents share a native language, which is not the dominant community language. They want their child to be proficient in both the dominant language of the community as well as their shared native language. The mother and daughter I am studying fit into this description.

Two of the main myths about children being raised bilingually are that they will suffer from language delays or that they will become confused when they are expected to use two different languages. There is no current scientific evidence substantiating a link between young children being exposed to more than one language and delays in their language development (De Houwer, 1999; Petitto & Holowaka, 2002 as cited in King & Fogle, 2006). Many point to the mixing of languages as a sign that a child must be experiencing confusion. In fact, this mixing is known as code-switching and is actually a sign of proficiency in the child's speech and could be a reflection of how the adult models in the child's life use language. (Lanza, 1992 as cited in King & Fogle, 2006).

There may be obvious benefits of bilingualism recognized by many such as professional opportunities, ability to travel, and increased understanding of other cultures. There can also be cognitive advantages to bilingualism, such as the ability to transfer academic skills between languages (Cummins, 2000). Another benefit is that when children grow up to be bilingual and maintain their home languages, they are able to preserve and strengthen cultural and family connections (Wong Fillmore, 1991).

There are times when a child might begin to lose her native language as she acquires a new language; this has been referred to as subtractive bilingualism (Lambert, 1975, 1977, 1981 as cited in Wong Fillmore, 1991). There are various factors that can contribute to subtractive bilingualism, including the lack of information that teachers and others have about bilingualism, the pressure for immigrants to assimilate, and hostility in communities related to immigration that is focused on language issues.

There is a great divide in the way in teachers handle their students' bilingualism (Lee & Oxelson, 2006). Those with training in ESL research and methods tend to validate and find ways to promote students' home languages. Those without education in this area tend to be negative or indifferent on the issue, resulting in them giving either no messages or negative ones about home language maintenance.

The tremendous pressure for children to assimilate into a new country and culture can also be a contributor to subtractive bilingualism (Wong Fillmore, 2000). There is sometimes not only pressure, but hostility shown towards other languages and cultures in the United States, resulting in even more pressure to try to become American as fast as

possible (Olsen, 2000). Often the home or native language is one of the first casualties in this process.

In spite of this problem of subtractive bilingualism, many parents continue to raise their children bilingually and there are different approaches they may use to achieve this goal. These methods are the one person- one language approach, minority language at home approach, and a mixed strategy approach. (Parsons, 2005).

Just as the methods to achieve bilingualism vary, so do parental attitudes on the topic. In studies done by King and Fogle (2006) and Worthy and Rodriguez (2006) parents of varying backgrounds reflected the belief that both English and their native language were valuable. Even among low-income groups of parents who worked long hours, there was considerable attention and thought given to this issue of maintaining the home language. Many parents did report difficulty in convincing their children to speak the home language, and that often children started to prefer English. Various techniques and strategies were used by parents to approach this problem. Some parents also stated that they received direct and indirect pressure to speak more English with their children from various people in the community. It seems logical to conclude that parental attitudes and the strategies they employ with the home language have a huge impact on the development of the child's bilingualism.

All of this background on the myths and benefits of bilingualism, the issue of subtractive bilingualism, and the various methods and attitudes parents have will guide me as I explore my questions: What are the factors that affect Stefania's attitudes and practices regarding maintaining the home language of Polish with her daughter Ela over

the time period of a year? What are the factors that affect Ela's attitudes and practices with Polish over the time period of a year? How do these language issues change over the time period of a year?

In the following chapter, I will outline the data collection techniques I will use in my research and why they are suitable for this study. I will be using interviews with both the mother and the daughter. I will also be gathering audio recordings of natural language interactions between the mother and daughter. These methods will be effective as I explore my research questions.

The interview is a suitable technique for my study because it will allow me to not only gather basic information but also deeper information concerning attitudes and feelings. Recordings of language interactions in the home will provide detailed descriptions of language in a particular context and also provide a springboard to ask more questions during interviews.

The following chapter will also preview some examples for both of my data collection techniques. Finally, I will describe the participants and setting of my study.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

In this chapter I will discuss the case study approach and why I chose this method for my research. I will also describe the techniques I used to collect the data for my study. I conducted two interviews with both the mother and the daughter that took place approximately a year apart. I also collected three audio recordings of home language interactions between the mother and daughter. I will describe the participants in my study and the setting of the study. Each data collection technique will be described as well as the advantages and disadvantages of each method. I will outline the ways in which I intend to address the problems associated with the disadvantages. For each method, I will also state why the method is suitable for my specific research questions. I will include examples of questions for the technique or details about the manner in which it was collected.

My research questions will be explored through a case study of one mother and her daughter. My questions are:

- What are the factors that affect Stefania's attitudes and practices regarding maintaining the home language of Polish with her daughter Ela over a time period of a year?
- What are the factors that affect Ela's attitudes and practices regarding maintaining the home language of Polish over a time period of a year?

- Are there changes in the mother's and daughter's attitudes and practices with Polish over the year?

Case Studies

Case studies in language learning provide a detailed and holistic view of the learner in their particular language environment (Mackey & Gass, 2005). An advantage of the case study approach is that it allows the researcher a deeper and richer picture of the learner that is generally not possible when studying larger groups.

However, case studies do have their drawbacks (Mackey & Gass, 2005). These include the inability to draw major conclusions or generalizations from the study since the participants are not randomly chosen and the studies tend to be quite narrow in focus. I believe that part of the appeal of a case study in this field is the very detailed telling of an individual's story in relation to their language learning. I believe the rich, contextual descriptions typical in case studies can open the doors to broader understanding and interest in the particular subject on a greater scale.

Data Collection Techniques

The techniques I used in this case study include interviews and audio-recordings of language interactions in the home. First, I conducted a highly structured interview with the mother to gather basic demographic information and any pertinent background material. Next, I did more loosely structured interviews with the mother concerning her attitudes on home language and the practices she employs with her daughter to promote home language use. I also interviewed the daughter about language use in her life. Next, after a period of one year had passed, I conducted a second set of interviews with both the

mother and the daughter, exploring the same issues I did in the first set and looking for any changes that had occurred.

During the year between the interviews, the mother collected audio-recordings of home language use between her and her daughter. She gathered three different audio-recordings, each lasting abut five minutes in length. When I reviewed these audio-recordings, I studied what language was being used by both the mother and the daughter and looked for general patterns concerning attitudes and practices with the home language. The recordings were also used to generate questions for the second set of interviews. During the final set of interviews, I played back certain segments of the recordings to the mother to discuss the language use between her and her daughter in more detail.

Interviews

One data collection technique I used in my research is interviewing. The first part of the interview with Stefania was structured and included a predetermined set of questions. The purpose of this interview was to gather basic demographic and background information from the mother. The questions covered topics such as age, educational and professional background, how English was learned, cultural and religious background, socioeconomic status, and social networks in the community.

The following interviews with the mother and daughter were unstructured. This type of interview develops more naturally as a conversation between the interviewer and interviewee (Mackey & Gass, 2005). The interviewer allows the discussion to evolve and does not have predetermined notions of what the answers should be. The setting should

be such that the interviewee is comfortable and allowed to answer questions and elaborate on points in a way and time period that is fitting to them. While these interviews were unstructured, I focused the conversations on the topic of home language maintenance and attitudes about language.

The second set of interviews with the mother and the daughter were conducted after a time period of year. These interviews were also unstructured, but I used some information I gathered in the first set of interviews to further explore issues. I also asked some questions based on the audio-recordings of home language use the mother gathered.

There are advantages and disadvantages when using the interview method for research purposes (Mackey and Gass, 2005). An advantage is that the method allows the researcher to probe and get more information from the participant if an answer is vague or not detailed. It also allows the interviewee to describe their attitudes, feelings, perceptions, and opinions on a particular experience or topic.

One of the primary drawbacks to the interview method is that the information gathered from the subject can involve “selective recall, self-delusion, perceptual distortions, memory loss from the respondent, and subjectivity in the researcher's recording and interpreting of the data” (Hall and Rist as cited in Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 174). I hope I avoided this problem by doing several interviews with the mother and also using the audio-recordings to investigate and further study their home language use.

A second disadvantage is that conducting high quality interviews is a skill and the researcher may not be well trained in this method of data collection (Mackey & Gass, 2005). I studied and reviewed suggestions on good interviewing as I prepared for my

research project. I did a pilot test and interviewed another mother raising a bilingual child to practice and improve my interviewing skills.

A third drawback of interviews is the "halo effect" (Mackey & Gass, 2005). This is when the interviewee perceives that there is a particular answer the researcher wants or a certain perspective the researcher seems to value, resulting in the interviewee giving the answers she believes acceptable or valuable to the interviewer, not necessarily the truth. This is the most complicated and challenging problem to cope with in using the interview method. I needed to be mindful of these phenomena throughout all the interviews I conducted with my subjects and was careful to not let my own opinions or biases enter the interviews.

I first did a highly structured interview to gather basic demographic information from the mother. This interview helped me gather the information in an effective way and provided a rich description of the individuals I am studying. (See Appendix B for complete set of questions.)

Some of the questions included:

- Where have you lived in the United States since you came here twenty years ago?
- How long have you lived in this community?
- How have you come to be fluent in English?
- What is the highest level of education you have completed?
- What is your degree in?
- What is your professional work history?

I then conducted loosely structured interviews with the mother asking questions about both her attitudes about maintaining her home language with her daughter and what practices and strategies she is utilizing to do keep the language going. I did an audio

recording of each interview session in order to be able to more fully review all data gathered at a later time. I believe this method was very suitable for gathering the necessary information. The participant is fluent in English, and we have a prior acquaintance, so I believe she felt comfortable answering my questions. There are so many different dimensions of preserving home language that can be studied and an unstructured interview allowed for a natural exploration into what was most relevant and interesting with the mother and daughter in my study. (See Appendix B for complete set of questions.)

Some of these questions included:

- Has it been your goal from Ela's birth for her to acquire Polish and English?
- What have your patterns of language use with Ela been since her birth?
- What are your current patterns of language use in the home?
- What strategies do you use to keep your home language going with Ela?
- How does she tend to respond to the two languages?
- Have you read and studied about the topic of bilingualism?

I also did a loosely structured interview with the daughter about how she feels about her two languages of Polish and English. She was six years old at the time but very verbal and fluent in English. I was careful to engage her in a conversation about language use in a developmentally appropriate manner. (See Appendix D for complete set of questions.)

Some of the questions included:

- Do you like speaking both languages?
- Who do you speak Polish to?
- Who do you speak English to?
- Are there some people that you can speak both languages to?

Again, I asked similar questions in the second set of interviews that occurred a year later, but used information gathered in the first set and the audio-recordings as a basis for deeper exploration of these issues. (See Appendix C for complete set of questions.)

Audio Recordings

Stefania collected three audio-recording of natural home-language interactions between her and her daughter. I listened to these recordings, took field notes, and transcribed the recordings. These field notes were taken while listening to the recordings and included questions and insights that I had as a researcher. Audio recordings are useful so that the researcher has an opportunity to examine the data at a later time and in more detail. (Mackey & Gass, 2005) I used the insights and impressions I noted from the audio-recordings to ask more questions during the second set of interviews and explore the home language issues in even more detail.

I had initially contemplated being present in the home to collect the audio-recordings but I determined that my presence would affect the participants too much in this study. Labov refers to the “observer’s paradox” in which the researcher's presence affects the actions and speech of those being observed (as cited in Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 176). I decided to have the mother collect the audio-recordings. Knowing that you are being recorded still means there is a risk of inauthentic behavior, but I felt it was less intrusive than being there and observing in the home. I also hoped the performance issue would be averted by stressing to Stefania and Ela that I simply wanted recordings of natural language interactions between them; I did not want them to do anything special

for the recordings. I did not offer advice or opinions on the strategies Stefania was using to preserve home language during any of the data elicitation techniques. I did not indicate whether I thought it was positive or negative to use English or Polish with Ela at any given time. My focus was to listen and document how the home language was being used.

For the recordings of Stefania and Ela, I asked Stefania to select a time period in their day when the two of them were typically interacting and talking in their home. I asked Stefania to record three sessions of this time period. The time period of recording was approximately five minutes each time. Stefania decided to collect them during three weekday mornings when Ela was getting prepared to go to school. These audio recordings were a suitable data collection technique for my research questions. I believe I was able to gather some rich and detailed information about their home language use through this technique. (See Appendix E for Guide to Recording Transcriptions and Appendix F for a transcription of one recording).

Participants

The participants in this case study are a mother and her young daughter. Stefania was born and raised in Poland. She came to the United States when she was twenty years old and has now been living here for twenty years. She first came as a tourist and loved it. She lived in a few large mid-western cities, and eventually settled where she currently resides, in a mid-western city of 100,000 people in 1999. Stefania is completely fluent in English and does speak with a slight accent. She attended a state university in the mid-west and got her bachelor's degree in nursing and then went on to get her master's degree

in nursing and currently works part-time as a family nurse practitioner. Stefania met her husband in the United States and he is also from Poland. Her husband works as an engineer at a local company. They have one daughter, Ela.

At the beginning of this study Ela was six years old and at the end of her kindergarten year in the local public school district. During the final set of interviews, she was seven and had finished first grade in a local private school. She was born in the city where she still lives, which is also the setting of this case study.

I use the pseudonym of Stefania for the mother in my subject and Ela for the daughter in my subject. I chose to ask Stefania to participate in this study because I knew she was a bilingual and her daughter was also a bilingual. I also knew from conversations we had that Stefania cared about maintaining the family language of Polish but also placed a big priority on Ela being successful with English and school. Since we met when Ela was about to start kindergarten, I also suspected that more issues with maintaining the home language would begin to emerge. Stefania is also an outgoing, thoughtful, and talkative person so I knew she would provide me with a lot of material for my study. Her daughter also possesses these same qualities, making her a good research subject. Finally, in Stefania's work at the clinic she helps with research studies so she knows the value of doing research. I also felt she would be reliable in coming to interview appointments and doing the recordings of home language.

Although Ela's father and Stefania's husband is not a subject in my research study, he is referred to numerous times in my interviews of both Ela and Stefania. I will

refer to him by the pseudonym of Ales. Ela's maternal grandmother is also referred to many times, and she has been given the pseudonym of Ada.

Location and Setting

The participants in the study live in a city with a population of about 100,000 people in the upper Midwest. There is a small Polish community in the city that they live, and this group is an important part of their social network. This community is made up of couples who are highly educated professionals, and they all have young children.

The data from the interviews was collected at my home and the participants' home. The recordings of language interactions between the mother and daughter were collected in their home during the day when just the two of them were in the house.

For the first round of interviews, I met with Stefania on two different occasions in March of 2009 to conduct my interviews. Each interview lasted approximately one hour. In June of 2009, I did an interview with Ela. Then, I did the second interview with Stefania in July of 2010 and the second interview with Ela in August 2010.

All three interview sessions with Stefania were conducted in my home. Stefania seemed comfortable with this arrangement. I did an audio-recording of all interview sessions. My first interview with Ela was conducted at Stefania's home during lunch with them. Since Ela was still quite young at this time, six years old, Stefania and I agreed that the best way to interview her was just by chatting over lunch. My last interview with Ela was done at my home. She and my daughter are the same age and attended preschool together so we arranged a play date. Her mom dropped her off and they played for a

while. Then during lunch, I asked her the questions. I recorded both interviews with Ela as well.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

I did an audio-recording of all interviews I conducted with Stefania and Ela. After the interviews, I wrote notes about general impressions I had and themes that were starting to emerge from the conversations. The interviews with Stefania were long, so I would listen to the recordings several times and take detailed notes and write my impressions. I transcribed the interviews with Ela and also took notes of my impressions.

The audio-recordings were done by Stefania in their home. I gave her my audio-recorder and showed her how to use it. I also provided her with a written set of instructions for the recorder to refer to. I asked her to record for five minutes on three separate occasions and to choose a time of the day when she and Ela were alone and normally having lots of conversation. She chose to do the recordings in the mornings when they were going through their routine of getting ready for the day and getting ready to go to school. These recordings were conducted on January 26, 2010, February 1, 2010, and February 2, 2010, all at approximately 9:00 in the morning.

When she returned these recordings to me, I transcribed them all and took field notes on them, recording some initial patterns and impressions. There were a few instances when I could not hear or understand what was being said, so I played it back for Stefania at our last interview for clarification. I also used what occurred during these language interactions to formulate more questions for the final interview.

Analyzing and Coding the Interviews

I typed up all of my notes and transcriptions from the interviews with Stefania and Ela. I then read through the notes and transcriptions several times to begin to identify general themes and patterns in relation to my research questions. Some themes began to emerge that answered my research questions. There are two main factors that affect Stefania's and Ela's attitudes and practices with the home language. These factors include the priority placed on English and the value still given to Polish. The factors that influence the priority placed on English include Stefania's own experience learning English and the emphasis placed on Ela's success in the United States. The factors that influence the value still given to Polish include family relationships, knowledge of the benefits of multilingualism, the Polish community in the family's city, and the cultural aspects of Polish.

Once I had identified these major themes, I then started a coding process. I used highlighters to distinguish between the different themes. I went through all of my notes and transcriptions and highlighted every sentence and comment according to which theme it corresponded to. There were only a few comments that seemed independent of any of the themes and I marked those by circling them in pen.

Analyzing and Coding the Audio-Recordings

I transcribed all three of the audio-recordings. I marked an "E" for when Ela spoke and an "S" for when Stefania spoke and separated their speech segments by lines. Ela used mostly all English in the recordings so that was simple to transcribe. When Stefania used English, I transcribed that, and when she used Polish, I just wrote "Polish" on the transcription. If there was anything I could not hear or understand, I played it

back for Stefania for clarification. She also clarified much of the Polish she was speaking by interpreting it for me when we listened to the recordings.

I reviewed the three transcriptions and took notes of my general impressions, including patterns of Polish and English and if Stefania ever encouraged use of Polish by Ela. I also made notes of what they were talking about and any other interesting issues that surfaced.

Ethics

In research projects, ethical considerations are very important and I have followed high standards as I have carried out this project including:

I have explained my study to the participant verbally and in writing, including the time demands that would be required of her and her daughter as participants.

The participant granted me both written and verbal permission to do this study with both her and her daughter.

I assured the participant that I would protect the confidentiality and anonymity of her family by using pseudonyms for all members mentioned in the study. I have also protected the anonymity of the community where the participant and her family reside.

The research plan was submitted to and approved by the Institutional Review Board at Hamline University.

The participant was aware of all data collection devices used during my research, such as the audio-recorder and was assured that all data gathered would remain safe and confidential.

The following chapter will describe the results gathered during my research, a discussion of the findings, and connections to the reviewed literature.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, I will present the results from my case study and discuss these findings as they relate to the literature I have reviewed connected to my topic. My questions are:

- What are the factors that affect Stefania's attitudes and practices regarding maintaining the home language of Polish with her daughter Ela over a time period of a year?
- What are the factors that affect Ela's attitudes and practices regarding maintaining the home language of Polish over a time period of a year?
- Are there changes in the mother's and daughter's attitudes and practices with Polish over the year?

Results

After gathering, reviewing, and coding all of my data, two major themes have consistently emerged to answer these questions. The themes that emerge as factors that affect the home language are the priority the family places on English and the value Polish also has in the family. Both of these themes contribute to the dynamics and changes in home language use in the household over the period of one year that this study was conducted. I will present these two themes as they relate to both Stefania's and Ela's

attitudes and practices regarding maintaining Polish during this year. Changes in these attitudes and practices over the year will also be noted in the results.

To gather all of this data I did a set of interviews with both the mother and the daughter in 2009 (See Appendix B &D). The purpose of these interviews was to gather information on the mother's attitudes and practices connected to home language use as well as the factors that shape them. The interview with the daughter was done to gather information on her own attitudes, practices, and feelings concerning home language use.

The next time of data collection was approximately six months after the initial interviews. Data this time was collected in a series of five minute audio-recordings that the mother collected in their home (See Appendix E). They were recordings of natural language interactions between the mother and the daughter. The purpose was to get an authentic language sample between them in their home and to compare that with the information reported in interviews. I was also able to use these recordings as a springboard to pursue other questions related to their home language use.

Finally, a second set of interviews was conducted in 2010 with the mother and daughter. (See Appendix C & D). This was a year after the first interviews. I asked many of the same questions and was attempting to determine if there had been changes in the attitudes and practices with the home language and what factors had affected these changes.

There is a priority placed on English in this family and that is shaped by Stefania's own experiences learning English in this country and her desire for Ela to be successful in the United States.

The Priority of English

The Mother's Experience

To understand how strongly Stefania feels about her daughter being proficient in English and having success here in the United States, it is helpful to examine her own experiences with learning English and being an immigrant in this country. These experiences have influenced her beliefs and actions regarding language use in the family.

When Stefania came to the United States at the age of twenty, she did not know much English. She never took formal classes but just relied on teaching herself and lots of exposure to the language. Some of her first jobs in the U.S. were babysitting, and she learned a lot from the children; she commented that they would correct her mistakes. She began learning English by reading children's books and even watching Sesame Street. Then she moved on to reading newspapers and tried to practice her speaking every day. She said that at first she was ashamed to speak, but she forced herself to practice. She commented that she loves Americans for never making fun of her attempts at English, and not once did she feel discrimination based on her English skills. She felt encouraged by Americans. Gradually, her spoken English improved more and more, and soon she was also able to read books in English that she had read in Polish, such as novels by John Steinbeck. Stefania estimated that it took her about two years to speak well and read a newspaper proficiently. She said her writing still really needed practice at this point, though, and took longer to master.

After eight years in the United States, Stefania took the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) in order to be admitted to an American university. She prepared

herself for this test and only missed five points. She said it was not a hard test, and her good score gave her confidence. She was then accepted and began to attend a large state university in the Midwest. She graduated from there and eventually also went on to earn a masters degree in nursing.

Today Stefania is an outgoing, charismatic woman who is a full and active member of her community. She never thought twice about immersing herself in English when she moved to the United States, and it was always her goal to be fluent. She can't imagine living in a community any other way. She said that when she lived in another large mid-western city, she met a woman who had been in the U.S. for eleven years and still spoke no English. She lived in a Polish neighborhood, went to Polish shops, deli, church, and only businesses that could communicate in Polish. Stefania said, "I thought, how sad; it's a tremendous handicap. You can survive, but why do you just want to survive?"

These experiences with learning English, adapting to the culture of the United States, and focusing on being successful here all shaped Stefania's attitudes and practices regarding her daughter's use of language.

Success in the United States

Stefania and her husband, Ales, have now lived in the United States longer than they ever lived in Poland. Before they had Ela, they mixed Polish and English in their language interactions with each other. However, they are both educated professionals and solely use English in their professional lives. From the beginning, they agreed that they

wanted Ela to be bilingual, but they really wanted English to be her first language. They believed that English had to be the priority.

Since Ela was a baby, they have engaged her in the English-speaking community. She went to an English pre-school and has done many other activities such as dance and soccer where English was the spoken language. Since they have no intention of moving back to Poland, fluency and proficiency in English is the priority. Stefania said on this topic, "I want her (Ela) to be successful in this country; this is my priority. She can take it (Polish) as far as she wants. If at some point she decided that she didn't need Polish anymore, I think I would be fine with that".

This attitude about the priority of English for her daughter has a strong influence on the language use in the home. While Polish is valued, it is clear that for both mother and father, their desire for their child to be successful in this country will always put English above Polish to some extent.

This priority on English has a big impact on Ela and it is clear that she most strongly identifies with English. This is confirmed when reviewing the audio-recordings Stefania collected about six months after the initial interviews. She gathered three separate audio-recordings of natural home language interactions between herself and Ela. Stefania collected them all in the mornings while Ela was getting ready for her school day. There were interesting issues that emerged from these recordings as I reviewed them and then discussed them with Stefania. The main issue I explored was the language patterns that Stefania and Ela use when they converse with each other. Stefania also reflected on her own conclusions regarding her language use.

In general, Stefania speaks to Ela in Polish and Ela speaks to her mother in English. There are many times when Stefania uses English, but there are only a few occasions when Ela uses Polish at all. Most of the content of the conversations revolve around what is going to happen that day, what Ela is looking forward to, what plans they have for the upcoming weekend, special projects going on at school, and the weather (it's winter).

The English Stefania uses in the conversations are short words like "no, yea, okay, wow, and well". She said she doesn't even realize she is using those words but now she has reached a point where she is as comfortable with her English as her Polish and maybe even more comfortable with her English. Stefania also uses English words that she says don't exist in Polish or are too long to say, such as "jump rope, sign up, neckwarmer". When we reviewed some of the tapes together, Stefania said that many times, she was interpreting an utterance Ela made in English into Polish. Stefania said there was not a time on the recordings when she explicitly asked Ela to speak Polish, and she said that is typical in their relationship. She also said that in the mornings, they are in a hurry, and she takes the easy route with the language and just lets it go.

The only time Ela used any Polish was on one of the recordings when her Mom said "Time to go" in English and Ela said "Yea, okay, I'm coming" in Polish. Stefania said that Ela will do short little phrases such as this in Polish fairly frequently.

Finally, when reflecting on the recordings, I asked Stefania if she thought they were a typical representation of their language interactions, and she said they were fairly typical since she often tries to start the day by speaking some Polish with Ela. However

she said, “For some reason, I believe I spoke Polish more when I was recording.” (See Appendix E for a transcription of one of the audio-recordings).

A year after the initial interviews, the priority on English has only grown, largely due to the fact that academics are becoming a more central focus in Ela’s life. She just finished first grade in second grade and has been attending a private school the past year. The family chose to transfer Ela out of the public school after kindergarten and they are very happy with the education she is getting at her new school. However, it is academically demanding, so Stefania feels that a lot of time needs to be invested in keeping up with things connected to school.

Her current attitude is very focused on helping Ela achieve in school and that attitude is reflected in her acceptance that Ela is using less Polish and more English. Stefania believes this is a necessity in order for her to stay on top of things with school. Doing well at school and completing homework has to be the priority, and that is all about English.

During this last interview, I read a quote back to Stefania that she had made in our first interview: “I want her (Ela) to be successful in this country and that is my priority. She can take Polish as far as she wants.” I asked her if she thought she would feel differently if their home language was a more dominant one in the U.S. like Spanish. I suggested there might be more concrete reasons such as professional opportunities to keep a language like Spanish going in the United States. Stefania became quite animated at this question, took the discussion in somewhat of a different direction than I anticipated, and expressed some strong sentiments that I had never heard from her before.

She said English is the language here; it's the primary language. She stated, "I think it should be impressed on people that we speak English here. Of course, other cultures should be respected and there is a place for other languages, but you still need to know English". Then she told me about a friend of hers who lives in Texas and had pulled her children out of public school because she felt that Spanish was used too much there and that English almost seemed to be the second language. Stefania disapproved of this situation very much.

Through the interviews, I also discovered that there is a strong emotional component to choice of language for Ela. Ela's preference for English is intact at our first interviews and grows stronger during the year of the study. Stefania feels that Ela relates to English better than Polish; she can express her feelings better and more naturally in English. If Ela is really happy or upset, it will always come out in English. Stefania said that she and Ela have a very close connection and most of their conversations are now in English. "The emotional connection with me has been formed in English".

Stefania reflected on the fact that she has now been living in the United States longer than she ever lived in Poland, so her own comfort level with English is very high. At times, she is trying to speak Polish and she slips into English without even realizing it. Her husband does not approve of all this English-speaking between the two of them, but Stefania said she does not feel bad about it.

The majority of Ela's life is carried out in English now that she is in elementary school. This is the language she most closely identifies with and is most comfortable

with. Ela is learning and socializing in English all day long. She speaks English with her friends, including her friends who can speak Polish. All of her extracurricular activities, with the exception of the Polish school, are conducted in English. In short, the majority of her life revolves around and is dominated by English and that is the language she has come to prefer. Stefania and her husband decided early on in Ela's life that they wanted English to be the priority and in essence to be Ela's first language. It is clear that this is exactly what has happened in Ela's life.

The Value of Polish

Although a clear priority is placed on English, Polish is still very important in this family. In fact, Stefania still cares about her own Polish proficiency. She said that she has good vocabulary and word recall but at times will need to check her spelling, especially the extra markings that are necessary in written Polish. She is careful to proofread her writing when she is sending a letter home. She reads novels in Polish and a Polish newspaper on-line every day. Since she was trained professionally in English, she actually knows medical terminology in English much better than in Polish. However, she cares about sounding professional and educated in Polish and has taken the time to study some medial terminology in Polish, so when she is back there, she can converse with medical professionals. She does not have much opportunity to use Polish in her work here; she has occasionally done some interpreting but never on a regular basis.

Stefania spoke about the value of Ela's Polish in several ways. The most important factor that motivates the maintenance of the home language is the connection Polish has to the family, particularly the relationship Ela has with her father, her

grandmother, and other Polish relatives. Other factors that are motivators in maintaining the home language include the mother's knowledge of the benefits of knowing more than one language, the family's connection to the Polish community in their city, and the cultural aspects of Polish.

In the second set of interviews, Stefania reports that in the year that has passed since we spoke, Ela's comfort level with Polish in not as high and that she has seen deterioration in her Polish. Ela is not speaking as much as she was even a year ago and she has lost vocabulary. She is a fluent reader and decodes proficiently in Polish; she uses good pronunciation when she reads. However, she does not comprehend everything she is able to read. Stefania said that Ela does not really have enough exposure to spoken Polish right now to maintain it at a high level. She said Ela still definitely has an English accent and struggles with certain Polish sounds.

In both interviews, Stefania reported that she rarely disciplines Ela in Polish. She said she does not want there to be a negative connection to that language. Sometimes if Ela is mad or tired and her mom speaks to her in Polish, she will respond, "Mom, don't Polish me!"

She also reports that after a year, Ela is even more adamant and conscious now that they only speak English in public. Ela confirmed that, and when I asked her why they speak only English in public, she simply stated, "Well, we just want to speak English there."

As Stefania reflected on Ela's deteriorating Polish, she seemed to feel badly and somewhat guilty. Stefania said that Ela needs to keep her Polish up, but it is difficult to

find the time to do this. Stefania then discussed the issue of time in relation to the Polish language at some length. Ela is now going into second grade; she has a busy life with school and other activities. All of their Polish friends are experiencing the same things. They are all busy working professionals. Private school is tough, and there is competition, and Ela gets stressed out, and sometimes there are social issues with other kids. Stefania spends lots of time making sure Ela is on top of her academics, and she also spends time talking to her and guiding her with the social and emotional part of her life. Stefania reflected on how busy Ela's life is and said that doing Polish is kind of like doing one more thing on top of an already busy schedule. She concluded, "Ela has to learn to be disciplined. Even if she's not having a great day, she needs to do the Polish. It's tough, though."

She still feels confident that Ela will keep her Polish in some way. "I know she's going to speak Polish and even though she speaks with an accent, who cares?" I asked if the connection between her husband and Ela was more in Polish, and she said probably but then added that even with her father, Ela will express her feelings more in English like when she tell him she loves him. Stefania said with a laugh that Ales will always make Ela repeat "I love you" in Polish. Ela's dad has a profound impact on Ela's use of Polish.

Family

Ela's father. Although I did not interview Ales, his approach with Polish and Ela came up frequently in every interview I did with both Stefania and Ela. He is definitely seen as the driving force behind Ela's maintenance of the language. Ales is very strict

about Polish and wants it spoken 100% of the time. Stefania reports that he will correct them every single time they do not use Polish with him. He speaks exclusively in Polish to Ela. Not only does he speak it with her, but they work for thirty minutes every day on reading and writing. Stefania said that the Polish, especially the academic Polish is "his thing, his focus." Her focus is more on English and helping Ela with her reading and her homework. When discussing these differences in their approaches, Stefania explained that she cares about Ela continuing with her Polish, but said, "I can't do everything. I take her here, there and everywhere, help with homework. That's the priority."

Stefania said at the first interview that with Ela beginning first grade, getting the academic Polish in every day will be more challenging. Ales think he can still do it and plans to continue this routine. A year later, Ales and Ela still spend the thirty minutes every day on academic Polish.

Both Stefania and Ela report that it is really a requirement for Ela to speak Polish with her father. Ales will give gentle and simple reminders like, "Polish, please." and Ela is generally not too resistant to him. Sometimes he pretends not to understand English, but she knows he does. When asked what her dad does when she speaks English, she raises her voice and says "Polski! Polski! ("Polish" in Polish) I asked what she did when he said this, and she reported that she just says, "Okay, Daddy".

Stefania said that her husband and Ela have a very close relationship, and she wants to please him, so she does Polish out of love. Stefania elaborated, "They have the best relationship, and it makes Ela more willing to work on her Polish. He also makes

Polish fun with her." For example, she said that Ela really enjoys Polish fairy tales, and she and Ales act these out and are very creative with them.

Stefania somewhat sheepishly admitted that her husband does give what he calls "rewards" and she calls "bribes" for successful Polish lessons. Ales will promise her toys or a special outing after a period of lessons or accomplishments. There is a system for her Polish education. There are goals set for her learning, and when she reaches them, she gets a reward. Stefania said she is not so sure this is the best method for motivating Ela but admits it seems to works very well.

Stefania concludes that Ales is definitely the one who is staying on top of the Polish maintenance and worrying about different aspects of her Polish acquisition. She commented that one time he heard a story from a language specialist that language sounds are acquired by three years of age, so for a while he was really hammering on Polish-specific sounds. Every single day he gives reminders about it and says things like," She's not speaking Polish enough". He speaks it all the time. He does not expect perfection; mistakes are okay, but he wants her to use it. Sometimes when Ela says something in English, he interprets it into Polish and then asks her to repeat it. When he arrives home in the evening from work, everything goes to Polish.

When asked who she speaks Polish with, Ela says with her dad and sometimes her mom, but more Polish with her dad "'cuz we always do Polish letters and numbers which usually are long and usually I feel like I don't have time for it all". She mentioned that sometimes it's fun to practice because at the end she'll get a toy or something.

Stefania says in the second interviews that her own current patterns of speaking Polish with Ela are very choppy. The general pattern seems to be that Stefania attempts to speak at times to Ela in Polish, Ela answers her in English, and then Stefania ends up switching to English as well. Stefania also said that when they are talking about important things, like emotions and feelings, they always communicate in English now, because that is the language Ela can express herself best in.

I have noticed from the recordings and from what Stefania tells me about her own use of Polish, that she frequently codeswitches. I asked if Ela ever does this and Stefania said no, that she keeps the languages pretty separate. She made one more interesting comment about Ela's language choices. She said that sometimes now Ela will speak Polish if she wants something and is trying to butter her parents up.

In my last interview with Ela, we again discussed Polish and English in her life. Here, I have included part of the transcription of this interview with Ela, because her own words sum up her feelings about Polish and English better than I ever could. The "I" stands for interviewer and the "E" indicates Ela is talking.

I: Do you always want to know Polish?
E: Yep! I always want to know Polish no matter what happens!
I: How come?
E: Because it will be very good, because then I'll be able to communicate with people from Poland.
I: Which language is easier to speak? English or Polish?
She laughed like it was a silly question and the answer should be obvious to me.
E: English!"
I: Who wants you to practice Polish?
E: My dad, of course.
I: Do you ever forget some of your Polish words?

E: Yea.
I: What happens then?
E: If I forget how to say something, I'll just say it in English and then he'll translate it for me in Polish.
I: And, what about your mom? Do you speak Polish with her?
E: No, we are usually the English buddies.
I: What's the most fun thing about knowing Polish?
E: Well, the most fun thing is that I can communicate with my family members.
I: So, you're going to keep up with your Polish?
E: Yep, until I'm really good, and then finally my dad might get me that Sharpay doll. I'm really hoping for that.
Then we discussed her grandma coming to visit in November which was just three months away. We talked about how they would be speaking a lot of Polish then.
I: You and your mom aren't going to be English buddies then, huh?
E: She's going to be a Polish buddy when Grandma's here!
I: Then it will be all Polish all the time?
E: Yep!

In this last exchange, Ela is very excited about her grandmother coming to visit and even shows excitement about speaking Polish with her. In all the interviews I did with both Stefania and Ela, it was clear that the person Ela most enjoys speaking Polish with is her grandmother.

Contact with Polish relatives. Stefania always first brought up her mother and other relatives in Poland when asked about the importance of Ela keeping Polish going. She emphasized that the main reason she wants Ela to know Polish starts with the family. Her mother Ada and other Polish relatives still live in Poland, and these are important people in Ela's life, so it is essential that she is able to communicate with them. Ada visits them in the United States once a year and stays for four to five months at a time. Stefania commented that as long as Ela's grandmother is alive, Ela will speak Polish, but not because of Stefania's insistence, but rather because Ela loves her grandmother, has a

wonderful relationship with her, and this is her only way to communicate with her. Ada will actually correct her daughter Stefania if she speaks English, but Ada seldom has to remind Ela to speak Polish with her.

Ela reports only speaking Polish to her grandmother and says, "With Grandma it's more fun. She doesn't make me do letters and numbers. She just plays with me; that's all she does. We play." When asked if Ada knows any English, Ela responds loudly and emphatically, "No way!"

Stefania commented that Ela's Polish gets a huge boost during the visits from her mother. She reiterated that with grandma it continues to be just a natural connection; it's all playing. Stefania added in the last set of interviews that Ada made no comments about Ela's Polish concerning whether it was deteriorating or not when she visited recently.

Benefits of Being Multilingual

Another factor that influences Stefania's desire for her daughter to continue with Polish is that she is aware of the benefits of knowing more than one language. In fact, she has her own rich and interesting experience with learning languages that contribute to the priority she places on Ela's bilingualism with English and Polish and her desire for Ela to learn other world languages. Stefania is also aware of research on the benefits of knowing more than one language.

Stefania grew up speaking Polish, and they also learned Russian in school. She said that she was fluent in Russian for a long time and still is fairly proficient with it. She also learned French in high school. Stefania says that she has always enjoyed learning

foreign languages and that it comes easily to her. She has been told by teachers that she has a talent for foreign languages.

She believes that learning other languages is extremely important in life. Stefania has a very positive view in the value and power of knowing other languages. She sees them as a way to connect to the world, learn about other cultures, and broaden one's perspectives.

This enthusiasm for her own language of Polish and other foreign languages is shared with her daughter and has a great influence on her. Ela was taking Spanish lessons with a neighbor during the first interviews and enjoying them very much. She told me some Spanish words and said, "I'm great at Spanish."

One reason they are choosing to have Ela attend a private school now is because they offer foreign languages there. They teach both Spanish and French. Stefania expressed disappointment and frustration with the fact that there is mostly no early foreign language teaching in public schools here in our city. She feels that America is behind in this regard. Stefania believes that foreign languages should not just be an extra at school; they should be a part of the curriculum. "In today's economy, our children need to speak foreign languages", she commented. Stefania elaborated by saying that foreign languages broaden horizons and allow one to learn about different cultures.

In the second interviews, Stefania said that Ela has been studying Spanish and French at her private school. She said Ela loves it and thinks the languages are so cool. Ela confirmed this statement and is very enthusiastic about learning Spanish and French.

Stefania said, "Children are like little sponges and they absorb language quickly.

I do think she is more comfortable learning new languages because she already knows two others. She loves language class and is doing fantastic with it."

Ela also expressed positive feelings about her abilities with Polish and commented that she felt proud and happy that she could read a Polish book to her peers and be like a teacher. At the end of her interview she was very proud to read a book in Polish to me and show me how she can write in Polish. I sensed that she knew these skills set her apart from others.

Ela also mentioned in the earlier interview that she told her kindergarten teacher that she speaks Polish. The class celebrated Name Day with Ela. In Poland, each day of the year has a name for it, which is the feast day for the saint for which you are named. It is traditional to celebrate Name Day in Poland, and so Ela brought this custom to her class and taught the other students about it and also taught them some words in Polish. As Ela recounted this story, she seemed very pleased with the whole experience. I asked her if she liked sharing her language with others and if she felt that speaking another language like Polish was something special about her. She responded, "Well, my dad says I speak Polish awesomely. That I'm a great Polish speaker." Her mom was in the room at this point and smiled at this comment and reiterated that she is great at Polish, and they are very proud of her. Ela seemed to beam with pride at this comment from her mom.

According to both Stefania and Ela, teachers at the private school Ela attends now are aware that she is bilingual, and they talk about it positively. They have praised her for being able to speak another language and asked her to teach the class some words.

Stefania said this seemed to make a big impression on Ela. She saw her Polish language as cool and something that differentiated her from the other kids in the class. "This had a positive impact on her- kind of like, I know something you don't know." Stefania continues to believe that this community views other languages and being multilingual in a positive way.

In addition, Ela is currently interested in Russia and the language. Both Stefania and Ales speak Russian, and her dad has been teaching her some Russian. Ela said she got interested in Russia because she likes the dolls in Russia, saw a movie about Russia, and her dad has been there. She said she wants to go there and also added that she has a Russian American Girl doll.

I asked Ela, "What's good about knowing other languages?'

"Well, it just helps when you go to other countries, because then you can communicate."

In both sets of interviews, Stefania spoke at great length about the value of knowing more than one language, including her belief that bilingualism has cognitive benefits. She believes that learning other languages helps brain development. She has taken psychology classes and her professional background has helped her learn about the benefits of being bilingual. She said that once you learn one language, others will come more easily since our brain gets used to the study of language and the structure of language.

Stefania has given a lot of thought to the value of bilingualism for her daughter, Ela. She commented, "The interesting thing with children and language is they absorb

like sponges, and when they have exposure and when they have friends, mutual interests, they start speaking like this (snaps)".

Because of this belief in children learning languages at a young age, Stefania was part of staring a Polish school on Saturdays for the Polish families in their community. This class focuses on helping the children maintain their home language. Stefania commented that teaching this class and socializing with this community frequently leads to issues of bilingualism and language development being a focus of discussion and debate among the parents.

Stefania said they have explored and learned about a lot of issues as they have undertaken the goal of raising their children bilingually and even more so since have started the Polish school. Stefania said that she personally is constantly learning about bilingualism and asking questions and evolving on the issue. She said she is an "open book on the topic". She is willing to explore issues and learn new things. For example, this Polish community had a big discussion about the optimal time to start teaching writing in Polish. Some thought it might confuse the children if they started too early and that they should wait until the third grade when their English writing was stable. They all talked it over, consulted someone more expert in language development, and decided to start right away with the Polish writing, and that has seemed to be successful.

Polish Community

This Polish community in her city is another factor motivating Ela's maintenance of Polish. In her community, Stefania and her husband socialize regularly with a small group of other families who are native Polish speakers. This group is made up of highly

educated professionals with young children. When they meet as a group to socialize, the parents speak Polish to each other and the children speak English. Stefania commented that at first they tried to encourage the children to speak Polish to each other, but it seemed so unnatural for the kids that they gave up on that. Stefania elaborated on this issue by saying that it is more natural for the kids to speak English with each other. As a group, the families don't want to force Polish in that way; it would be too much pressure.

In some of these families, both parents are Polish speakers, but in several, there is one native Polish speaker and one native English speaker. They are all over the board with the amount of Polish they use at home, but it is used to some extent in all of their homes.

Stefania and another mother in the group did start a Saturday Polish school for the group to encourage the children's language development. At the time of the first interview, the Saturday Polish school had been going for one year. There are nine children and they spend one hour a week in class. The class is conducted entirely in Polish, and they work on all language modalities: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Stefania said she is trying to do the best she can with this because she feels it is important, but she struggles because she is not a teacher. She has read and sought advice from language specialists on the best methods and practices for the class.

Most of the kids are at the same level more or less, but Ela is higher than them and easily gets bored in the class. She does like coming, though, because it's social for her, so Stefania had given her responsibilities and asked her to help be a teacher. Ela likes this role a lot. Stefania said that she hopes the school will continue. She is not sure

about the future or how far all the parents want to go with this. The general goals are that the children can speak fluently and communicate, be able to read some, and be able to write a letter to Polish relatives. If the children want to go further, that is fine.

When I ask about the Polish school at our final interviews, Stefania reports that the school is still going on. The class meets for forty-five minutes once a week. They continue to work on all language skills. The age range of the children now is from five to ten years old. They are all on the same approximate level with their language skills, except Ela continues to be at a higher level. Like a year ago, she only goes to the school for social reasons because she likes the kids. She has continued in her role as helper and teacher.

Stefania said she plans to keep going with the school as long as the kids want to come and the parents are happy with it. She said the school is very low key. She used to assign homework, but they would never do it, so now she just keeps it casual. She said the majority of the parents are not putting much effort into working with their children on Polish at home. She said that at first this lack of effort frustrated her, but then she realized how busy the families all are. She said they are all busy professionals. In many of the couples, the husband is a native Polish speaker and the wife is a native English speaker. These husbands are all working doctors, and the mothers are home more with the children so Polish does not get much attention.

Stefania does communicate with the parents and lets them know how their children are doing in the class. Parents all seem to be very aware of where their children's language skills are. She said that some will send their kids to Poland for the

summer, and they'll get really good and fluent, even lose their accent, but then they get into the school year again here in the United States and they lose it all over again. Stefania said, "Hopefully the older they (the kids) become, the more they will see the value of the Polish language".

Another way this Polish community keeps the language alive for their children is by bringing in the culture and tradition of Poland. They often celebrate Polish holidays together and in their own family units.

Culture

Stefania commented in both interviews that Polish is important culturally in their family life. They have children's books, music, magazines, and movies in Polish. Ela loves all of these. She really enjoys Polish stories, especially fairy tales, and as mentioned earlier loves to act these out with her father. Ela also likes movies and books in Polish and will often reach for them first.

This family also observes Polish customs in their home, and Stefania said that this is a natural way to use the language to bring it to life. Traditions like St. Nicholas Day and Name Day are celebrated. They also carry out Catholic religious traditions that are celebrated in Poland. Food is another way Poland and Polish are kept alive in their household. Ela knows all about traditional Polish foods.

Ela spoke very positively about all these cultural aspects connected to Polish both times I interviewed her. She was eager to show me her Polish books, movies, toys, and clothes and tell me all about Polish food and holidays.

Discussion

In this section, I will discuss and interpret my findings in my case study as they relate to the literature I have reviewed connected to my research questions. Those questions are:

- What are the factors that affect Stefania's attitudes and practices regarding maintaining the home language of Polish with her daughter Ela over a time period of a year?
- What are the factors that affect Ela's attitudes and practices regarding maintaining the home language of Polish over a time period of a year?
- Are there changes in the mother's and daughter's attitudes and practices with Polish over the year?

I will present this discussion according to the themes that emerged in my study with the mother and the daughter. The themes that emerged as factors that affect the home language are the priority the family places on English and the value Polish also has in the family. Both of these themes contribute to the dynamics and changes in home language use in the household over the period of one year that this study was conducted. I will present these two themes as they relate to both Stefania's and Ela's attitudes and practices regarding maintaining Polish during this year.

The Priority of English

In the first study of bilingualism and families that I reviewed, (Worthy & Rodriguez- Galindo, 2006) the parents all agreed that becoming proficient with English was necessary to their children's success in the U.S. They also recognized the

professional and economic value of fluency in English. Even though many parents in the group were not proficient English-speakers themselves, they seemed to have a good understanding of their children's progress and development in English and cared that their children became fluent and academically successful with English.

In my case study, the parents were already very much assimilated into the culture of the United States before Ela was even born. Both of them are highly educated professionals who are fluent in English. In fact, they have now lived longer in the U.S. than they did in their birth country of Poland. Since they have no plans to return to Poland, they naturally want Ela to be assimilated into U.S. culture and be successful here. Stefania herself worked hard to learn English and assimilate when she first moved to the Untied States in her twenties.

Throughout my study, it was clear that while Stefania places value on her daughter maintaining Polish, the clear priority is that Ela is proficient in English in order to be successful in the United States. Early on, Ela was immersed in a world where the majority spoke English and so it was natural for her English preference to develop at a young age. Stefania supports that preference because of her desire for Ela to be successful in this country. She also wants Ela to be accepted and have a sense of belonging in this community.

Stefania reported in the second round of interviews that Ela's preference for English has grown in the past year as she becomes even more involved with school and the academics become more rigorous. Ela also continues to be involved in many activities such as dance and soccer that are conducted in English. Ela's world of English

continues to expand and as it does, both mother's and daughter's attitudes and practices continue on a path of more English and less Polish.

The literature on language preference and assimilation for immigrant children reflects much of the experiences of Ela and her family. Children often discover that the dominant language works with most everyone in their community, while their home language only works with a few. It may seem logical to children to begin to more exclusively use the dominant language (Taeschner, 1983 as cited in Parsons, 2005). All children want to be seen as normal, feel included, and accepted by their peers. Immigrant children often learn that the more they speak English, the more accepted they are (Wong Fillmore, 2000).

It is very clear from all of the interviews and recordings that Ela most strongly identifies with the English language. Her mom described how Ela is most comfortable expressing herself in English and how her emotions always come out in English. She clearly is most proficient in English, and the majority of her time is engaged with the English-speaking world. Although it seems clear that Stefania wants the Polish culture and language to remain a constant in Ela's life, she is also clear that English is the priority, and she is comfortable that Ela clearly prefers English over Polish.

The Value of Polish

In my second round of interviews, Stefania reported seeing clear deterioration in Ela's Polish, citing some loss of vocabulary, less fluency, and not as much growth. She said that the factors that contribute to this deterioration are the lessening opportunities to

practice Polish and the difficulty of finding the time to invest in Polish. Even Ela herself talked about forgetting some Polish words in the second interview.

Although Stefania is comfortable with Ela's preference of English over Polish, she still values their home language and does care that Ela continues with it. The factors that motivate both Stefania and Ela to continue with Polish include family relationships, the belief in the benefits of knowing more than one language, the connection to the Polish community in their city, and the cultural aspects connected to the home language.

Family

"Communicating with children in the native language helps to promote a sense of connectedness among the child, the family, and the heritage culture and community" (Giambo & Szecsi, 2005, p. 164). If children lose their home language they can be at risk of not only losing their closeness with their parents but their connections to the extended family and their language community may suffer as well.

Wong Fillmore (2002) says that one of the greatest dangers of subtractive bilingualism is the loss of family connections. Wong Fillmore (1991) says that there can be grave concerns about the development of a child who gives up the home language, specifically in situations where the parents only speak the home language and do not speak English well at all. If a parent's ability to communicate with their children is lost, it becomes difficult for them to teach their children their values and culture. Losing a home language is not simply about the ability to communicate, it is also about their connection to their family and community, their ethnic identity. If they lose this

bilingualism and biliculturalism, they are losing part of their future potential in today's world (Lee & Oxelson, 2006).

When I asked Stefania why maintain the Polish at all, she replied, "It all starts with the family". I also asked her what would be lost if Ela no longer had the ability to communicate in Polish and she talked about the family and cultural connections and then adamantly said, "As long as her grandmother is alive, she'll speak Polish." She does not seem overly concerned about the degree of Ela's proficiency in Polish; she just wants her to be able to communicate with their Polish relatives.

The connections with her parents and her grandmother seem to be the strongest identification Ela has with Polish. These relationships will likely be the strongest reason for Ela to continue identifying with the Polish language. However, since Stefania is already reporting signs of decreased proficiency in Ela's Polish, she does seem to be at risk for subtractive bilingualism. In this family, loss of Polish would likely have a negative affect on Ela's relationship with their grandmother and extended family.

Benefits of Being Multilingual

Stefania has a strong belief in the value of knowing more than one language and this belief is another factor that contributes to her desire that Ela maintain her Polish.

In the second study of Hispanic families that I reviewed in my research by King & Fogle (2006), the parents as a group were highly educated and viewed maintaining or teaching a home language as a gift to give to their children (Worthy & Rodriguez-Galindo, 2006, p. 598). This is a view that Stefania agrees with judging by the many positive comments she has made about maintaining the home language. Another factor

that contributes to Stefania's desire for Ela to continue with her Polish is that she values bilingualism and is educated about the benefits of it.

The first study of Hispanic families revealed that while the parents saw clear gains in their children's English development, over half reported they were seeing definite signs of erosion in their Spanish (Worthy & Rodriguez-Galindo, 2006). Many were experiencing difficulty in getting their children to use Spanish and some of the specific problems the parents experienced with the use of the Spanish language in their family were reported during interviews. The parents said that sometimes the children were speaking to each other in English so the parents could not understand them. Parents also reported experiencing pressure from family and teachers to use more English.

Teachers can play a role in a family's bilingualism (Lee & Oxelson, 2006). They can support it, be indifferent about it, or be negative about it. A study of California teachers about teachers' opinions concerning family's maintenance of home language revealed that teachers are either negative or indifferent about this issue or they are supportive of home language use.

The teachers who were negative or indifferent cited these reasons for their feelings: the belief that the home language was really a family issue or concern, their focus on their own workload with the students, or a lack of understanding about bilingualism and what their role could possibly be in encouraging home language use.

By contrast, teachers who supported home language use believed that they had a definite role in encouraging the students' maintenance of their first languages. One teacher commented, "If the school is going to help each student reach their greatest

potential, maintaining their home language is part of that. It is part of teaching the whole student" (Lee & Oxelson, 2006, p.461).

I had the opportunity to discuss teachers' opinions and impressions with both Stefania and Ela. They both reported that Ela's kindergarten teacher was relatively indifferent about the fact that she was bilingual. However, when they asked to celebrate Name Day, she did respond positively about Ela's presentation of both the custom and her Polish language. With her first grade teacher, they received more direct positive feedback about Ela's bilingualism. They have explicitly praised her for being able to speak another language and have asked her to teach the class Polish words. Stefania commented that this has seemed to have a big impact on Ela and whenever this comes up, she feels very proud of her abilities.

Stefania commented in both interviews that knowing foreign languages is essential in today's society. She has also criticized the U.S. educational system for being somewhat backward in its approach to foreign languages by not stressing them enough or introducing them to children at a younger age.

Stefania talked about how much she still enjoys being able to read Polish newspapers, not only because of the language, but because of the valuable different perspective it affords. Not only does Stefania value foreign languages for herself but she cares about it for her daughter. While she and her husband worked to help Ela develop their home language of Polish in her early years, she also attended Spanish classes as a preschooler. Stefania is very pleased that the private elementary school Ela attends

teaches both Spanish and French. Ela's parents are also encouraging her new interest in Russian.

Ela has clearly absorbed this positive image of foreign languages and is proud of her ability to use Polish. She is also very excited about Spanish and French and most recently Russian. She commented in an interview that other languages are important so you can communicate with others in the world.

Clearly, this positive view of foreign languages in the family has the potential to contribute to Ela's maintenance of her Polish. She knows that she needs Polish to connect with her family just as she needs other foreign languages if she wants to travel and communicate with others in the world.

Maintaining Polish also helps this family keep their connections to the Polish community in their city.

Polish Community

"Bilingual parents who try to educate their children in their mother tongue confront immense pressure for cultural conformity from peers, friends, teachers, and the media. In the absence of a sizeable and economically potent ethnic community to support language maintenance, fluent bilingualism in the second generation is likely to prove an elusive goal." (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996, p. 230)

The Polish community in the city where they reside also factors into the drive to keep up with the Polish. This group of parents seems to be very aware of the benefits of their children maintaining their Polish, and their struggles with this seem to center around finding the time to focus on the Polish and their children's preference for English. These

parents are highly-educated professionals who know the benefits of bilingualism. When this community gathers, the children speak in English but the parents speak in Polish. They celebrate Polish customs together and try to keep their children's Polish going though the school on the weekends.

Culture

Being bilingual is not just about the language, it is about connections to the heritage culture (Giambo & Szecsi, 2005). If children lose their bilingualism and biliculturalism, they are limiting their potential in today's world (Lee & Oxelson, 2006).

Stefania and her family enjoy making Polish culture a central part of Ela's life. Polish books, music, movies, and celebrating cultural traditions are a priority in their home. Ela is proud of her Polish heritage and enjoys Polish traditions, customs, and food. This is evident by her eagerness to talk about Polish customs and the language with her classmates and with me in our interviews.

Summary

Through my interviews with Stefania and Ela and the audio-recordings of their home language use, I have been able to examine what factors affect their attitudes and practices concerning their home language of Polish. I have also been able to identify changes in these areas during the year that the study was conducted.

Two major themes emerged in my study as factors in language use. These themes are the priority of English and the value of Polish in the family.

Ela's proficiency in English is the clear priority. This has been a carefully considered decision in the family and is shaped by the parents' desire for their daughter

to be successful in the United States. Stefania's own experiences learning English and being an immigrant also have contributed to their decision to make English the priority.

Although English is essential, the home language of Polish is still clearly valued in this family. The factors that shape Ela's maintenance of Polish include family relationships, Stefania's knowledge of the benefits of being multilingual, the Polish community in their city, and the cultural aspects of Polish.

In my next chapter, I will discuss the implications of my case study, the limitations of my work, and make recommendations for future research projects on my topic. I will also reflect on my own personal and professional growth while doing this study.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

The questions I explored in this study are:

- What are the factors that affect Stefania's attitudes and practices regarding maintaining the home language of Polish with her daughter Ela over a time period of a year?
- What are the factors that affect Ela's attitudes and practices regarding maintaining the home language of Polish over a time period of a year?
- Are there changes in the mother's and daughter's attitudes and practices with Polish over the year?

In my study, I discovered that there are two main factors that affect home language use. The first factor is the priority the family places on English. Stefania wants Ela to be successful in the United States and her own language experiences have also shaped this emphasis on English.

The other main factor that affects home language maintenance is the value the family places on Polish. The motivators for continuing with Polish are family relationships, knowledge of the benefits of being multilingual, connections with the Polish community, and the cultural aspects of Polish.

During the year of my study, I also found that all of these factors continue to play a role in the daughter's home language maintenance. Her preference for English

continues to grow and she is using less Polish. Stefania has also reported signs of deterioration in her daughter's quantity and quality of Polish.

In this chapter, I will discuss possible implications of my study and the limitations of my study. I will make recommendations for future research projects on my topic and reflect on my own growth through this research process.

Implications of the Study

While my study concerning home language use was very small in scale since it focused on the experiences of one mother and one daughter, I believe there are still some important implications of my research. The issues which emerged have relevance for teachers, for parents who are trying to maintain a language other than English in their home, and for any community that has diversity in home languages.

Teachers

Stefania is strong in her belief that maintaining Polish is a positive in Ela's life and she has the support of her husband, her mother, and the Polish community in her town. She doesn't seem to need the approval or support of Ela's teachers to feel confident about working on Polish at home. Since both parents and Ela are completely fluent in English, language has never been an issue that teachers have been worried about with Ela. However, it was interesting to note that Stefania did seem to appreciate the praise and recognition Ela received from her first grade teacher for knowing another language. She also reported that Ela really enjoyed this praise and attention. Teachers' attitudes and communication about other languages can make a big impact on students and parents when it comes to speaking other languages.

There are still many teachers who give negative or mixed messages about using a language other than English at home. I have experienced this in every educational setting I have worked in that has students who are English Language Learners. For those students who are not yet proficient in English, many teachers feel they are doing the right thing by advising parents to practice English at home with their children. The teachers are often well-meaning but they have not thought through the implications of what they are asking the parents to do. Since parents generally have a lot of respect for teachers, they often take the advice to heart.

In my current school district, I always talk to the teaching staff about home language use before parent-teacher conferences. I have presented research on the value of bilingualism and how academic skills can transfer between languages. I have also talked about the negative impact of students losing their home language and what that can do to the family relationships and connections with the culture. I have advised the staff to encourage use of the minority language in the home and community while assuring them that English proficiency can still be a goal. I find that there is still a lot of variation in how teachers respond to these ideas. Teachers can have either a positive or negative impact on the preservation of minority languages.

Parents

The mother in my study is an upper-middle class, highly educated professional who knows a lot about the value of being proficient with other languages. She herself is fluent in English and Polish. It was clear through the study that her daughter's Polish was starting to deteriorate in just a year's time and that less importance was being placed

on the Polish. Stefania said again and again that she cares about Ela maintaining Polish but the priority is for her to be successful in the United States. Time was a major factor regarding the Polish as far as Stefania was concerned. It was becoming increasingly difficult to fit it in. However, Ela's father's persistence with Polish seemed to make a difference, and the relationship between the family and Ela's grandmother was also a major factor in Ela's continuing with the Polish.

The other factor that seems to contribute to the continued focus on Polish is that the family has a community of friends from Poland who have children as well. They all care about their children maintaining their language of Polish and staying connected to the culture. It does seem that being a part of a community that is well-educated and understands the importance of other languages has helped support them in their continued focus on Polish for Ela.

Looking to Ela's future, she is now in third grade, and I have to wonder if the Polish will continue to erode over the next years as she gets busier and academics get tougher. Even with all of the knowledge and advantages that Ela's family has, maintaining Polish has already proven to be a challenge and this challenge will likely only increase in the years to come.

The Community

The community that Ela, Stefania, and I live in has gone through and continues to experience a growing rate of diversity in its population. This diversity includes many families from countries who speak other languages. Our community is typical of many

other towns and cities in the United States that are experiencing growth in diversity and also seems typical in the challenges and problems that arise due to this diversity.

Stefania has repeatedly stated that she has never experienced any discrimination based on her bilingualism in this community and that she feels this city is very tolerant of and encouraging to other languages. I do believe that this is Stefania's experience in this community but it should be noted that her experience is shaped by the fact that she is fluent in English, has what most people consider a “pretty accent’, speaks a European home language, is highly educated and upper middle class, works as a professional at a medical center that employs and treats people from around the world, and is highly assimilated into the English speaking community and culture.

It is going to continue be a challenge for minority languages to be preserved in the United States. Educators, researchers, advocates, and immigrants who are knowledgeable on the subject of language acquisition and the value of multilingualism need to continued to present information and advocate for preservation of these home languages. Immigrants can be successful members of American society, speak English well, and yet still maintain their native language and cultures. The two goals do not have to be at odds; they can and should be complementary.

Limitations of the Study

This case study is based on the experiences of one mother and her daughter concerning home language use over a period of a year. Because of this specific focus, the data may not be applicable to other parents and children.

Recommendations for Further Study

There are many areas of study that could be explored in the future related to my topic of home language use in families. I would be interested in continuing to follow up on the home language maintenance with Ela and Stefania. I also think a study focused on the issues of home language maintenance among families who are newer to the country, less-well educated, and lower-income would be worthwhile. Finally, it would be interesting to see what effect specific programming in schools focused on maintaining home languages would have on families.

Personally, I would love to stay in touch with Ela and Stefania and interview them periodically about Ela's use of Polish and see how it changes with time. It would be fascinating to know what direction she takes or does not take with her Polish and what factors contribute to this.

On a broader scale, I think it would be worthwhile to do a larger study of families and their issues with home language use with children over time. It would be interesting to look at those families who are newer to the country, still learning English themselves, and are from a lower socio-economic class. I think it would be most interesting to look at the pressures that operate on parents and children if the home language starts to erode. It would also be interesting to investigate how the children feel about their home language over a period of time. I would like to know what strategies are most effective for parents to use to encourage home language use and what qualities parents possess who are most successful in keeping the language going at home.

I am happy that Stefania has not had any negative experiences due to her immigrant status and bilingualism, but there are many immigrants who have had a dramatically different experience in this same city. I know this from my interactions with immigrants in both my professional and volunteer work in the same community. Families who speak Spanish and Somali have talked about feeling hostility and experiencing discrimination when they are out in the community speaking their languages. Many of these families are much more recent immigrants than Stefania, are from a lower socio-economic class, are unemployed or work at low-wage, low-skill jobs, do not have a lot of education, are struggling with English themselves, and are still not fully assimilated into the culture and community. I believe that the children of these parents are at a high risk for losing their home language and a study involving this group could be very beneficial.

Finally, it would also be interesting to know what the impact is on a community if it is given the power, support, and encouragement to not only maintain their home languages with their children but to become more proficient with them, especially in the areas of reading and writing. What would the effect be if a school district offered a way for Spanish and Somali speaking parents to come together to teach their language? What would this kind of validation mean to the parents and the children?

Last year, I was chatting with three fifth grade girls who are English Language Learners in my school. They all speak Spanish at home but their literacy skills in Spanish are very low. They asked me to teach them how to read and write Spanish. We ended up working together over lunch a few times a week. They would help me with my

speaking, which is my weakest language skill in Spanish, and I would teach them reading and writing. They loved it, and it was a wonderful experience for all of us. However, this was really only scratching the surface of encouraging literacy in their native language. At conference time, one of the girl's mothers thanked me profusely for taking the time to do this. She said she felt horrible that her daughter did not know how to read and write in Spanish and seemed so grateful that I spent even this small amount of time working on Spanish literacy with her daughter. It really made me think of how such an effort on a larger scale could positively impact the families.

The new ESOL coordinator of our district has started some new outreach programs that bring together communities in the district to discuss concerns and questions they have. These meetings are conducted in the groups' native language and have been very successful in making immigrants feel more comfortable and confident when interacting with the school system. They have also helped empower communities to advocate for their children in the schools. There has been discussion about the importance of preserving native languages in some of these meetings, and this summer a Cambodian Language and Culture School program was held for Cambodian children. There is discussion about encouraging other communities to do the same type of programming so that native languages can be encouraged and taught in a more systematic way. It would be interesting to know what effect efforts like this might have on a community's strength and confidence in promoting home language use.

My Personal and Professional Growth

I became an ESL teacher because I have a passion for language and for teaching children and adults from other cultures. I have benefited and learned a tremendous amount about other people through my work as an ESL teacher. My goal has always been and still is to help students reach a high level of English proficiency and to help them achieve success in the United States. However, I have never considered that for them to achieve this they would need to sacrifice their own language or culture.

As I began teaching ESL to adults and having conversations about home language use, a common theme emerged again and again no matter what group I was talking to. This theme was how difficult it was to get their children to keep up the native language. Parents expressed feelings of loss and disconnection from their children, but they also talked about losing their authority and power in the household since many of their children were learning English faster than them. As I continued teaching ESL but moved into teaching elementary students, this theme would come up again in conferences with parents, but it would also come up in conversations with colleagues. I realized how much misunderstanding and even prejudice there still is about what it means to learn English in our society and to be an immigrant.

It was a rich and rewarding experience to delve into all these issues of language with Ela and Stefania. Stefania is an intelligent and thoughtful woman who believes in the value of home language yet still admits to struggling with keeping it up. Ela spoke quite eloquently about her language experiences for such a young child and provided a lot of insight into the topic.

Through my interviews with Ela and Stefania, all the literature I have reviewed on this topic, and my own personal experiences with students and their parents, it is clear that the topic of home language use in this country will continue to be a complicated and controversial one. I firmly believe that the issue of subtractive bilingualism is one that should be addressed and that measures should be taken to prevent this phenomena.

"While many people have to work hard to learn a second language, the deterioration of a language one already knows is a shameful waste of a child's potential" (Worthy & Rodriguez-Galindo, 2006, p. 598). It would be gratifying if one day the United States was not known as a country where other languages die but rather as a nation where English is spoken yet other languages can continue to flourish and exist together peacefully. It will take a lot of speaking up on the part of teachers, researchers, advocates, and immigrants themselves to begin to reverse this trend. I believe with enough education, persistence, and passion on the topic of preserving home languages, it is possible that one day many languages could continue to flourish and be valued here in the United States.

Summary

This study on home language maintenance has important implications for teachers, parents, and communities. These groups will need to focus on these language issues in order to avoid subtractive bilingualism.

The main limitation of my study is that it is a case study of one mother and her daughter, so my findings may not apply to other families.

I have several recommendations for future studies connected to my topic. I believe it would be very interesting to check in with Ela and Stefania every couple of years to examine how the home language maintenance is going. A larger scale study on home language maintenance with a group of lower-income, less-educated, more recent immigrants would also be instructive. Finally, it would be beneficial to know the effects of home language maintenance if a community and the schools gave explicit support and even offered programming to support home language maintenance.

My study has contributed to my knowledge and passion for this topic. I hope to use my interest in this area to encourage home language maintenance in my school district and my community.

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APPENDIX A

Consent Letter

January 25, 2009

Dear Ms. _____,

I am completing a master's degree in English as a Second Language at Hamline University in St. Paul, MN. As part of my graduate work, I plan to conduct research during 2009 and then a year later in 2010. The purpose of this letter is to ask your permission for you and your child to take part in my research. The final product will be a printed, bound thesis that will be shelved in Hamline's Bush Library. I may also publish or use my findings in scholarly ways in the future.

My research will be centered on your first language use with your daughter. I want to learn more about your experiences raising a daughter with a language other than English in an English-speaking community.

There will be a few stages to my research. First, I would like to do an interview with you. This interview can be done in your home or another private location at a time that is convenient to your family. Second, I would like to interview your daughter. This interview will be done in a natural play setting appropriate for her age. Third, I would like you to collect a short audio recording of language use between you and your daughter at home. Finally, a year after the first set of interviews, I would like to do another interview with both you and your daughter. I plan to do an audio recording of the interviews in order to review the information at a later time.

If you and your child participate in my research, your identity will be protected. No real names or identifying characteristics will be used in the thesis. All data will be collected at your convenience and you or your child may decide at any time not to continue participation in the study.

I have already received permission to do this research from the Hamline Graduate School of Education.

Please sign and return the permission form to me in the envelope provided. If you have any questions, please e-mail me at lenz.rowekamp@usfamily.net or call me at 507-282-0465. Thank you for your cooperation. I look forward to working with you on this project.

Sincerely,

Laura Lenz

APPENDIX B

Interview #1 Questions for Stefania

This interview will cover broad questions on my topic. The results from this may lead to development of more specific interview questions for the mother and daughter.

- How long have you lived in the United States?
- How long have you lived in this community?
- What is the highest level of education you have completed?
- What is your degree in?
- What is your professional work history?
- How did you learn English?
- What are your thoughts on raising children with two or more languages?
- Has it been your goal from Ela's birth for her to acquire Polish and English?
- Have you read, studied, and gathered resources about raising a child bilingually?
- What have your patterns of language use with Ela been since her birth?
- What are your current patterns of language use in the home?
- What strategies do you use to keep your home language going with Ela?
- How does she tend to respond to the two languages?
- Do you speak your first language with others in the community? Does your daughter?
- Is your daughter learning to read and write in the first language?
- How do you feel others in the community perceive your family's bilingualism, for example: your colleagues, Ela's teachers, other parents, etc.

APPENDIX C

Interview #2 Questions for Stefania

1. The other interviews were in March 2009 so Ela was finishing kindergarten. Now she's headed into second grade. Ask similar questions as in the first interview about language patterns and usage, especially at home.

2. How is school going for Ela?

3. What are your current patterns of speaking Polish with Ela at home? Do you think there have been changes in this over the past year? Does she still have a high level of comfort with Polish? Does it tax her? Is she more comfortable with English?

4. Discuss recordings of language interactions in the home. Were they typical or more Polish than usual?

5. You do not appear to ask Ela to speak Polish. True?

6. In the first recording you and Ela were talking about it being a good day, playing in the snow, eating junk food, signing up for jump roping at school. You seem to be repeating some of Izabela's phrases in English like "awesome day, after school, jump roping." You also use short phrases in English: "Well, no, oh, yea, why, okay, wow" and phrases that are specific to English such as "sign-up".

Discuss these observations with Stefania and ask for her reflections and interpretations.

7. In recording #2 you are getting ready for the school day, gathering books, talking about dolls. Let's review this one spot on the recording because it appears that Ela uses some Polish. Is that true? What does she say? Is this typical that she might interject a little Polish like this?

8. In recording #3 you are discussing snow pants, library day. Ask for more insight on some of the langue interactions here. Do you typically start out the day trying to speak some Polish to Ela? Again, was this typical of your interactions? Was it natural? Do you think the recorder affected you?

9. Are you still speaking Polish when Dad is there?

10. You said in the first interview that the strategies your husband uses to encourage Ela with her Polish are constant reminders and a reward system. Are these strategies still being used? How is she reacting to these strategies?

11. Is dad still working on academic Polish with her in the evenings? 30 minutes a day?

12. Do you think Ela is still on par academically in Polish?

13. Is Ela still motivated with Polish? Does she feel a need, a desire to use it? What is she motivated by? Is there more resistance to Polish from Ela as she is in school full day? Is there more resistance to studying Polish? How are you handling this?

14. Are you still doing Polish school? What is the focus? Does Ela like it? Is she still interacting with Polish friends? How often? How is this for Ela? Last time, you said she was bored because it's easy for her. What are your goals with the school?

15. Have you visited Poland recently? Has Grandma visited here?

16. How strongly do you feel about maintenance of Polish- listening, speaking, reading, and writing for Ela right now?

17. Do you feel stressed about this? Is it too much to do?

18. You said she was taking French and Spanish at school? How is that going? How does she do? Do you see a talent? How do you think knowing Polish affected her ability with these languages? Is it important to be fluent in these languages? Do you think Spanish and French are more useful than Polish? You said in the first interview "In today's economy our children need to speak foreign languages?" Which languages are you talking about here?"

19. Do you believe that currently there are benefits to being bilingual for Ela? Are there benefits in remaining bilingual for her future? How does it affect her outlook on life? Openness to other cultures? World view?

20. How would you feel if she started to resist Polish more? How would you feel if she wanted to give Polish up?

21. You said in the first interview that Ela prefers English, expresses herself better, and "can relate to English better than Polish". Is this still true? Has this preference lessened, grown, or stayed about the same?

22. How does she react to use of Polish in public? You said that in the first interview she had said in a store, "Mom, speak English, they speak English here". Has there been more of that? What are your current patterns of speaking Polish in public?

23. What about disciplining in Polish?

24. Who knows she is bilingual? How do they react? Do teachers at school speak of it positively, negatively, or is it just not talked about? Do they encourage you to maintain home language? Any messages you get from teachers?

24. What do you think this community feels about bilingualism? What messages have you and your family received about this?

25. You said in the first interview, "I want her to be successful in this country- this is my priority. She can take Polish as far as she wants". Do you think you would feel differently if your home language was a more dominant one in the United States- like Spanish?

26. Are you still reading Polish books, watching DVDs, listening to Polish music?

27. Does Polish ever cause stress in your relationship with your daughter?

28. Are you still doing Polish customs- St. Nicholas Day? Are there other ways that Polish is brought into your family?

29. Do you see any erosion in her Polish? Can she discuss things in Polish as well as English- higher order thinking, critical thinking? What about if she was talking with a mono-lingual Polish child? Does she have an English accent? Are you still coaching on her on certain Polish sounds? Grammar? Idioms and expression in Polish? Reading and writing on par?

30. You seem to codeswitch a lot. Does Ela ever do this?

31. What language is more important to you, your husband, and Ela?

32. What does Ela perceive to be the advantages, importance of Polish?

33. Where do you go from here with her Polish? Do you and your husband talk about it explicitly? Do you discuss goals, plans for her language? Where do you want Ela to be with her Polish as an adult?

34. Any recent big issues/questions with language? Is the bilingualism something you search out information on? Is it something you think about a lot or just a normal part of life?

35. What kinds of discussions do you have with your Polish community about maintaining home language with children? What are others' experiences?

APPENDIX D

Interview Questions for Ela

The same set of interview questions was used with Ela both times I interviewed her.

How old are you?

What grade are you going to be in?

When is your birthday?

So, what languages do you speak?

Who do you speak English with?

Who do you speak Spanish and French with?

Who do you speak Polish with?

Do you like speaking Polish?

Can you read and write in Polish?

Do you like doing that?

Do you still work with your dad on Polish? Is it fun? Rewards?

What's the most fun about Polish?

How do you feel about knowing another language that most of your friends don't know?

Do you like listening to stories in Polish? Music? Movies?

What about Grandma? What is Polish like with Grandma? Does she speak English?

Do you have any friends that you speak Polish with?

Do you think any of your friends know Polish?

Why do you speak English with them?

How is Polish school?

Do you help? What do you learn?

Who cares most about you speaking Polish?

What does Dad say when you speak English instead of Polish?
Are you okay with that? How does it make you feel? Is it ever a problem?

What about Mom and Polish? Do you speak Polish with her?

Does your teacher and the kids at school know that you know this other language of polish? Do you ever talk about it at school?

What language do you like best? Why?

Which language is more natural, easier to speak?

Do you ever forget polish words or how to say certain things?

Do you think you want to keep up/ keep practicing your Polish? Why or why not?

Would there be any problems if you forgot Polish?

Do you want to keep up with your reading and writing in Polish?

Is it okay to speak Polish out in public? Do your parents do that? How do you feel about that?

Do you want to be able to speak other languages as you grow up and you're older? Why?

Do you think Polish could be a good thing to know in the future?

APPENDIX E

Guide to Recording Language Interactions

Using the audio-recording device:

- Press "Menu".
- Press the large middle button on device when you want to select something. Use the arrows to move to different options.
- Hit the middle button on the "Voice" page.
- Select "Record Now".
- When you are finished making a recording, select "Stop."
- Then when it says "Save recording?", select yes.
- If you need to stop for a little bit, you can select "Pause" and then "Resume" when you are ready.
- To turn off, press "Menu" again.

Guidelines for collecting conversation samples:

- The recording will be best if you are sitting fairly closely to each other.
- Let's start with collecting 3 different conversations. I will then get the recordings from you and just make sure that everything worked properly. If necessary, I will return it to you to collect a few more recordings.
- For each conversation, record for about 5 minutes.
- Choose a time when you and Ela normally converse.
- Just speak whatever language comes naturally. If you would naturally speak Polish, speak Polish. If you would naturally speak English, speak English. Or if a mix of the two languages is natural, do that. My goal is to collect the most natural samples of your language interactions with Ela.

If you have any questions, call me at home at 282-0465 or on my cell at 259-8163. You can also e-mail me at lenz.rowekamp@usfamily.net

Thank you so much.

APPENDIX F

Transcription of Audio-Recording

1-26-10, 9:18 AM

Note: Mom is speaking mostly Polish, punctuated with some English. Ela is answering in English.

E: Because I think it will be an awesome day, because um, because um, because I'm excited

S: You're excited.

E: About after school, remember?

S: Polish … after school.

E: Because you're bringing me pretzels.

S: Polish.

E: And, then tomorrow is going to be McDonald's – junk food twice in a row!

S: Well, pretzels, Polish…….Nope, nope.

E: Water…thank you

E: I'm going to play in the snow today. Today is going to be a good day to play in the snow. You know why?

S: Why?

E: Because me and Jasmine made up a new game, puppies and kitties and I think I'm going to be a cat

S: Oh, yeah.

E: We still need to plan something and we still need to plan what we're going to do for the talent show.

S: Polish.

E: Yeah, we're going to team up.
Me and Jasmine are a team. We're a great team.

S: Yep.

E: We don't know what we're doing, but we're good at one thing- jump roping.

S: Jump roping, okay, ….Polish.

E: I'll bring my jump rope. Wait a second. Mr. Smith has lots of jump ropes.
He has lots of jump ropes, really.

S: Polish.

E: Yeah, I can bring one for Jasmine.

S: Yeah- Polish.

E: I can lend Jasmine one. But then she's going to give it back to me, right?

S: Polish.

E: I know.

S: Yeah.

E: Yeah. So today is going to be a fun day.

S: Yeah, I think so…..Polish…."sign up".

E: No, tomorrow is the sign up, I think. I don't know, really.

S: Polish.

E: Umm.

S: Polish.

E: No, no, no not at all.

S: Not at all.

E: I think I have a good idea.

S: Polish.

E: Today is gym class. I'm going to ask Mr. Smith if he has a couple of jump ropes we can use.

S: Okay.

E: Because we jump roped a lot in the fall. Me and Jasmine both got to 10.

S: Wow… Polish.

E: But we need to get to 30 and we're going to practice that. I'm going to ask Mr. Smith if we can play with the jump ropes today, because we forgot about the talent show, and it's going to be so much fun.