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ORIGINAL LITERARY WORK DECLARATION

Name of Candidate: **Zou Xiaoqiong**

Registration/Matric No: **TGC 110030**

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Family Language Policy among Upper-Middle Class Families in Beijing

Field of Study: **Sociolinguistic**

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Abstract

This study focuses on a group of Chinese parents from the upper-middle class who are raising their children bilingually. It uses the lens of family language policy (FLP) to investigate the process of raising a bilingual child, how parents perceive language(s) and how their beliefs transform into actual language practices and management at home for their child's language development. An ethnographic method is used to collect data with data sources that provide insight into actual language practices, parental language ideology and their sources, and parental language management. The findings reveal that there is a visible shift from Chinese to English that is generational among participants, all parents hold an unambiguous belief in the benefits of developing English because it provides overt socioeconomic and educational opportunities. Further, parent participants take advantage of English educational institutions (cram schools and home tutors) to implement their family language policies (FLPs) instead of speaking English themselves.

Abstrak

Kajian ini menumpukan sekumpulan ibu bapa daripada golongan pertengahan atas China yang mengajar dan membela anak-anak mereka secara bilingual. Ini perlu melalui pemerhatian Polisi Berbahasa di dalam Keluarga (FLP) untuk mengkaji dan memerhati proses membela seorang anak yang bilingual, bagaimana ibu bapa ini menerima serta tanggapan mereka terhadap Bahasa, terutama sekali Bahasa Inggeris, dan bagaimana tanggapan mereka berubah menjadi satu praktis pembelajaran Bahasa yang betul dan perkembangan Bahasa anak mereka di rumah. Hasil kajian telah menunjukkan perubahan Bahasa dari Cina ke Inggeris yang ketara di kalangan generasi-generasi; semua ibu bapa memegang satu kepercayaan yang tertutup terhadap keleihan untuk mengembangkan Bahasa Inggeris dari segi memberi peluang sosioekonomik dan pelajaran yang jelas; ibu bapa yang terlibat di dalam kajian ini terlalu bergantung berat pada pengurusan Bahasa yang telah ditetap oleh FLP mereka daripada bertutur di dalam Bahasa Inggeris secara sendiri.

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Family Language Policy among Upper-Middle Class Families in Beijing

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background

China has 56 ethnic groups and the Chinese language includes more than 80 dialects. Standard Mandarin was established as the official language in 1955 (Blachford, 2004). The first language law in China was entitled “Law of the People’s Republic of China on the National Commonly Used Language and Script”. It allowed for the daily use of local dialects in necessary and appropriate situations, and combined with promoting Mandarin used by government officials and in public interactions (Pan, 2005). In modern China, Chinese dialects are slowly being replaced by Mandarin because of governmental efforts that popularize the use of Mandarin (Li, 2007; Liu, 2010).

As English has been seen as a lingua franca and a means towards success in a globalizing world (Butler, 2013), many countries have begun introducing English at earlier grade levels in their curricula than ever before (Gao, 2006) and China is no exception to this trend. English has gained a prestigious status in China because of the Open Door economic policy of 1978, which resulted in an ever-increasing foreign presence. English has been chosen as the first foreign language since 1978 and is taught as a compulsory course beginning in primary school (Adamson, 2004; Lam, 2005). The current use of English is widespread, and it has a higher status today than at any time before in the history of China (Qiang et al., 2011). It is a crucial subject,

which determines university admission, and individual as well as social advancement, because it is a language requirement for well-paid jobs (Liu, 1995) and for international communication in China (Pride & Liu, 1998). In sociopolitical and economic centers like Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou, people of all walks of life learn English one way or another (Jiang, 2003; Hu, 2008). Chinese parents unsurprisingly prove fully supportive of their English learning and development because English is widely regarded as a means for social and economic advancement (Gao, 2006; Sun, 2013; Dong, 2011). In addition, one outcome of the rapid economic development in modern China is a new and growing class of parents with the ability to support their education without financial pressure, especially for English language learning and who intend to raise their child bilingually (Butler, 2013; Cheng, 2010).

Local dialects are dying out in China, and English as a first foreign language has attained a prestigious status because Mandarin is becoming the dominant language and lingua franca in China. This study focuses on a group of Chinese parents from the upper-middle class who have learned English formally, and have the ability to provide a bilingual setting to develop their English proficiency without financial pressure. These Chinese parents are taking the path of raising their child bilingually. This study investigates how these parents perceive languages, especially English, and how their beliefs are transformed into actual language practices and management at home in relation to their child's language development. The study took place in Beijing because it is the capital city, as well as the political, economic, and cultural center of

China, and it is the most significant, representative city in terms of promoting and learning English and Mandarin (Lam, 2005; Adamson & Feng, 2009). The study explores through the lens of Family Language Policy (FLP) how English is actually practiced and managed in the light of parental language ideology at home.

FLP is defined as parental language planning with regard to language use among family members within families (Spolsky, 2004). It takes “into account what families actually do with language in day-to-day interactions; their beliefs and ideology about language and language use; their goals and efforts to shape language use and learning outcomes” (King et al., 2008, p.3). FLP investigates the interactions between parents and children that relate to the language development of the latter.

Classical language policy concentrated on national language planning to solve the language ‘problems’ of new nations after independence in the immediate post-colonial period of the 1950s and 1960s. Kaplan and Baldauf (1997) relaxed the restriction to the nation-state by referring to polities, defined as a state or one of its subordinate civil authorities, such as a province, prefecture, country, municipality, city, or district. However, in practice, language planning continued to be widely interpreted as the development of a central policy in support of a new national language, if necessary balancing the demands of competing language varieties for that role. In essence, the classical model was a ‘top-down’ only process that tended to ignore demographic pressures. Many scholars have tried to identify competing forces,

which they labeled 'bottom-up', and Spolsky (2004) indicated that the processes that operate in macro level planning also operate in micro level planning. In his view,

“The domain of language policy may be any defined or definable social or political or religious group or community, ranging from a family through a sport team, or a neighborhood or a village, or a workplace or organization, or city or nation state or regional alliance.” (Spolsky, 2004: 40)

Spolsky (2004) maintained that language policy operates within a speech community of whatever size. Thus, the family as one such domain was involved in language policy studies though seldom, until recently, studied independently. Currently, the family is being increasingly considered as a significant domain for studying language policy as it determines how languages are transmitted across generations and under what conditions a language is maintained or lost (Fishman, 2004), and its important role in influencing a child's linguistic development (King, Fogle & Logan, 2008). FLP has emerged that contributes to the following fields of study: language policy and child language acquisition (King & Fogle, 2008).

The model of language policy proposed by Spolsky (2004) included the following components: practice, ideology, and management. Language practice focuses on the actual use of a language, whereas language management focuses on specific acts that take place to manage and manipulate language behavior in a given domain. The ideology encompasses the values attributed to a language that governs language practice or choice.

The application of Spolsky's (2004) model for families in previous studies about FLP have revealed a focus on the analysis of actual language practice (what family members do with language), parental ideology (what parents think about language), and parental management (what parents try to do about language) (Shi, 2008; Liang, 2008; Li & Hoon, 2010; Schwartz, 2012; Curdt-Christiansen, 2014). Previous studies have shown that FLP is co-constructed by parents and parental ideology is oft regarded as an underlying force in FLP as to decisions on what language to practice and measures to employ them to influence or control language behavior because they are "based on the perceived values, power and utility of various languages" (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, p.354; King, 2000; King et al., 2008). Spolsky (2004) further indicated there are four external forces that co-exist with FLP as follows: sociolinguistic, sociocultural, socioeconomic, and sociopolitical forces.

Sociolinguistic forces provide sources for beliefs about which language is good/acceptable or bad/unacceptable. Sociocultural forces provide a reference for the symbolic values associated with different languages. Socioeconomic forces are associated with the instrumental values that languages can achieve. They have a powerful influence on individual language behaviors because political decisions on language policy, especially language-in-education policy, provide or constrain access to sociopolitical 'equality'. Parental ideology gives languages symbolic and practical values that directly shape the language practices adopted by family members in their

everyday moment-to-moment interactions and efforts made by parents to support or control language development.

The study of FLP focuses on language usage, learning, and management within families and contributes to the influences of broader language policy issues at macro level in private domains because parental ideology is the driving force of FLP (King, 2000) and is influenced by the four external forces mentioned above.

In conclusion, FLP provides an integrated overview of research on how languages are practiced, managed, and learned at home based on parental language ideology. It reflects the influences that broader language policies at the macro level have on families. It is important as it shapes language development and school performance; and collectively determines language maintenance and shift. Therefore, it is the objective of this study to explore actual language practice, management at the micro level, and parental language ideology as they are shaped by sociocultural, political, linguistic, and economic forces at the macro level.

1.2 Problem Statement

First, FLP as one of the domains involved in language policy has received increased attention over the last decade worldwide. King and Fogle (2006) investigated how parents construct FLPs to raise additive bilingual children. Curdt-Christiansen (2014) examined how FLPs are planned and developed in bilingual families in Singapore.

Some studies zoom in on factors that are related to language policy in bilingual homes, e.g. the influence of parental ideology, parental discourse strategy, and language choice, among others (Caldas & Caron-Caldas, 2002; De Houwer, 1999; Dopke, 1988). However, FLP in the context of China has not been studied. Language policy at the national and educational institution level has dominated current work in China, such as language policy carried out by the government (Yan, 2006; Li, 1994; You, 2003); language policy at school (Hu, Li, & Lei, 2014); or the languages used in the media (Pride & Liu, 1998; Gao, 2005). In order to fill this research gap, this study explores the language policy affecting Chinese families in China.

Second, according to previous English language studies in China, English teaching (Hu et al., 2014), learning (Gao, 2006), English education development (Wei, 2011; Wang & Gao, 2008) at the national and educational institution level, and English used in public places or the media, such as in workplaces (Sommers, 2008), newspapers (Pride & Liu, 1998), or advertisements (Chen, 2012), have dominated current work in this area in China. However, English use and learned in families has not been fully investigated. Families have been considered an important domain because they relate to the linguistic development of children (King et al., 2008). Apparently, learning English is not limited to formal classes, but it is widely assumed to occur in the family. Therefore, this study explores how English is practiced and learned within families.

Third, with the development of globalization more and more families are willing to raise bilingual children. Most researchers have focused on immigrant families (Orly, 2012; Kopeliovich, 2010), interracial marriages (Francisco, David, & Thilagavathi, 2013), or families who have the perfect bilingual setting in which both parents speak more than just their mother language; for example, parents from Singaporean families who can speak English, Chinese, and/or Bahasa Malay (Curdt-Christiansen, 2014). In China, Mandarin as the national language and lingua franca is taking the place of local dialects, English has gained the highest position among foreign languages used, and parents intend to raise their child bilingually, which is a new trend in modern China. These parents are highly educated and belong to the upper-middle classes. They might study abroad or use English frequently at work. These families have the appropriate setting to raise their children bilingually and the ability to provide a positive family language environment to support language development, especially English, without financial pressure. In addition, thanks to the One-Child policy in China, most families have only one child, so parents make greater efforts to improve their child's language development. Hence, there is a need to investigate the process of raising bilingual children in terms of what exactly parents do with languages at home, how English is actually practiced, and how parents manage or support English language learning.

1.3 Objectives

This study examines the actual language practices and management at home based on parental ideologies of the significance of languages for the future of their children, especially with English. Inevitably, this exploration involves broader issues of the impact of English as the language of modernity and political economy on the status and role of the heritage languages in modern China. More specifically, this research aims to:

- (1) Identify the actual language practice in families, especially the patterns of language use among family members;
- (2) Investigate parental language ideology that relate to broader political, economic, sociocultural, and linguistic issues;
- (3) Examine the language management carried out by parents to control or support language learning.

1.4 Research Questions

- (1) What types of patterns of language use are found in participant families? In particular, how do these families use English in their everyday encounters?
- (2) To what extent does parental language ideology relate to broader political, economic, sociocultural, and linguistic issues and inform FLP regarding language development?
- (3) What kinds of family language management do parents provide for the language

development of children?

1.5 Significance of Study

First, English used in the private domain, particularly the family, has not been fully investigated in China. Second, this study focuses on a group of parents who want to raise their child bilingually. This is a new phenomenon for China. These parents represent a group of families in modern China that belong to the upper-middle classes and are highly educated. The study is significant because it explores how this group of parents supports or manages language development at home in the process of raising a bilingual child and it may provide some useful information for other parents in China who want to raise their child bilingually. Third, FLP is a new field and this study is expected to help fill the research gap on FLP of Chinese families that contributes to the study of related theory to some degree and to support the content of FLP. Study in the field of FLP contributes to the understanding of language practices, learning, and management within families and sheds light on broader language policy issues at macro level and their influences.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

Despite the efforts made in this study, there are some limitations to it. The amount of data was limited. This present study was conducted on only five bilingual families in Beijing and the data collected is far from comprehensive due to time constraints. This study only focuses on the families from the upper-middle class in Beijing and,

although, it is the capital and is not fully representative of FLP for all of China. In Beijing, the promotion of Mandarin and English is much more obvious than in other cities. Thus, future studies should look at families from other cities in China and compare their practices with those identified in this study.

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Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides clarification of the terminology used in this study, discusses the existing research related to this study. It is important to set the foreground of this study with governmental language policy in China and language status in modern China to understand how Chinese parents perceive language and how ideology transforms into actual language practice and management within families with for language development of children. The third part discusses related studies in the newly emerging field of FLP. It is an important area of investigation as it provides for how languages are managed, learned, and negotiated within families. A thematic arrangement of related studies is employed in this section to present an organized literature review. The third part examines the theoretical and conceptual framework of this study, which is built on the research literature available on FLP.

2.2 Definition of terms

To provide clarification of the terminologies used in this study, the following terms are defined operationally.

Family Language Policy (FLP) – is a field examining parental beliefs and ideologies about language, language practice, especially the language used by child and efforts to influence or control the child's language practice through various management techniques (Spolsky, 2004; King and Fogle, 2008, 2012).

Language practice – mainly refers to the patterns of language use among family members, such as the languages used between parents, between child and mother/father, or between child and grandparents. It also involves what family members actually do with languages at home, such as the languages they choose when they are watching TV program, movies, reading books, and so on (Spolsky, 2004; Curdt-Christiansen, 2014).

Language ideology – what parents think about languages, which is based on the perceived values, power and utility of various languages. (Spolsky, 2004; Curdt-Christiansen, 2009).

Language management – what parents try to do with child's language, the methods parents employed to help or control child's language learning and development (Spolsky, 2004; Curdt-Christiansen, 2014).

2.3 Government language policy and language status in China

This section describes governmental language policy in China, which includes policies about Chinese language and English. The status of languages in modern China is discussed to provide a better understanding of the background to this study.

2.3.1 Chinese languages

This section comprises a brief review of the history and development of Chinese languages. In this study, they are divided into standard Mandarin and dialects. Government language policy and the status of standard Mandarin and dialects in modern China are discussed.

China has 55 minority nationalities and over 80 Chinese dialects that have developed over thousands of years. Broadly speaking, Chinese language are categorized into seven major dialect groups, each with its own sub-variety such as Mandarin, Wu, Gan, Xiang, Hakka, Yue, and Min (Ramsey, 1987) that are mainly based on geographical and linguistic-structural characteristics (Li, 1994). The dialects belonging to different groups are not mutually intelligible, for example, a Mandarin speaker is unable to understand a Cantonese speaker at all. However, speakers of all Chinese dialects share a written form that is based on Mandarin. In addition, the Mandarin dialect group is the majority language group and constitutes 90% of the Chinese population as well as includes 1,500 sub-dialects (Ji, 2010; You, 2004; Zhai, 2003). The sub-dialects that belong to the Mandarin group are mainly spoken by people from Beijing as well as the northeast and southwest China. The national language, standard Mandarin, is based on the northern dialects (Li, 2007; Yan, 2006). In this study, Mandarin only refers to the official language, i.e. standard Mandarin.

2.3.1.1 Standard Mandarin

The promotion of Mandarin as the language of national unity and education has been legislated in national policies in China since 1949. Post 1949, achieving social unity and warding off the potential danger for national disintegration were a national priority. Hence, the promotion of a unified national language was considered a key means of achieving this. Chapter I, Article 3 of the first Constitution of the PRC (The Communist Party of China, 1954) made clear to all citizens that “中华人民共和国是统一的多民族国家 (The People’s Republic of China is a unified state with different ethnic minorities)”. Although this Article clearly expressed the government’s political attitude towards languages for all country’s ethnic minorities, i.e., that “个民族都有使用和发展自己的语言文字的自由 (all ethnic minorities have the freedom to use and develop their own spoken and written languages)” and this belief prevailed even while a national standard language was urgently needed to achieve national unity and harmony in this multiethnic nation. From this, national ideology and government worked on language using this law historically to include simplifying Chinese characters, promoting Mandarin nationwide, formulating and promoting Chinese Pinyin, and standardizing the language. In the 1980s, thanks to the economic reforms and Open Door policy, their influence on social development and technological innovation caused the government to adjust the direction, target, policy, and core of the language program. The Constitution of the People’s Republic of China (The Communist Party of China, 1982) further legislated the national promotion of standard Chinese in Article 19:

国家发展社会主义的教育事业, 提高全国人民的科学文化水平。国家举办各种学习, 普及初等义务教育, 发展中等教育, 职业教育和高等教育, 并且发展学前教育.... 国家推广全国通用的普通话。

The State undertakes the development of socialist education and works to improve the scientific and cultural level of the whole nation. The State establishes and administers schools of various types, popularizes compulsory primary education and promotes secondary, vocational and higher education as well as pre-school education. ... The State promotes the nationwide use of Mandarin.

The Article implied that the promotion of Mandarin was justified because it was the language of scientific, educational, and cultural advancement. As a result, notifications on the promotion of Mandarin in teacher training schools, normal universities, and other primary to secondary schools that were successively issued between 1986 and 1993.

The national Commonly-used Language Law of the People's Republic of China (The State Council, 2000), which was approved on 31 October 2000 and took effect from 1 January 2001, further served to reify the status of Chinese as the national language.

The article 10 in Chapter 2 of the law states that:

第十条：学校及其他教育机构以普通话和规范汉字为基本的教育教学用语用字。[...] 学校及其他教育机构通过汉语文课程教授普通话和规范汉字。使用的汉语文教材，应当符合国家通用语言文字的规范和标准。

Article 10: All schools or other educational institutions should use Putonghua and standard Chinese characters as their instructional written and spoken languages. [...] All schools or other educational institutions will teach Putonghua and standard Chinese characters through the Chinese course. The textbooks used should conform to the standardization of the standard spoken and written Chinese language.

第十三条：公共服务行业以规范汉字为基本的服务用字。因公共服务需要，招牌、广告、标志牌等使用外国文字并同时使用中文的，应当使用规范汉字。提倡公共服务行业以普通话为服务用语。

Article 13: the public service should use standard Chinese characters as the written language. When occasion requires foreign languages and Chinese to be used on signboards, billboards and bulletin boards in the public service, standard Chinese characters should be used. People working in the public services are encouraged to speak standard Mandarin.

The establishment of numerous administrative structures and committees at various levels ensured the success of the legislation for the promotion of Mandarin. Combined with promoting the use of Mandarin by government officials and in public interactions, the language law also resulted in the daily use of local dialects in necessary and appropriate situations. Minorities in China have rights to maintain their languages.

2.3.1.2 Chinese dialects

The Chinese language is classified into seven major dialect groups as follows: Mandarin, Gan, Wu, Hakka, Xiang, Min, and Yue, each with its own sub-varieties (Ramsey, 1987; Norman, 1988; Li, 2002). The majority language group in China is the Mandarin group, which makes up 90% of the population of China and includes 1,500 sub-dialects. Among these dialects, there are still many differences grammatically, lexically, phonologically, and phonetically. Even people from adjacent cities sometimes have different dialects and have difficulty with oral communication.

Chinese national policy stipulates regional and cultural autonomy with freedom for each dialect group to use its own language, but this freedom is subject to prior interest

of creating a single national language. Local dialects are allowed for daily use in necessary and appropriate situations and Mandarin is promoted for use by government officials and in public interactions. Populations in China who could only communicate in local dialects decreased from 70% to 47% in 2004 because standard Mandarin was promoted as the national language (Ma et al., 2009; Gooskens & Heeinga, 2004).

In modern China, The government has been actively promoting Mandarin through legislative, administrative, and other measures to popularize the use of Mandarin. So the use of dialects is decreasing and Mandarin is slowly replacing them as a result of governmental efforts. Although about half of all the people in the country still speak dialects (Li, 2007), the status of dialects in China has visibly decreased. In addition, the government has been actively promoting Mandarin through legislative, administrative, and other measures to popularize the official language (Liu, 2010). The influence of promoting Mandarin on the use of dialects is so tremendous and unpredictable that Mandarin is taking the place of dialects in many districts of China (Xin, Kong, & Xu, 2008).

2.3.2 English in China

Like most non-native English speaking countries around the world, China has inevitably gravitated towards English (Bamgbose, 2003). In China, English has gained the highest position among foreign languages. Its importance as a high-stakes

subject has warranted its inclusion in the curricula for higher levels of schooling as a crucial subject that determines university admission, individual, and social advancement, a well-paid job (Liu, 1995) and international communication (Pride & Liu, 1988). The lofty position of English reflects governmental concerns and the official force behind its promotion and spread. The prominence it affords its speakers makes English learners regard English proficiency as “a personal asset” (Hu, 2005, p.5). Hence, the speakers make huge investments in English learning.

English will no doubt continue to play an increasingly important role in Chinese education. As China’s “emergence as a world power, with its increasing integration into the world system, China will need English to project its own presence” on an international stage (Bolton & Tong, 2002, p.180). This government orientation has resulted in policy-makers that place more emphasis on English education. The Ministry of Education (MOE) have developed specific opinions about foreign language teaching in primary schools since 1962 and approved the introduction of foreign languages as school subjects in Year-4 and Year-5 without prescribing any national curriculum or syllabus. The primary English education policy that came into existence and changed in tandem with social, economic, educational, and political forces of the nation (Hu, 2007). English has been regarded as the path to advanced science and technology as well as constituting a form of access to the international forums because of the Four-Modernizations program that was start in 1978 (Hu, G., 2002a, 2005; Hu, Y., 2007). These have motivated the expansion of primary and

secondary English education. The ideology driving English learning at the elementary level maintains that English needs to be learned at an early age and, in fact, the earlier the better. The MOE subsequently released "the first unified primary and secondary curriculum and accompanying draft" of an English language-teaching syllabus in 1978, which suggested that it could be done either in Year-3 or in Year-7. On January 18 2001, the MOE Guidelines for Vigorously Promoting Setting up English Courses in Primary Schools in China obliged primary schools to teach English as a school subject from Year-1 in coastal or economically developed areas in the fall of 2001 and from Year-3 in less developed regions in the fall of 2002. This nationwide policy mandated that all students in primary schools to learn English as a compulsory subject regardless of large gaps in educational level between the developed regions and the underdeveloped areas and the current conditions of English language education in primary schools.

The standard English Tests of College English Test Band 4 (CET4) and College English Test Band 6 (CET6) were established at the end of 1985. CET4 started in 1986 and CET6 was tested in 1989. CET4 and CET6, now the largest national English tests in China have considerable influence on ELT and ELL development in China. The purpose of the CET is to examine the English proficiency of undergraduate and postgraduate students in China and to make sure all of them could reach the required English levels specified in the National College English Teaching Syllabuses.

English language education has been high on the central government's modernization agenda (Hu, G., 2005a) since the late 1970s as this is when Mainland China began to open up and reform. Huge amounts of public and private resources have been invested in English language education. In the 21st century, there is a great need for English proficiency and efforts have been stepped up to expand English language education and improve the quality.

Based on the documentation on English in China (McArthur, 1992; Zhao & Campbell, 1995), China has approximately 200 to 300 million speakers of English although it is used in varying degrees of proficiency. Pride and Liu (1988) observed based on the degree to which the Chinese government favors English and the favorable attitude toward English of the public, English may be regarded as a second language in China and ranks second only to Chinese. Furthermore, English is an important required subject in the exam-oriented educational system in China and performance on English exams greatly influences educational opportunities and career choices (Gao, 2006). Zou and Zhang (2011, p.191) argued that "English is more than just a school subject; it permeates into many aspects of social life". Therefore, Chinese parents unsurprisingly hold positive attitudes towards developing their English abilities.

Influenced by a national orientation towards the English language, studies of English in China have mushroomed with numerous studies focused on the history of English education in China and its development, language policy (Adamson, 2004; Fong,

2009; Hu & Alsagoff, 2010; Wen & Hu, 2007; Zhao & Campbell, 1995; Zheng & Adamson, 2003), and English curricula and teaching pedagogy (Adamson & Morris, 1997; Chen, 2011). Others have focused on individual factors that influence language learning (Gu, 2009; Jie Li & Qin, 2006), learner identities (Bian, 2009; Gao, 2009a; Gao, Cheng, Zhao, & Zhou, 2005), or the social context of learning English (Gao, 2009b). These studies have mainly been conducted from a national or institutional level perspective has focused on the overall picture of English in China. This study will provide an insight into English used from a micro-level perspective, to identify how English is actually used, learned, or managed within families.

The above sections provide a better understanding of the background to languages in China from a macro perspective and contribute to the present study. A reasonable summary is as follows: standard Mandarin is becoming the dominant language and lingua franca in China; the local dialects are dying out; and English as the first foreign language in China has attained a prestigious status in the country based on the review of language policy carried out by the Chinese government and the current situation of Chinese languages and English in China. Under these circumstances, this study uses the lens of FLP to investigate how languages, especially English, are actually practiced and learned in light of parental language ideology with regard to the language development of children within the focus group. The field of FLP emerged recently and it has not been studied in China, related studies on FLP conducted by foreign scholars are reviewed in the following section.

2.4 An overview of related studies

Traditional language policy studies focus on language policy at the macro level, such as the state or public places (Berry, 1968; Fishman, 1968; Piller, 2001; Ricento, 2000). FLP is a new term, defined by Spolsky (2004), who proposed that family was one of the domains in language policy studies and argued that the three components of language policy, language practice, ideology, and management should be widely used in FLP studies. King, Fogle and Logan (2008, p.3) defined FLP as taking “into account what families actually do with language in day-to-day interactions; their beliefs and ideology about language and language use; and their goals and efforts to shape language use and learning outcomes”. FLP is defined as explicit and overt planning in relation to language use within the home among family members (King and Fogle, 2008). The term FLP has gained recognition and attention recently and existing studies incorporate analysis of family language practice, ideology, and management worldwide.

To present an organized literature review, a thematic arrangement of studies is used in this section and divided into two parts as follows: first, it reviews the pioneering studies that have largely inspired the contributors to further consolidate the emerging field of FLP studies; second, it reviews the existing studies in the field of FLP using Spolsky’s (2004) model. The related studies reviewed in this section have provided insights for the current study.

2.4.1 Related pioneering studies

The studies reviewed in this section were conducted by Fishman (1991) and De Houwer (1999). Although neither researcher explicitly used the precise term FLP, which was coined later; however, it is obvious that this is the subject with which they are dealing. Their studies provided evidence for and contribute to current FLP studies.

2.4.1.1 Fishman (1991) – language maintenance and shift

Prior to defining FLP, many previous studies worked on families in language shift and language maintenance and drawn from empirical evidence. Fishman's (1991) model to reverse language shifts was widely used. Fishman (1991) identified the importance of families in maintaining and transmitting the home language among generations and family is regarded as the initial stage in the child's language socialization. He argued that even though macro policies in education and institutional settings may provide support and influence the outcome of language transmission efforts. It is ultimately the family that has to initiate language transmission for successful language maintenance. Fishman's (1991) study drew researcher attention to families as well as inspiring Spolsky (2004). It further provided strong evidence that families should be involved in the context of language policy studies.

Fishman's (1991) indicated that a three-generation theory with the first generation of immigrants added knowledge of the new environmental language to their native

language; the second generation became bilingual; and the third generation was usually monolingual. This theory has been used to support current FLP studies, some of which continue to study language shifts and maintenance by investigating languages used among the first three generations in families.

Patterns of language use among the generations are discussed according to language ideology and management from Spolsky's (2004) model that established FLP (Hua, 2008; Lanza, 2007; Kopeliovich, 2010). This was discussed in Section 2.2.2.1.

2.4.1.2 De Houwer (1999) – parental beliefs

Before the full recognition of FLP, De Houwer (1999) pinpointed some key issues in this area of study. De Houwer's (1999) indicated that parental beliefs could be related either to a particular language or to how a language is used in social or family contexts. De Houwer proposed a three-tiered framework (Figure 2.1) to explain the complex relationship between parental belief, parental linguistic choice, and interaction strategies along with the language development of children. Further, it shows that parental beliefs decide the practices that in turn influence the language development of children.

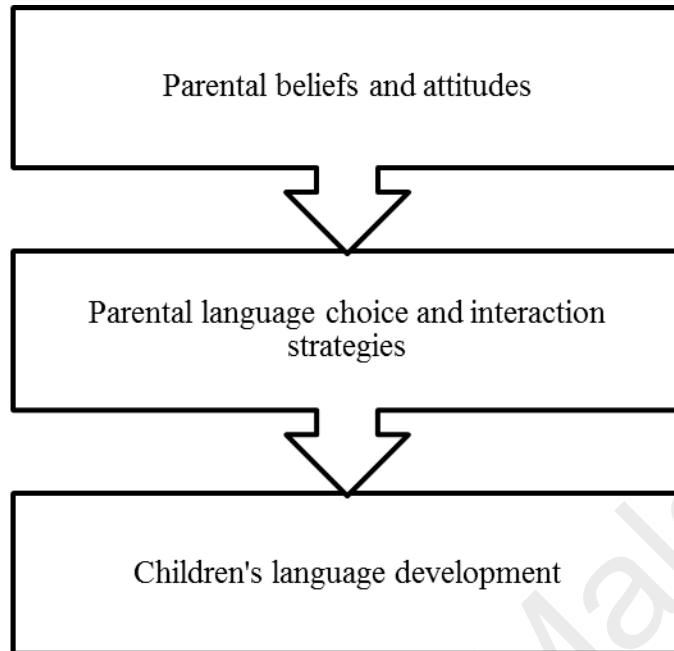


Figure 2.1 Relationship between parental beliefs and language development in a potentially bilingual input condition (De Houwer, 1999b, p. 86).

De Houwer (1999) suggested and is regarded as strong evidence that language ideology is often the underlying force in FLP and decisions on what language to practice and what measures to employ to influence or control family member language behaviors, especially children (King et al., 2008; Spolsky, 2004).

2.4.2 FLP studies

Studies on FLP reviewed in this section incorporate analysis of family language practice, parental ideology, and management that were proposed by Spolsky (2004) as components of the language policy model. To present an organized literature review, the arrangement in this section is based on the chronological development of FLP studies. Early interpretative approaches to the study of FLP emphasized language maintenance and shift, parental discourse strategy for achieving bilinguals in families,

and the importance of language input. In recent years, researchers have given greater attention to the different values that are ascribed to different languages, parental language ideology, broader external factors influencing parental language ideology, and family language management.

2.4.2.1 Language maintenance and shift

After the term of FLP was defined, many researchers employed Spolsky's (2004) FLP model to study language maintenance and shifts within families (e.g. Hua, 2008; Lanza, 2007; Kopeliovich, 2010). These existing studies were focused on the actual language practices among family members to identify if any language maintenance or shifts have occurred within the family and then investigated participant language ideology as motivations for family language practices.

Among these existing studies, FLPs focus on the patterns of language choices among family members, especially for intergenerational language choices within families, such as the languages used for communication between spouses, siblings, parents and children, parents and grandparents, and children and grandparents. Following Fishman (1991), these studies investigated if the language(s) spoken by older generations were transmitted to their offspring (e.g. Shi, 2008; Liang, 2008; Kopeliovich, 2010).

For example, among Taiwanese families, many parents spoke Tai-gi with grandparents, mixed Tai-gi and Mandarin with each other, and Mandarin with children, although they regarded Tai-gi as more intimate than Mandarin and a source of tradition; whereas Mandarin was the dominant language in public places and Tai-gi use was lost in the third generation. The parents held the belief that the dialect was useless and that it had negative influences on future study and employment for children. They preferred the language, which was widely used for communication. They believed that speaking Mandarin would bring better opportunities for their children than Tai-gi would (Liang, 2008).

Similarly, in Singapore, parents spoke Teochew purely for communicating with elderly family members. They spoke Mandarin and English with children and, consequently, most of the children now do not speak Teochew. The parents have much preferred to speak the language(s) of wider communication, especially for the sake of the language development of children. The parents chose not to speak Teochew to their children because they thought it was old fashioned and the tendency in Singapore was to speak English and Mandarin. The parental ideology about English and Mandarin were mainly associated with governmental language policy and economic benefits associated with these two languages (Li & Hoon, 2010).

The studies mentioned above have shown that language shifts have occurred among generations. Mandarin has replaced other Chinese dialects in Taiwanese and

Singaporean families. The family members only speak dialects with older generations and these dialects are lost by the third generation. Parents prefer to speak a language of wider communication with their children, such as Mandarin and English. This phenomenon of language shift among generations has proved Luykx's (2005) point that language shift in the context of rapidly modernizing societies undergoing language shifts form a vernacular language to an official language or the language used for widely communication.

Some researchers have worked on language maintenance and shifts among immigrant families and found that cultural identification with the host country and the country of origin are decisive factors in whether the language is maintained or transmitted in the family and in turn influenced the formation of FLP. Pease-Alvarez (2005) interviewed 63 immigrant parents from Mexico in California. The findings showed that some participants gave up the use of Spanish with their children and adopted English monolingual norms and Anglo values to improve their social status as well as to enjoy the benefits associated with becoming Americans. The parents formulated their monolingual FLP by only speaking English with children at home and made great efforts to maintain the English monolingual norm by helping children to study English, to become familiar with English culture, such as watching English movies, and to read English literature along with not taking their children back to Mexico.

Similarly, research on Russian-Hebrew immigrants to Israel shows the powerful assertion of immigrant original cultural identity (Russian) and their openness to possessing a strong Hebrew identity: parents constructed a bilingual FLP by speaking both Russian and Hebrew with children at home. The researchers found that the different degrees of reported Russian language maintenance depended on their FLPs and the more parents spoke Russian with children the better the proficiency of the children's Russian (Ben-Rafael et al., 2007). In addition, the researchers claimed that parental cultural identity is strongly linked to economic and social status and cultural pride.

Curdt-Christiansen (2009) studied 10 immigrant Chinese families in Quebec, focusing on parental language ideology, which she regarded as the factors underlying their family language policies. Through analysis of her interviews with the parents, she demonstrates that their strong cultural belief in the Chinese language as an identity marker and a link to Chinese culture is one of the main motivations for their bilingual family language policy. Thus, it is important for them to transmit their language to their children, and for their children to acquire and maintain the language.

The aforementioned studies have taken the FLP approach to investigate language maintenance and shifts within families as well as the language practices and parental language ideology have been addressed. In addition, these studies have used Fishman's (1999) work as theoretical support and their findings have proved De

Houwer's (1991) theory that parental ideology are the main factor that decides the languages used within families and, in turn, decides the formulation of FLPs. The ideology is sourced from broader social, political, economic, and cultural forces. These studies have proved King et al.'s (2008) and Fishman's (1991) arguments that parental language ideology is one of the major factors in language maintenance and, in turn, could influence the shaping of FLP.

2.4.2.2 Parental discourse strategy

Scholars working in the FLP area have paid particular attention to parental discourse strategies (Curdt-Christiansen, 2013; Lanza, 2004; Gafaranga, 2010), such as OPOL, the one parent, one language strategy, in which parents speak different languages at home, which are minority or majority languages (De Houwer, 2007; Takeuchi, 2006; Suzanne, 2004). The Non-OPOL strategy was studied and included parental use of a minority language or a majority language at home. William (2009) argued that children had more exposure to the minority language than with the OPOL approach, in which only one parent spoke the minority language to the child. One of the other advantages of this approach is that "there is no switching back and forth between two languages at home, and the whole family can share the same common language" (Larson Wang, 2012, p.23). However, Xu et al. (2013) argued that this approach is not suitable for all bilingual families if the parents have different native languages. They indicated that both parents are required to speak the same minority language at a proficient level to raise a bilingual child successfully.

Other parental strategies like minimal grasp, expressed guess, repetition, move on, and code switching have been examined in FLP studies. For example, Lanza (2004) studied bilingual families in Norway and found that parents employed a ‘minimal grasp’ strategy by pretending not to understand when the child chose to speak in Norwegian instead of English. This strategy increased the use of English at home by the children. Along similar lines, Pan (2005) found that Chinese immigrant parents in the USA always switched to English when the children spoke Chinese. Similarly, Curdt-Christiansen (2014) found that in Singapore parents applied a move-on strategy to continue the conversation in Mandarin when the children spoke English to them. Overall, parental language choice as a strategy has been widely recognized in FLP studies and parents have employed different strategies to maintain the desired language at home and, in turn, maintain their FLPs.

2.4.2.3 The importance of language input

Early FLP studies focused on the relationship of language practices and language development and the importance of language input to influence language learning of children. The findings of the studies have shown that parents who are sensitive about language use at home, especially when talking with children, they can improve the performance at school of children (John, 2008; Tse, Lam, & Loh, 2007; Stavans, 2012). For example, Hong Kong students performed well on English exams because their parents were sensitive about languages used at home, such as English TV programs and movies with English subtitles as well as spoke English at home to make

sure their children were exposed to English as often as possible (Shek, Ka, Yu, & Wai, 2010).

The findings of the existing studies agreed with Pearson (2007), who proposed the “input-proficiency-use cycle” to address the importance of language input provided by parents at home. She argued that if there is enough input, and then there will be learning. “Without interacting with people using the language, no learning takes place. Without enough interaction, learning can take place, but the children do not reach enough of a comfort level in the language that they will willingly use it” (Pearson, 2008, p. 126). She also argued that “A greater amount of input leads to greater proficiency, which leads to more use, which invites more input and the cycle starts again” (Pearson, 2008, p. 127).

Parent language proficiency has been addressed by researchers working on the importance of language input. Some studies have revealed that continuity in the language used at home and language used in the classroom can result in superior performance in a particular language by children (Schwartz, 2008; Zhu & Li, 2005; King & Fogle, 2006). For example, if English is the majority language used at school, parents are advised to speak English more frequently than other languages to support English language learning for children. Along the same lines, Zhao and Liu (2009) focused on English and Chinese language usage within families and showed that parents prefer to interact with their children in English rather than Chinese. This

occurred even when they are not confident in terms of their own oral expression, parents normally require their children to use the language that they are less exposed to so that they are truly bilingual. Our data suggests that there is no correlation between parental language competence and their home language choice with children, so even if parents are not good at the target language, the researcher suggests they should interact with their children in that language to make sure they are exposed to it as much as possible.

Driessen et al. (2005) argued that although the home language environment is a main factor affecting language attainment at school; when parents who are not good at the language but still insist on speaking it at home with their children have a negative influence, so the quality is more important than the quantity of the language spoken at home.

Language input addresses the importance of language practices at home. The researchers mentioned above have argued that parents should pay more attention to the languages used with children. Parents should be aware of language choice at home, as the language input provided by parents there contributes to better learning and use of the target language for children because FLP was created specifically for the language learning and development of children.

2.4.2.4 Parental language ideology and their sources

King and Fogle (2008) claimed that there is a need to investigate parental language ideology and its role in shaping FLPs. In line with King and Fogle's call, recent studies (Schwartz, 2010; Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, 2014; Miao, Xu, & Park, 2012; etc.) have focused on parental language ideology as shaped by the sociocultural, political, economic, and linguistic forces at the macro level. The findings of the studies prove that parents base their FLPs on what they think is best for the child. FLP is co-constructed by the parents to enable them to make decisions about which language is used and learned by their children (Schwartz, 2010). Thus, parents are regarded as the creators of their own FLP and studies have found that parental ideology plays a major role in FLP. Their ideology allow parents to make a language choice for their children, make decisions on what language to practice, and what measures to employ with regard to language acquisition (Sandel & Chao, 2006; Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, 2014; King et al., 2008, 2012).

For example, Curdt-Christiansen (2014) performed research on FLP among bilingual families in Singapore with regard to Chinese language development. Her study revealed that all parents hold an unambiguous belief in the benefit of the development Chinese language in terms of cultural identity and providing overt socioeconomic opportunities. The FLPs of participating families are constantly interacting with and shaped by the sociopolitical forces. When facing the sociopolitical and educational realities in Singapore, these parents are forced to place Chinese and English into a

dichotomous position, which results in lower expectation for Chinese proficiency and less sufficient provision of Chinese literacy resources.

Similarly, parents from non-English speaking countries may prize English as having more prestige than their native language. For example, some parents from Taiwan (Miao et al., 2012) and Hong Kong (Tse, Loh, & Lam, 2010) have indicated that they prefer to speak English with their children or support their children in learning English, because English is associated with economic power and leads to better education and employment in the future. Some parents do not prefer dialects because of sociolinguistic forces. They have the idea that dialects are not fashionable and outdated (Yin, 2009); however, other parents intend to maintain their dialect in the family because of sociocultural forces, as they want to pass on their culture to the next generation and arouse interest in their hometown or country (Miao, Xu, & Park, 2012).

From the analysis of parental language ideology, it is obvious that society-level contexts or conditions provide sources for parental language ideology and therefore affect FLPs. According to Spolsky (2004) and Curdt-Christiansen (2014), the society-level contexts are sociolinguistic, cultural, economic, and political conditions: in other words, communicative, cultural, instrumental, and political values associated with and ascribed to a language in a society. These four external forces provide

sources for parental language ideology and associate different values with different languages, which in turn influence the formulation of FLP.

2.4.2.5 The relationship between parental language ideology and actual practice

While emphasizing close analysis of parental language ideology in FLP studies, recent research reveals that in some cases the declared language ideology does not always cohere with the actual language practices within families (Kopeliovich, 2012; Schwartz, 2008). For example, Schwartz (2008) found discrepancies between parental ideology and the actual language practices among Russian-Hebrew immigrant families. Almost all parents reported positive attitudes towards maintaining the Russian language; however, during the actual interactions between parents and children, the children showed less knowledge of Russian (L1) vocabulary.

The data reveal that the links between parental language ideology and actual language practice may be indirect and even conflicting. The reasons for this phenomenon are summarized as follows: parental language proficiency is limited (Sun & Zaodi, 2013), resistance to use the target language (Kopeliovich, 2010), lack of a suitable home language learning environment, financial pressure, lack of time, lack of government support (King & Fogle, 2006), and ineffective language curriculum (Sun & Zaodi, 2013).

Even if parental language ideology is inconsistent with actual language practices in some cases, researchers still insist that parental language ideology is the driving force in FLP. There are three components involved in the FLP model as follows: language practice, parental language ideology, and parental management. Parental language management is always decided by parental language ideology. Parental management refers to the efforts parents make to control or support language behavior. It is regarded as the implementation of FLP, which reflects parental language ideology and influences a child's language acquisition. Studies on parental management are reviewed below.

2.4.2.6 Parental language management

Early FLP studies are mainly focused on immigrant families in which bilingual parents have good proficiency in both heritage and majority languages. In recent years, FLP studies have paid attention to the regular families, in which parents may not be good at the target language, or when the actual language practices are not consistent with parental language ideology, so that language management becomes more important. Language management is regarded as an effort to maintain the FLP and help with a child's learning of the target language. Parents can rely on different methods to carry out their FLPs and support their child's language learning instead of interacting with the child in the language. FLP studies have identified the methods parents use to control or support language learning to enrich language management. Additionally, scholars have now begun to incorporate family literacy as a language

management measurement in theorizing FLP. Language management is divided into the following tendencies: external and internal control (Curdt-Christiansen, 2013; Gregory, 2008; Mui & Anderson, 2008; Stavans, 2012).

The external control aims to find a supporting sociolinguistic environment to develop language ability. It involves the choice of school, the choice of bilingual education, and enrolling the children in an all-English speaking summer camp, sending them to private cram schools, or hiring a home tutor to improve their language capacity (Schwartz, 2012; Shi, 2008; Barkhuizen, 2006; Park & Sarkar, 2007). For example, Barkhuizen (2006) used in-depth narrative interviews to find that South African immigrant parents in New Zealand intended to transmit Afrikaans to their children, so they moved to a place with a high concentration of South African immigrants and their children had a better chance of communicating in their mother tongue. In the case of the three bilingual (English-French) adolescents (Caldas & Caron-Caldas, 2008), parents wished their children to prefer French to English at home, so they enrolled the children in an all-French-speaking biking excursion and summer camp. Parents also rely on ethnic religious institutions to provide their children with a context for enhancing their home language. Korean immigrant parents in Canada wanted to maintain their own language, so they and their children attended the Korean church, which promotes Korean heritage schools and worship services. They were key to 'creating social, linguistic and cultural centers' (Park & Sarkar, 2007, p.37) for Korean immigrant parents and their children.

The internal control could be summarized as reading books, watching TV programs or movies, listening to songs in different languages, speaking to children in a foreign language, or teaching children the language themselves, among others (Shi, 2008; Schwartz, 2012; Curdt-Christiansen, 2014; Fogle, 2013). Many parents rely heavily on television and the Internet to teach their children the target language. This is considered as a fun source of secondary support for language learning (King & Fogle, 2006).

Internal family language management has received much attention recently, because the internal control has involved the parents and it influences a child's language acquisition and school performance directly. Family literacy has been involved as a language management measurement in FLP studies. The home environment is seen as a contributor to literacy development as evidenced by quantitative and qualitative studies. For example, studies have demonstrated that when parents or other family members read books with children, and when a family environment is rich in literacy materials, then literacy development is also enriched (Weigel et al., 2006). Qualitatively, studies have shown that habitual literacy practices at home in different languages are instrumental in establishing FLP (Curdt-Christiansen, 2013; Ren & Hu, 2013).

Both tendencies may co-exist within a single family and appear in considerably modified states under different conditions. Regardless of which methods parents use

to control or support language learning, language management is always determined by parental language ideology, even if the actual language practice is not consistent with parental language ideology. Take, for example, the case when parents wanted to transmit Russian to the next generation but the real language practice within this family was not consistent with parental beliefs and the children spoke Hebrew with peers and answered in Hebrew even when their parents addressed them in Russian. The parents of this family insisted on trying to influence Russian learning and employed strategies such as requesting children to speak Russian directly, buying Russian textbooks, reading Russian books, and hiring private Russian teachers. As a result, all children acquired basic literacy skills in Russian, although they did not use them frequently (Altman et al., 2013).

2.4.2.7 FLP research methodologies

By reviewing the existed FLP studies, there is great diversity of methodological tools used to investigate FLP, which may constrain the ability to compare the data and generalize the findings. At the same time, the variety of tools reflects the complexity of FLP research, which addresses a wide range of socio-linguistic contexts and demands an interdisciplinary approach.

The most frequent method used in FLP studies is the qualitative approach manifest in in-depth, semi-structured interviews (Shi, 2008; Orly and Tijana, 2013; Park and

Sarkar, 2007; Schwartz, 2010; etc.). The researchers gained language practices, ideologies and management by interviewing parent participants, and they argued that language ideologies are 'power-inflected' and tend to become the source of social tensions shaping the family language practices, parents base their FLPs on what they think is best for their children (Orly and Tijana, 2013; Schwartz, 2010). Thus, parents are the creators of their own FLP, and previous studies which used semi-structured interviews to collect data have found that parents' ideologies play a major role in the FLP, language ideology is often the underlying force in family language decisions on what language to practice and what measures to employ in order to influence or control family members' language behaviors. In other words, parental language ideologies are consistent with actual family language practice and management (Sandel and Chao, 2006; Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; Stavans, 2012; etc.). So the most effective method to obtain parental language ideology is semi-structured interview, which is very effective to gain the information in detail and depth,

At the same time, there is a growing tendency for methodological triangulation in FLP study, with multiple methods required to explore the largely invisible process and influences that arise in the course of intergenerational language transmission, to investigate the actual language practice and the parental language environment within families. For example, Okita (2004) proposed a two-stage approach for data collection, first investigating the distinctive features of the target community (Japanese- British intermarried families in the UK) in a general sense through an exploratory survey,

then, providing in-depth, qualitative insight into the family language policy and childrearing, using the life story method in separate, semi- structured interviews of mothers and fathers. Combining quantitative and qualitative approaches, FLP researchers can identify the common characteristics of families belonging to a distinct community or sub-group. The rich source of descriptive data obtained from the survey forms the background for the deeper understanding of unique processes involved in FLP within one or several families of the target group.

By using the mixed methods for data collection, some researchers found that the declared language ideology of one or both parents does not necessarily coincide with the strategies followed consciously or unconsciously in language practice with children (Kopeliovich, 2006; 2012; King and Fogle, 2006; Spolsky 2004; etc.). For example, Kopeliovich (2006) investigated FLP in one immigrant family from the FSU in Israel. Using in-depth interviews and observations, Kopeliovich (2006) uncovered the hidden sides of FLP and showed how the proactivity mother gradually reconsidered her FLP and renounced her strategy of overt interference with the children linguistic behavior. The children's resistance to use of Russian (L1) at home after immigration to Israel, and sharp conflicts within the family forced the mother to look for new solutions and change her "Russian only" practice at home. Furthermore, her awareness of the inconsistency between her ideology and the actual language practice was painful and disappointing.

Another important methodological issue in FLP research is the incorporation of the children's perspectives in the parental data. Until now, relatively few studies collected data on FLP from both parents and children (Schwartz, 2008; 2010). At the same time, using the children's reports on FLP, observing their language socialization, and measuring their languages mastery can strengthen considerably the validity of data collected from parents. When considering the strengths and limitations of the data derived from children's reports, Schwartz holds the view that even if we cannot assume that the children's views are fully reflected in what they say, they are not likely to try to please the researcher by providing expected answers during the interviews, and the children's language ideology seems to be affected considerably both by parental language ideology and by the actual implementation of the language policy at home.

In sum, the growing practice of using multiple methods in FLP studies demonstrates that the different research approaches in a single investigation would obtain more than one type of data, and different types of data would arrive at the same research findings (Mackey and Gass, 2005). In order to reduce observer or interviewer bias, enhance the validity and reliability of the data, and obtain the actual language practice and management within families, the current study would apply mixed methods for data collection (See Chapter 3).

2.5 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework strengthens this study and provides a strong foundation for data gathering and analysis. This section examines the theories and issues that shape the development of the conceptual framework of the research. It reviews the development of language policy and the studies carried out by Spolsky (2004, 2008, 2012), King et al. (2008, 2012), and Curdt-Christiansen (2009, 2013, 2014).

2.5.1 Language policy

‘Language policy’ is a widespread and long-standing practice. It includes the field of linguistics, employing concepts such as grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, the language used in different domains, the selection of official or national languages, and so on. ‘Language policy’ has been defined in various ways (Reagan, 2002). It is an area of study in that researchers seek to identify an activity that could exert an influence over the prevalence of a language. Language policy is concerned primarily with solving the ‘language problems’ of a state (Berry, 1968; Fishman, 1968; Fishman et al., 1968; Ray, 1968). Over the last decade, studies in this field have shifted to a greater focus on language policy, related language used in public places, and in different institutional contexts, such as the office, the school, and the workplace (Wiley & Wright, 2004; Ricento, 2006; Robinson et al., 2006).

In recent years, a number of linguists have become interested in the field of language policy at the micro level. According to Holmes (2008), the linguistic behaviors of

individual language users can determine whether a national language policy will succeed. Therefore, micro language policy is a new research area that has attracted much attention in recent years. Small-scale or microstructural environments are relevant to daily life, since language is an asset and a primary instrument of human communication, and language could cause a problem or a barrier to communication. Causes include the multiplicity of ethnic groups, languages, dialects, registers and scripts. These conditions may lead to some situations that make language policy necessary.

Each domain within a sociolinguistic ecology has its own variety of language policy and each influences and is influenced by all other domains. In one aspect, the centralized classical model recognized the relevance of other domains not only the state. The one other domain— is the family. In his widely accepted model of immigrant language shift, Fishman (1970) set out a three-generation theory, according to which the first generation of immigrants' added knowledge of the new environmental language to their home language, the second generation became bilingual, and the third was usually monolingual in the dominant local language. The loss of 'natural intergenerational transmission,' as it was called, was recognized as the key marker of language loss and it occurred within the family. Thus, the family was added to the state as a domain relevant for language policy, though it has seldom, until recently, been studied independently.

2.5.2 Family language policy

Spolsky (2004, 2008), King et al. (2008, 2012), and Curdt-Christiansen (2009, 2013, 2014) are the main researchers who have defined and developed FLP to help people gain a clearer picture. Their studies are discussed in the following section.

Spolsky (2004, 2008, 2009, 2012)

In 2004, Spolsky proposed the language policy model that includes three components: language practice, ideology, and management. He maintained that 'language policy operates within a speech community of whatever size' (p.4) and all speech communities have a language policy or policies.

The first component, language practices, Spolsky (2004) defined as the conscious selection that a member of a community makes with regard to words, sounds, grammar, or language in every speech act. The second component, Spolsky (2004) defined as the ideas and beliefs that the members of a speech community have and share about language and language use, such as what is appropriate and inappropriate language use and which languages or varieties have prestige. Finally, he defined language management as explicit statements about appropriate language use or acts with an intention to manipulate language use by authorities. Such authorities are a teacher in school or a parent in a bilingual family. Furthermore, ideology that shapes practices and management is influenced by four external forces: sociolinguistic, cultural, economic, and political forces. In turn, these influence language policy.

Spolsky (2008) argued that families should be involved in language policy studies based on Fishman's (1991) three-generation theory. Fishman's theory is that language shifts among generations are recognized as key markers of language loss and this occurred within families. Thus, families were added to language policy study.

In 2009, Spolsky proposed the recognition of various other domains, ranging from national organizations through to state, local government to army, business, work, media, education, religion, and the family. In each, language management occurs and language policy and its components are usefully studied.

Later, in 2012, Spolsky argued that every domain has its own participants and each participant may have their own language ideology. In families, the key participants are parents, children, and significant others. Each of these participants has different language beliefs that motivate their language practices and each of them may try to manage or influence the language practices and beliefs of others. In conclusion, Spolsky was the first to define the model of language policy and add family as one of the domains. The model has been widely used among FLPs. King et al. (2008, 2012) developed and expanded the field of FLP and their studies are discussed below.

King et al. (2008, 2012)

King et al. (2008, 2012) developed and expanded FLP based on Spolsky's (2004) work. They applied the three components of language policy. King et al. (2008) has

called for more attention to language policies within families because the study of FLP is a newly emerging field in the larger context of studies of language policy and traditional language policy studies mainly focus on the macro level.

King et al. (2008) proposed a framework for examining FLP by integrating research perspectives from studies of language policy (Spolsky, 2004) and child language acquisition (Berko-Gleason, 2005). They performed research in these two independent fields and found that both have limitations. The limitation in terms of language policy is that most of the studies in this field focus on language policy at the macro level and pay little attention to private families. The limitation in terms of child language acquisition is that researchers in this field commonly work on detailed analysis of the interactions between parents and children and pay little attention to parental attitudes and expectations (Owens, 2001; Guasti, 2004). Given the limitations of the two field studies, King et al. (2008) reported that FLP has the potential to bridge the gap by drawing from the substantial body of work in each of these two areas. This approach takes into account what families actually do with languages in daily interactions. Their ideology about language, language use, as well as its goals and efforts to shape language use within families stands out as an important idea.

In addition, King et al. (2008) suggested that studies on FLP should focus on parental ideology, which could integrate broader external issues and child-rearing goals. In turn, completing micro studies of child-parent and -caretaker interactions as well as

allowing researchers to achieve a better understanding of the varied outcomes of child language acquisition in bilingual families.

Later, in 2012, King et al. defined FLP as explicit and overt planning in relation to language practice and learning among family members as well as implicit processes that manage certain language and literacy practices over others within families. Further, they argue that parental views are regarded as a form of explicit policy statement and the implicit policy has to be gained from the actual language practices among family members because families seldom have official documents stating their language policy.

Curdt-Christiansen (2009, 2013, 2014)

In line with King et al. (2008) call for studies on FLP research in this field has increased recently. Curdt-Christiansen has been researching the field of FLP since 2009, when she examined how FLPs were formed in 10 Chinese immigrant families in Canada with regard to their language and literacy education in three languages (Chinese, English, and French). She focused on the parental ideology that underpinned FLP and the central focus of analysis was how parents perceived the languages as they related to different values. The findings of this study suggest that FLPs are strongly influenced by sociopolitical and economic factors.

Curdt-Christiansen (2013) emphasized the relationship between the language policies at macro level and micro level. She indicated that FLP recognizes the relevance and influence of economic, political, and social structures and processes in a given society. In this case, FLP studies contribute to an understanding of the processes of language shift and maintenance and shed light on broader language policy issues at the macro level. Importantly, as FLP is the key factor leading to practices of continuity or discontinuity of heritage and minority languages, unpacking the relationships between micro- and macro-level policies can yield important insights into the everyday processes of language use and communicative practices. Thus, this can lead to better practices and policies to support language maintenance.

In 2014, Curdt-Christiansen looked at FLPs in 20 bilingual families in Singapore with regard to Chinese language development. She employed Spolsky's (2004) language policy model to study the language practices, parental language ideology, and management within these families. In line with King et al. (2008), Curdt-Christiansen (2014) emphasized the importance of parental language ideology in shaping FLP. She explicated how the broader sociopolitical, linguistic, economic, and cultural forces influenced parental language ideology as well as connected with FLP (Spolsky, 2004).

In conclusion, the studies carried out by Spolsky (2004, 2008, 2009, 2012), King et al. (2008, 2012), and Curdt-Christiansen (2009, 2012, 2013, 2014) have made great

contributions to and provide evidence for the present study. These studies have been adopted as the conceptual framework of this study.

University of Malaya

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology employed in this study. It specifically describes the research design, participants, research instrument, data collection, and plan of analysis. The research uses ethnographic data collection methods to answer the research questions. By means of semi-structured interviews and observations, how the language(s), especially English, is practiced and managed based on parental language ideology within families is explored.

3.2 Participants

The participants in this study were from five bilingual/trilingual families in Beijing: two parents and one child in each family, 10 parents and 5 children (15 individuals) in total. Because of time constraints, only five families participated in this study. Importantly, these families understood the project and gave permission for regular observations. The criteria for the selection of the families were as follows:

- (1) The parents intended to raise their children bilingually, and they had implemented several plans to raise their children bilingually in their own way.
- (2) The parents belonged to the upper-middle classes, as judged by their monthly household income according to the National Bureau of Statistics of China (2008) (over 30,000 Chinese Yuan, approximately equal to 4,700 US dollars per month);

(3) The parents were highly educated (bachelor degree or above), and spoke at least two or more languages: Mandarin, English, and either dialects or other foreign languages. These parents were limited to those who had learned English formally and were certificated (College English Test Band 4 – CET4 at least. CET is a national test in China, whose purpose is to examine the English proficiency of college students to ensure they reach the basic-level or intermediate-level specified in the National College English Teaching Syllabuses. CET4 is for undergraduate students, and CET6 is for postgraduate students. The purpose of CET is to make an objective and accurate measurement of the college students' English proficiency and to provide feedback for College English teaching. It is more focusing on English grammar and vocabulary. The CET tests reading, writing and listening, it does not have a part for speaking. The scores are graded on a curved scale, so that the highest score possible is 710. In addition, passing the CET tests is important for Chinese students. Graduates may only be able to get a degree or a good job if they can pass the CET with a high score. However, the CET certificates have been one of the graduation requirements of undergraduates in the majority of Chinese universities for almost twenty years, these tests reflect the exam-oriented English education, unlike the IELTS or TOFEL test, which is more focusing on the practical operation of the English language, such as the listening part is closely integrated with reality, so the CET tests in China can not equivalent to the IELTS or TOFEL test.);

(4) The child participants were middle school students (aged 12–17) who started to learn English formally in primary school. In this study, responses strengthen

considerably the validity of data collected from parents. Children of middle school age have their own ideas and attitudes and their responses are more reliable. The children started to learn English formally in primary school so they had learned English for 7 years at least and could speak it.

This study focuses on Chinese parents who are raising their child bilingually. These parents are highly educated and have learned English formally. Previous studies show that parents with higher educational levels spend more time helping their children to learn and speak English more frequently than less educated parents do (Tsai, 2001; Chang, 2008; Lee, 2010). More importantly, these parents have the ability to speak English, the ability to provide a positive family language environment, and the ability to invest in their child's language learning without financial pressure. Despite the effectiveness of the methods that parents used to raise bilingual children, these families are selected because the parents have their own plans to raise their children bilingually, and they have implemented several methods to help their children to learn English in their own way.

In terms of finding families, the first point of contact was a friend of the researcher, an English teacher in a middle school in Beijing and an English home tutor, she introduced the researcher to some parents who were interested and agreed to take part in this study. Most importantly, these parents gave permission for regular home observations.

The participant profile (Table 3.1) is presented in the following section. For the purpose of clarification to differentiate between the parents and the children, the participants will be coded into three groups. The fathers will be coded as “F”, the mothers will be coded as “M”, and the children will be coded as “C”.

Table 3.1: Profile of Participants

Family No.	Parents				Child	
	Age	Occupation	Educational Background	English Competence	Age	Educational Background
Family 1	F:42	F: Manager	F: Bachelor	F: CET-4	14	Middle School
	M:40	M:Manager	M: Master	M: CET -6 IELTS-5.0		
Family 2	F:43	F: Manager	F: Master	F: CET - 6	13	Middle School
	M:38	M: Professor	M: Master	M: CET-6		
Family 3	F:43	F: Manager	F: PhD	F: CET- 6	14	Middle School
	M:41	M: Officer	M: Bachelor	M: CET-4		
Family 4	F:40	F:Marketing director	F: Bachelor	F: CET- 4	16	Middle School
	M:32	M: Officer	M: Bachelor	M: CET-4		
Family 5	F:45	F: Doctor	F: Master	F: CET-6	14	Middle school
	M:42	M: Accountant	M: Master	M: CET-6		

F = Father; M = Mother; CET = College English Test

3.3 Instruments

A great diversity of methodological tools is used to investigate FLP, which may constrain the ability to compare the data and generalize findings, for example, semi-structured interviews (Shi, 2008; Orly and Tijana, 2013; Mila and Victor, 2011; Schwartz, 2010; etc.), observations and semi-structured interviews (Kopeliovich, 2006; 2012; King and Fogle, 2006; Spolsky 2004; etc.). So as to obtain the actual language practices and management accrued within families, enhance the validity and reliability of the data, an ethnographic approach was used to collect data for this study. Data collected through semi-structured interviews and participant observations were used to understand the multiple dimensions of family specific social worlds. The observations provided data of natural speech and individual tape-recorded, semi-structured interviews provided data for detailed linguistic examination, as well as for a focused analysis of the speaker self-perceptions, attitudes, and language ideology. Participant responses during the semi-structured interviews were validated by regular home observations.

In addition, in line with previous studies, FLPs are studied through the three components of the FLP model. However, the actual language practice is sometimes inconsistent with parental language ideology, so it is necessary to use an ethnographic approach to collect data as semi-structured interviews could identify parental language ideology and observations used to gain the actual language practice and language management within families. For this study, both the parents and children

would be interviewed and observed, using the children's reports on FLP and observing their language socialization and language ability can strengthen considerably the validity of data collected from parents.

a. Semi-Structured Interviews

The interviews were framed and conducted according to previous studies in the field of FLP performed by Kopeliovich (2010), Giasuma (2006), and Shi (2008). Semi-structured interviews contained a series of open-ended questions and aimed at exploring the participant patterns of language use, especially how English was used in daily communication, language ideology and sources, and the methods or strategies parents used to influence or control language development. The interview was also used to further probe the data collected during the observation.

The interview questions for parents consisted of three main parts. First, general questions were about the parental language choice with different family members and languages used in different contexts. The second part explored their opinions about language(s). As parental ideology is influenced by sociolinguistic, cultural, economic, and political forces, to what extent these four forces influenced parental languages were examined. Parental expectations about language development were examined; the third part focused on the efforts parents had made to control, influence, or support language learning. The interview questions for children included two main parts. First,

general questions about language use at home, as well as their parental language use at home; second, language use with peers, and the reasons.

In some cases, extra questions were added and questions were adjusted according to the participant response where necessary. Semi-structured interview is useful for gaining insight and context into a topic, and it allows respondents to answer questions in as much detail as they want. The interviewer can probe areas suggested by the respondents' answers. However, it also gets disadvantages and limitations over other methods, only a relatively small number of interviews can take place because each one can last for a long time, because the sample size is small, so the results are unlikely to be representative of a particular population. The time for interview is quite limited and interviewer may give out unconscious signals that guide respondents to give answers expected by interviewer, it may seem intrusive to the respondents.

b. Observation

The observation used a set of interpretative, material practices that made the world visible by turning it into a series of representations through field notes, informal conversations, and recordings. Observations and field notes are considered as a useful way to gather information about family language happenings. In addition, observations and field notes are likely to confirm or contradict the participant responses to some interview questions and to capture some aspects of linguistic behavior that the interviewer cannot obtain from the respondents. In other words,

people misreport their language behavior, and their language practices can thus be authentically recorded in natural settings through observations that are seen as one of the main sources of information in a case study using ethnographic data collection methods.

The observation aimed to gain the actual language practice within the family, and the family language environment parents provide for their children, as well as methods parents used to manage or control language learning at home.

3.4 Data Collection

Actual data collection was conducted from July–October 2013. The families involved in this study were visited at least five times and each time between two and four hours were spent with each family. On each visit, a different mode of data collection was carried out. In this study, any visit to the research families was subject to prior appointments made with the parents as heads of the household either in person or on the phone.

The data collection was done in three phases. The first phase involved frequent visits to the participant homes to become accepted as an integral part of their life, offering to teach or help any child with homework and to babysit the children. Since the data collection occurred during the summer holiday, children spent much more time at

home, so this strategy received favorable responses from some parents whose children needed assistance.

The second phase was tape-recorded semi-structured interviews. All participants were informed about the purpose of the interview. The average time of each interview was about 20 minutes and the setting was informal and conducted in Mandarin to make the interviewees feel comfortable. Parents and children were interviewed separately. Parent and child responses were collected to make this study reliable. The parents were interviewed first, then the children. This order was helpful for capturing parental opinions about language(s) to reshape some questions for the children. After the interviews, participants had the right to listen to the recording for verification and correction to ascertain the reliability and validity of the data to guarantee that the information gathered was authentic.

Observations in families was done by means of tape-recording or note-taking and usually took place when all the family members had a chance to get together, such as after dinner, when they held brief conversations while watching TV together. A voice recorder was used to record the conversations at home. Some recordings were interrupted by phone calls or members of the family who want to participate in the conversations. Circumstances like these were expected especially in families with children and other family members like the grandparents. The following aspects were observed. First, who used what languages with who, when, where, and why was

prominently talked about. Second, how family members communicated with one another or avoided communication was the next topic of concern. Third, what opportunities for English language practice (e.g. English movies/TV series, music, and books) were available to family members and children was the final topic of concern.

To make participants feel comfortable and avoid frustration, all participants were allowed to listen to their voice recording and were free to edit or erase any recordings that they did not want included. In addition, informal conversations were carried out with participants during the observation to produce useful insights for data analysis and were recorded in the field notes. More interviews were also used during or at the end of observation because some questions were framed according to the observations.

3.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis in qualitative research is the process of making sense of the data. This section discusses the strategies utilized in the organization, analysis, and interpretation of data.

3.5.1 Analysis of Interview Data

The interview data were recorded by voice recorder, and field notes were taken as well to prevent any loss or damage to the recorded data. During the interviews, the

respondents were able to talk about something in detail and depth, interviewer could not pre-judge what was and was not important information. So field notes were taken to record any important elements noticed during the interview, extra questions were added according to the field notes. All the data collected from interviews were transcribed into Mandarin word by word and then translated into English. In analysis of the data, as part of the procedure, a narrative report based on the semi-structured interviews was read and reread to understand thoroughly the message of the informants (Miles & Huberman, 1994). At this stage, writing down the impressions was done to clearly evaluate the data. Then the data gathered were coded and classified into patterns of language use, language used for different purpose (TV, books, movies, etc.), participant attitudes about different languages, reasons and the influences of the four external forces on parental ideology, and language management. After the data were categorized, all categories were linked together to make good inferences. Moreover, as the analysis progressed, a constant comparative analysis was made. This was done by frequently comparing the interview transcripts with the codes to ensure rigor in the analysis and interpretation of data.

3.5.2 Analysis of Observation Data

Observation data were recorded in a diary or on any paper available, but discreetly, and later together with the researcher's comments. The data gathered from observation is divided into verbal and non-verbal data. The non-verbal data from observation referred to participant language use in terms of reading, watching

TV/movies, sending messages online, and so on, as well as parental language management. All non-verbal data were recorded in the field notes and coded into themes. The verbal data referred to participant conversations or interactions recorded during the daily observations and were analyzed in terms of who said what, to whom, for what purpose, and how. It was helpful for summarizing what we know about the patterns of languages in a family.

3.5.3 Procedures of data analysis

Firstly, all data (interview and observation) were transcribed word by word. The interview data collected through voice recorder and field notes were transcribed into a narrative report, and it had been read and reread to understand thoroughly the message of the informants. The Conversational data collected through observations were transcribed in the order in which the interaction took place and following the speaker-respondent strategy, for example, the question-and-answer principle. The non-verbal data (such as the books the participants read, the movies they watched at home) recorded in the field notes during observations were transcribed into a narrative report with researcher's comments.

Secondly, all the transcribed data were divided into segments of information, and then labeled with codes. For example, the narrative report based on semi-structured interviews could be divided into following parts: language background of the participants; the languages used among participants, and participants with other

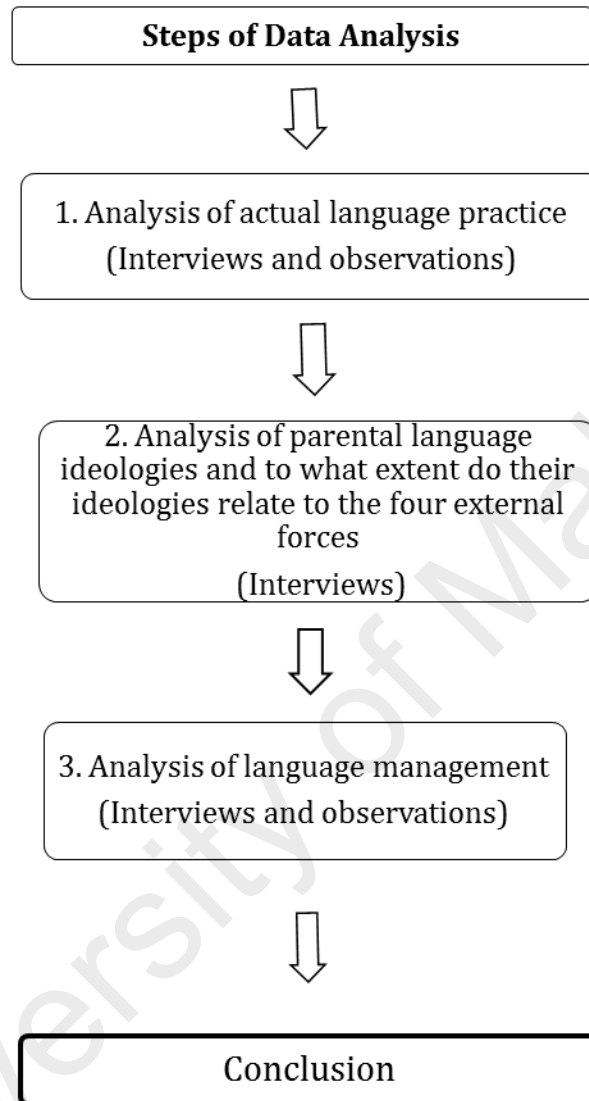
family members; parental language ideologies about their languages, and the reasons; parental attitudes about each language and reasons; factors had influences on their attitudes; methods they used to improve child's English proficiency, and so on. The conversations recorded through observation were coded with speaker-respondent, place and the language(s) they used in conversation. Each code was with a description to provide a detailed rendering of people, people's main points, places or event in a setting.

Thirdly, there were about 20-30 codes used to label the segments of information, the next procedure was to reduce the overlap and redundancy of codes, and collapsed the codes into themes. The reductionism referred to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming the data that appeared in the transcriptions. It allowed the researcher to decide which information had to be discarded and to be retained. The data (collected from interviews, observations and field notes) with similar descriptive codes were aggregated together to form a major theme in the database. There were seven themes based on the conceptual framework: language background of participants; parental/child's reports on actual language practices within families; parental language ideologies; the factors which had influenced parental language ideologies; external language management; internal language management. During this process, the data collected from interviews, observations and field notes were all came together. After categorizing all the data into these themes, the data of each

family had been analyzed by following the steps in Figure 3.1, and the main findings would be discussed so as to answer the research questions.

Figure 3.1 shows the steps in the analysis of the data collected through semi-structured interviews, observations and field notes. These steps are based on the conceptual framework of this study. The first step of the analysis focused on participant language choices made among different family members, the languages they used for different purposes in different situations, and the data collected from interviews and observations. The second step consisted of data analysis of parental language ideology. The sources of their ideology could be divided into two parts: the four external forces and parental experiences. The data of parental ideology were obtained from interviews. The third step was to analyze parental language management for their children: the methods parents employed to control, influence, or support language use, and the language environment parents provided for their children. The data of language management was divided into external and internal management, and the data were collected from interviews, observations, and field notes.

Figure 3.1 Steps of data analysis



3.5.4 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework (Figure 3.2) of this study is adopted from Curdt-Christiansen's (2014) work which is based on Spolsky (2004) and King et al.'s (2008, 2012) theory on FLP (these researchers' works have been reviewed in section 2.5.2).

Figure 3.2 Conceptualization of family language policy (Curdt-Christiansen, 2014)

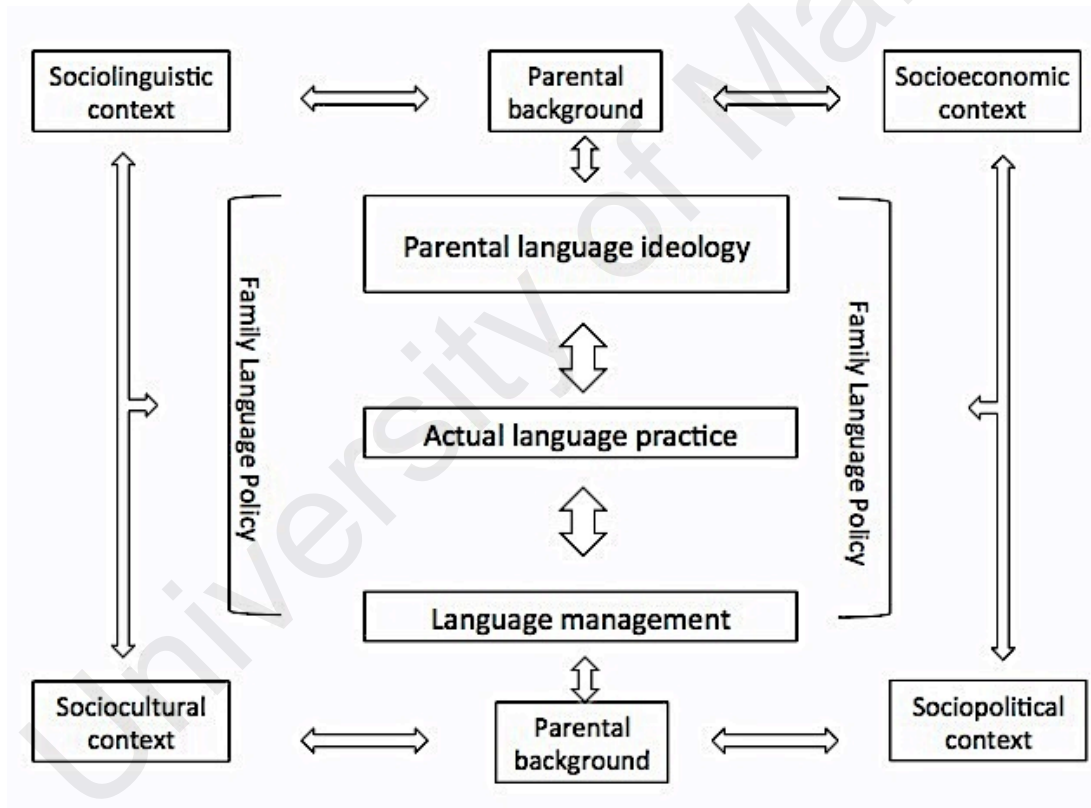


Figure 2.2 represents the multidimensional system of FLP based on Spolsky's (2004) definition of language policy, which is comprised of three interrelated components: language practice (actual language use; what people do with language), language ideology (what family members think about language), and language management (what they try to do about language). In addition, language ideology is the driving

force of FLP (King, 2008), as they are “based on the perceived values, power and utility of various languages” (Curdt-Christiansen, 2014, p354). According to Spolsky (2004), the four major external interrelated linguistic and non-linguistic forces that co-exist with FLP are sociolinguistic, sociocultural, socioeconomic, and sociopolitical forces.

This broader framework attempts to provide explanations of how languages are used, learned, and managed within families based on parental language ideology that are influenced by the sociopolitical, economic, cultural, and linguistic forces.

Chapter 4 Findings

4.1 Introduction

This study focused on a group of Chinese parents who wanted to raise their child bilingually. It investigates the process of raising bilingual children and how parents perceive languages, their sources, and how their ideology is transformed into active language practice and management within families. The data collected from semi-structured interviews, observations and field notes are presented and analyzed in this chapter. The participating families are analyzed separately in this chapter. Then participating families are discussed as a whole to answer the research questions in chapter 5.

The data analysis of each family begins by showing the actual language practices, which include the patterns of language use used within a family for daily interactions among members, and the participant language choices in different contexts. This is followed by a discussion of the dominant language used within a family, and in particular, the usage of English in their daily encounters. Then, parental language ideology and the sources (mainly the external forces) of their ideology are examined, which is then followed by a discussion about the extent of the four external forces influence on parental language ideology. Lastly, parental language management within families with regard to the language development of their child is discussed.

The analysis in this chapter is provided with interview extracts and supported by the data collected through the observations. The following abbreviations will be used in this chapter to refer to the participants in this study, and the number refers to the family number, for example:

- “R” refers to researcher;
- “F” refers to father; “F1” refers to the father from family 1;
- “M” refers to mother; “M2” refers to the mother of family 2;
- “C” refers to the children; “C3” refers to the child of family 3.

4.2 Family 1

The parents of the first family came from different places in China: the mother was a native Beijing woman, born and raised there; the father was born in Tangshan city, Hebei province, and had lived in Beijing for 18 years. The mother could speak two languages, Mandarin as her first language, and English as her first foreign language. As well as these two languages, the father could speak Tangshan dialect, which was his first language. Their daughter was 14 years old, and she spoke Mandarin and English, having started to learn English formally when she was four years old.

4.2.1 Actual Language Practices

In this section, the languages used among family members (data from interviews and observations) and the languages they used for different purposes in different situations (data mainly from observations) are analyzed. The current study considered the variety of modes used within a family for daily interactions between spouses, between

parents and child, between child and grandparents, between parents and grandparents, and between child and siblings/peers to capture the complexity of language use in each family (Table 4.1). It should be noted that the participants do not always live with grandparents, so the data of languages used between participants and grandparents is gained from parents through interviews and validated by child participant responses in interview.

Table 4.1 Patterns of language use for the languages you speak to each other.

Variety of modes	Language(s)
Wife – Husband	Mandarin
Mother – Child	Mandarin, English (occasionally)
Father – Child	Mandarin
Mother – Grandparents (on parental sides)	Mandarin
Father – Grandparents (on his side)	Tangshan dialect
Father – Grandparents (on his wife’s side)	Mandarin
Child – Grandparents (on parental sides)	Mandarin
Child –peers	Mandarin, English (sometimes)

Table 4.1 presents the language repertoire of the first family. It shows that the parental language use was split with Mandarin spoken only by the mother, and Mandarin and Tangshan dialect by the father. The mother's first language was

Mandarin, so she spoke Mandarin only with different family members, even with the relatives on the father's side who spoke Tangshan dialect. The father of this family spoke Mandarin with his wife, daughter, and relatives on his wife's side, but he spoke Tangshan dialect to relatives on his side. During the interview, they indicated that:

M1: 我只说普通话，不会说唐山话。因为我们结婚也好多年了，所以基本上我能听的懂（唐山话）。有些唐山的亲戚普通话说说的也不是特别好，他们就跟我说唐山话，我跟他们说普通话。

(I only speak Mandarin, I don't know how to speak Tangshan dialect. Since we have been married for many years, basically I can understand Tangshan dialect. Some of the relatives on my husband's side, their Mandarin is not good, so they talk to me in Tangshan dialect, and I respond to them in Mandarin.)

F1: 我从小就说唐山话，因为我爸妈这一辈子都在唐山，他们基本上不说普通话。我是从上学以后才开始说普通话的。现在在北京，不管是家里，还是外面工作，都说普通话。但是一跟我父母说话，或者唐山的其他亲戚，我就习惯性的说方言（唐山话）。

(I have spoken Tangshan dialect since I was born, because my parents have lived in Tangshan for their whole lives, and they barely speak Mandarin. I learnt Mandarin after I went to school. Now I live in Beijing, and I speak Mandarin at home and at work, but I speak Tangshan dialect habitually with my own parents or other relatives from my hometown.)

As regards their actual language practice at home, it was evident that Mandarin was the dominant language used between parents and child. When they were having conversations in the living room, or during dinner, they spoke Mandarin most of the time. However, when the father was talking with his relatives from his hometown on the phone in Tangshan dialect, his daughter occasionally repeated what he said with a Tangshan dialect for fun. English was used less frequently in this family. During the interviews the mother indicated she spoke English to her daughter occasionally, and

the father seldom spoke it at home. Sometimes they left messages with some simple English words on the phone. During the observations, the researcher found that the daughter sometimes responded to her parents in simple English words.

For example, the mother asked her daughter to set the table for dinner in Mandarin, and the daughter said, “Wait” in English; after few minutes, the mother asked again in Mandarin, and then the daughter responded to her in Mandarin. In another situation, the mother asked her daughter to clean up her own stuff in Mandarin. The daughter did not respond the first time, so the mother asked again and the daughter said, “OK, OK” in English.

The mother opened the dialogue in Mandarin, the daughter made the conversation move in English, but the mother moved on in Mandarin. When asked the reason why during an informal conversation with the mother participant, she said she did not notice, and she was used to speak Mandarin.

As well as with her parents, the child participant spoke English with her classmates sometimes, and she said during the interview:

C1: 我喜欢跟我的同学, 我的朋友讲英语。

(I like to speak English with my friends and classmates.)

R: 那你跟她们经常讲英语吗?

(Do you always speak English with them?)

C1: 好像也不是特别经常, 有时候吧。

(Not always, sometimes.)

R: 什么时候说呢? 用英语都聊什么?

(When and regarding what topics do you speak English with them?)

C1: 下课, 放学以后。用英语聊电影, 美剧, 还有英语作业。

(After class, after school. We talk about movies, American drama, and English homework in English.)

Given the data collected from observations, it was evident that the child participant greeted her friend in English when they were talking on the phone, such as “Hi, morning”, and when she was discussing English homework with her classmates on the Internet, she sent messages like “the first two paragraphs; dictation words,” and so on.

As well as daily interactions among family members, the languages they used in different contexts were analyzed, and the data were collected from both interviews and observations. The data show that parents preferred to watch TV programs, read magazines, newspapers, books in Mandarin, and movies in English, and the child of this family usually watched English movies/TV series and listened to English songs.

In conclusion, given the data from interviews and observations, it was evident that Mandarin was the dominant language used among participants in this family, and English was not actually used in their daily interactions; even when the child responded in English, the mother did not notice and moved on in Mandarin. However,

it was evident that the child participant used English more frequently than her parents did, albeit limited to simple words.

4.2.2 Parental Language Ideologies

The parental language ideology and their sources, collected from the interviews, are presented in this section. The parental language ideology is divided into three parts: ideology about Mandarin, English, and Tangshan dialect.

4.2.2.1 Ideologies about Mandarin

The parental ideology about Mandarin was determined. Both the mother and father held the view that Mandarin should be the first language for their daughter, because it is important and necessary for people who live in China.

F1: 普通话是最基本的, 在学好普通话的基础上, 再学习别的语言。毕竟是在中国, 肯定要会说中国话。

(Mandarin is the essential and fundamental language for learning other languages. And we live in China, we have to speak Chinese.)

M1: 从孩子出生我们就跟她说普通话, 肯定要让孩子先学会普通话, 这点是肯定的。

(We have spoken Mandarin to our daughter once she was born, Mandarin must be her first language, and we are sure about this.)

4.2.2.2 Ideologies about English

During the interviews, the parents expressed positive attitudes about English with regard to their child's development. Their ideology was sourced from their own experience at work, and external sociopolitical and economic issues.

For example:

M1: 英语太重要了。(English is quite important,)

R: 为什么呢?

M1: 是现在学校的必修课, 以后考大学, 找工作都用得到。

(It is a compulsory subject at school, you need to use it to get admitted into university and for job hunting...)

F1: 我觉得现在来说最重要的是英语吧, 上学工作都用的到。我们那个年代学英语还没那么流行, 但现在工作做总会多多少少接触到一些英语, 觉得以后说英语会是一个主流, 所以还是觉得孩子的英语基础应该扎实一点, 应该多花点心思提高孩子的英语。

(I think English is most important for now, because you can use it at school and at work. English was not popular in our time, but now I need to use English at work to some degree. I think speaking English will become the main stream, so I'd like my daughter to acquire a solid base in English, and parents should pay more attention to improving their child's English ability.)

The parents highlighted the broader socioeconomic and political issues related to English, indicating that as a compulsory subject in school it would lead to better education and employment for their daughter in the future.

4.2.2.3 Ideologies about Tangshan Dialect

Tangshan dialect was the father's first language, so he held a positive attitude about it.

He considered it as a mark of his identity as a Tangshan person. His ideology are represented as follows:

F1: 虽然我现在是在北京，户口也是北京，但我的老家还是唐山，唐山人当然要会说唐山话。人不能忘本嘛。

(Although I live in Beijing now, and my household registration is in Beijing, my hometown is Tangshan. Tangshan people have to speak Tangshan dialect without doubt. A man should not forget his roots.)

However, both the father and mother held same negative attitudes towards teaching their daughter Tangshan dialect, their negative attitudes were gained through interviews. For example, the father indicated that he spoke it because he was born there, but he did not want his daughter to learn it.

F1: 一是因为孩子一直在北京，学了也没什么用，二是怕唐山话影响孩子的发音，回头万一连普通话都说不标准了。另外，现在全国都在推广普通话。

(First, because my daughter lives in Beijing all the time, she has no chance to use Tangshan dialect; second, speaking dialect would influence her pronunciation, it would have a bad influence on her speaking of standard Mandarin. In addition, Mandarin is promoted widely in China.)

The data from interviews showed that the sociocultural force influenced the father's ideology about his mother tongue, but only his. In relation to their daughter's language development, the parents did not want their child to learn, or speak, dialect, and their ideology were sourced from the sociolinguistic force. They believed that speaking dialect would have a bad influence on speaking standard Mandarin, and it was useless.

In conclusion, the parents considered Mandarin as a basic language and it was necessary for a Chinese to speak Mandarin in China; English was important in a child's future life as it related to sociopolitical (policy in education) and socioeconomic issues; and with regard to child's language development, speaking dialect had a bad influence on child's pronunciation, and Mandarin was promoted widely by the government, so dialect was unnecessary.

4.2.3 Language Management

The language management data were collected from interviews and observations. In this family, the parents had a plan to help their daughter with English grammar, writing, speaking, and listening. Different methods would be used depending on the child's performance at school. For English grammar and writing, the mother said that she had bought a lot of English exercise books for her daughter, and she hired a tutor to teach English grammar when she realized her daughter's English result was not good. She thought hiring a home tutor would improve the child's English, especially grammar. In order to improve the speaking and listening skills in English for the child, the parents sent their daughter to an English camp during holidays or cram school during the weekends, where the teachers were native English speakers. When the child had spare time at home, the mother would suggest her daughter watched American TV series/movies instead of Chinese or other TV series.

The language management at their home meant that the daughter had more than 10 English exercise books, and she had to do English exercise every day, her mother checking it after work. She went to English cram school four days a week, where she could communicate with foreign teachers to improve her oral English.

The father realized that Chinese children need many more opportunities to speak English, and should be freed from rigid texts, and he said during the interview:

我对她现在的英语还比较满意，考试成绩不错。所以这个暑假我想让她提高一下口语，多一点说英语的机会，不是只在做练习题。
(I'm satisfied with her English results now, she did well in the final exam. So during this summer holiday, I hope she can improve her oral English, to provide her with more opportunities to speak English instead of writing English.)

When asked why they did not speak English at home with their daughter, the parents explained:

M1: 我们虽然也是学过英语，但总觉得自己英语不好，孩子现在懂得比我们多，我们教也教不了什么。
(Although we learned English, we are not good at it. Our daughter knows it better than us, so we have nothing to teach her.)

F1: 有些词我都不懂还要问她.....还是交给专业的老师教比较放心。

(There are some words I don't understand which I have to ask her... it's much better to have professional English teachers to teach her.)

This family chose Mandarin as the dominant language used at home, and they made great efforts to help their daughter to learn English as it related to sociopolitical and economic forces. Although English used by the child participant was limited, there

was still a visible shift from Mandarin to English. The father did not transmit his mother tongue to his daughter because he and his wife considered the dialect had a bad influence on child pronunciation. The language management mainly followed their ideology except for speaking English to their daughter themselves, because the parents had a low level of English language proficiency. Therefore, they employed several methods to improve their child's English competence.

4.3 Family 2

The language background of the second family was more complex than that of the first one. Neither parent's first language was Mandarin and they spoke different dialects. The father of this family was born in Yantai, Shandong province, so his first language was Shandong dialect, and then he learnt Mandarin latterly. English was been learned since middle school. The mother of this family was born in Yanbian, Jilin province, and her first language was Korean and then Mandarin. She learnt English in high school, and she studied in Japan for four years, so she could speak Japanese fluently. As reported by the parents, their son was capable of two languages: Mandarin and English. However, the son self-reported he used to speak three languages: Mandarin, English and Shandong dialect. Nevertheless, he had not spoken Shandong dialect for years, and he had forgotten it.

4.3.1 Actual Language Practices

In this section, the languages used among family members (data from interviews and observations), and the languages they used for different purposes in different situations (data mainly from observations) are analyzed. The variety of modes used within the second family for daily interactions between family members is presented in the following table (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Patterns of language use for the languages you speak to each other.

Variety of modes	Language(s)
Wife – Husband	Mandarin
Mother – Child	Mandarin, English (occasionally)
Father – Child	Mandarin
Mother – Grandparents (on her parental sides)	Korean
Mother – Grandparents (on her husband’s side)	Mandarin
Father – Grandparents (on his side)	Shandong Dialect
Father – Grandparents (on his wife’s side)	Mandarin
Child – Grandparents (on parental sides)	Mandarin
Child – siblings/peers	Mandarin, English (sometimes)

According to the interviews, the dominant language in this family was Mandarin, and parents spoke their own first languages with their own relatives.

In the interviews conducted with father and mother, they said:

F2: 我跟老家人都说山东话，跟他们说普通话显得生分。我老婆跟她家里人说朝鲜话，我是一点都听不懂。但我们都在一起的时候，就都说普通话。这就是普通话的好处，各个民族，各个地域的人都可以用普通话交流。

(I speak Shandong dialect with my relatives from my hometown, I feel distant if I speak Mandarin with them. My wife spoke Korean with her family which I could not understand. But when we get together, we all speak Mandarin. I think this is the benefit of speaking Mandarin, that people from different ethnic groups, different places in China, can communicate.)

M2:我平常在北京只说普通话，跟我家人里我才说朝鲜话。日语以前说的挺好的，现在好久不说有点退步了。英语很少说，也就是辅导孩子功课的时候，教孩子的时候会说一点吧。

(I speak Mandarin dominantly in Beijing, and speak Korean only with my own family. I used to speak Japanese fluently, but now I'm out of practice. I seldom speak English, only when I help my son with his homework or teach him English. I think my Japanese is much better than my English.)

The child participant was reported by his parents to speak Mandarin dominantly with all the family members. But their son had stayed with his grandparents (on father's side) before the age of six, so he used to speak Shandong dialect. The following remarks were made by his mother:

M2: 他爸爸工作忙，当时我又在日本上学，只有他爷爷奶奶能帮助他。虽然奶奶很努力的在学普通话，但老人说了一辈子的山东话，很难改过来，所以我儿子就学会了。现在我跟他爸爸都管着不让他说山东话，因为说普通话的时候总是带着山东味的口音，个别词的发音还是山东话，他到现在说‘钥匙 (yaoshi)’还是说成‘钥匙 (yueshi)’. 本来孩子是土生土长北京的，这样一说话就跟外地人似的。

(His father was busy with his work, and I was studying in Japan during that time, so his grandparents took care of him every day. Although his grandmother was learning Mandarin seriously, she had spoken dialect all the time, so it was hard for her to change her accent and my son learned dialect from them. For now, his father and I, we don't allow him to speak dialect anymore, because the Shandong dialect has influenced his accent when he is speaking Mandarin, there are some words he always

pronounces like dialect, such as the word ‘key’- *yaoshi* - he pronounces like *yueshi*. When he speaks like this, he doesn’t sound like a native of Beijing.)

The data collected from observations supported participant responses during the interviews. The parents and child communicated with each other in Mandarin at home. The father and mother spoke or sent voice messages to their own relatives in their own first languages separately, and the child spoke Mandarin with his grandparents (on both parental sides). When the mother discussed English homework with her son, they occasionally used some English words or read some English sentences from books.

For example, the mother was helping her son with his English homework:

M2: 你这个句子该是什么时态?

(What’s the tense of this sentence?)

C2: 过去式。(Past tense.)

M2: 这个是 Past tense, what should you do with past tense?

(This is past tense, what should you do with past tense?)

Based on the child’s data collected from both interviews and observations, the researcher found that his dominant language at home was Mandarin. He barely spoke English at home, except when it related to English homework. For example:

The child participant was doing his homework in the study, and the mother was cooking in the kitchen:

C2: 妈, 我这周都写过一篇作文了, 怎么还要写? Why?

(Mom, I already wrote one composition this week, why do I have to write another one? Why?)

M2:这是你们老师要求的, 必须得写, 关于你暑假生活的。

(It's your teacher who asked, you have to write it. It's about your summer holiday.)

C2: (saying to himself) My summer holiday, oh no. My holiday sucks.

For entertainment, the mother preferred to watch Korean TV series without Chinese subtitles, and the father chose to watch TV and read newspapers in Mandarin. The child participant enjoyed watching American movies, such as *Captain America*, *The Avengers*, and *Iron Man*. According to the field notes, he updated his blog in English sometimes, citing English songs or actor's lines. When playing basketball with friends, he spoke some simple English words like 'all right; OK; come on.'

4.3.2 Parental Language Ideologies

In the interviews, the parents expressed their attitudes about their first languages, Mandarin, English, and Japanese, especially their ideology about the languages they wanted their child to learn.

4.3.2.1 Ideologies about Mandarin

Both parents held the same view about Mandarin. For their family, it was not only the national language or school language, but also the language they used to communicate with different family members, because the relatives on each side spoke different languages and they could not understand each other, so Mandarin was the lingua

franca within this family. The parents made a decision to teach their son Mandarin first. Their attitudes towards Mandarin are manifest in the following interview extract:

F2: 我的观点是，中国人肯定要先学中国话。现在全国推广普通话，所以普通话肯定是要先说的。不跟是跟家里人交流，还是在外边，在学校，普通话是最基本的了。

(I think Chinese people have to learn Chinese first. Now Mandarin is widely promoted by the government, so people have to learn Mandarin first. It is the basic language for you to communicate with families or others outside the family or at school.)

The parent participants in this family had addressed the sociopolitical and cultural factors that influenced their ideology about Mandarin. They mentioned the government language policy whereby Mandarin was promoted as the national language, and the cultural value of speaking Mandarin as a Chinese, so they insisted that Mandarin should be the first language of their son.

4.3.2.2 Ideologies about English

The parental ideology about English was the same as those of the first family. The parents addressed the importance and benefits of learning English for their child's future education and employment, and the sources of their ideology were related to the broader socioeconomic and political (language policy in education) forces.

The parental ideas are presented in the following:

F2: “英语在全世界都很流行，学好了英语出国旅游，上学都很方便。即使是在中国，工作生活中也会有时候用上英语。就算以后工作生活用不到，咱们国家这么大力推广英语，你不会，就要被淘汰。”

(English is popular all over the world. To learn English well, travel or study in foreign countries is appropriate. And in China, English will be used in daily life or at work. Even English won't be used widely in our daily lives, our government takes great efforts to promote English, and you will be ignored by society if you cannot speak English.)

M2: “学好英语，在以后的学习工作生活中都是很有用的。现在英语在越来越普及，想要进好大学，找个好工作，英语好是必须的。”

(Having the ability to speak English well will be useful in the future work and life. English is popular and it's the basic requirement for people to go to college and get a good job.)

These statements revealed that parents placed high sociopolitical and economic value on English. They mentioned the government language policy, especially on education, and the economic advantage to their child of learning English.

The mother from this family spoke Korean and Japanese fluently. When asked why she did not transmit these two languages to her son, the only reason she gave was the language policy in education:

M2: 英语是必修课，以后上大学对英语都是有要求的。其实学个日语，韩语挺好的，是有优势的，但毕竟不是学校的学科，所以就还是专注于学英语吧。

(English is a compulsory subject at school, it is needed to be admitted into university. Actually I think speaking Japanese or Korean has a greater advantage, but neither of them is a school subject, so I think it's better for my son to focus on English first.)

It was clear that although the mother was capable of speaking two other foreign languages, she preferred English as the only foreign language for her son to learn, as it was the school subject and it would lead to better educational opportunity.

4.3.2.3 Ideologies about Dialects

The father's first language was Shandong dialect, and his parents spoke Shandong dialect. When the child was young, the grandparents (on the father's side) stayed in Beijing to take care of him. The child learned Shandong dialect from his grandparents. The father indicated that he did not bother with it at first, until his wife discussed this with him, and then they decided to stop their son from speaking Shandong dialect.

F2:一开始我没在意，因为我一回家也跟我爸妈说山东话，觉得孩子跟爷爷奶奶说家乡话挺亲切的。后来我老婆说儿子的普通话都带着山东味，必须得改。那之后，我们就不让孩子说山东话了，就开始纠正他的发音。

(I did not pay much attention to this situation, because I speak Shandong dialect with my parents at home and I thought the child's interaction with his grandparents in my mother tongue was an intimate bond. Then my wife told me our son's Mandarin was not standard, his pronunciation was influenced by the dialect. After that, we asked our son to stop speaking Shandong dialect and started to correct his pronunciation.)

The mother expressed her negative attitude about Shandong dialect during the interview, and she indicated that:

M2: 山东话的发音跟普通话差很远，孩子小的时候根本就分不清，总是混着一起说。我觉得山东话听着有点土。方言在老家才用的上，在北京学了也没用。(The pronunciation of Shandong dialect is different from Mandarin, and the child could not tell, he always mixed them together. I think Shandong dialect is old-fashioned. Dialect can only be used in the hometown, and would not be useful if you were to live in Beijing.)

Her own mother tongue is Korean, the language of ethnic Koreans in China. This ethnic group is called Chaoxianzu and it forms one of the 56 ethnicities officially recognized by the Chinese government. Their language is not different from the national language of Korea. The father indicated that Korean was a foreign language to him, and he did not think much about it. The mother was proud of her mother tongue, and she said:

M2: 我的家乡话基本上跟韩语差不多，所以我就比别人多会了一种语言。我去韩国，或者看韩剧都没问题。，对我来说都是一种优势。
(My mother tongue is almost the same as the national language of Korea, so I can speak one more language than other people. I have no problem communicating with Korean people in Korea, and watch Korean TV series. It is a benefit for me.)

Based on the data from interviews, the parental ideology about Shandong dialect were mainly caused by the sociolinguistic force. The parents realized that dialect would have a negative influence on their child's pronunciation, and the mother used the term 'old-fashioned' to express her ideology about dialect.

4.3.3 Language Management

The language management within this family could be divided into two parts: avoiding Shandong dialect, and improving English.

4.3.3.1 Avoiding Shandong dialect

In the interviews and informal conversations, the mother said that when her son was five or six years old, she actively interfered with his pronunciation of Mandarin,

pressured him to practice the standard pronunciation of Mandarin, nagged him for speaking Shandong dialect. Once the mother found her son's pronunciation was not correct, she would correct him and ask him to repeat it 10 times. The mother considered her strategy was effective, as her son's pronunciation was much better than before. Especially after he went to school, where everyone spoke Mandarin, the language environment had a positive influence on her son.

The interview with the father also provided strong evidence of the mother's narrative.

The father reported as followed:

F1: 孩子的妈妈对孩子语言这方面要求的比较严，经常给孩子纠正发音。
(My wife is very strict about our child's language, she usually corrects his pronunciation.)

In the observations, when the child was talking with his grandmother on the phone, he switched from Mandarin to Shandong dialect. Only his voice was recorded in the following extract (the Shandong dialect is shown in italics):

C2: 喂, 姥姥... 你那干什么? ... 嗯, 吃完了... 知道啦。
(Hello, grandmother... what are you doing? ... Yes, I have already had my dinner... I know.)

The pronunciation of Shandong dialect is different from Mandarin. In Mandarin, the grandmother is called "lao," but in Shandong, she is called "nang." When the child participant spoke the Shandong dialect, the mother laughed and talked to her husband in Mandarin: "Listen to your son, half Shandong dialect and half Mandarin."

When asked why she did not stop her son from speaking Shandong dialect, she laughed and responded:

M2: 他现在已经能分清了, 就只有跟姥姥姥爷打电话的时候偶尔会说,而且他现在只记得住个别词怎么说, 句子根本就不会。他普通话现在也没问题了, 所以就不担心了。

(He could distinguish Mandarin and Shandong dialect, he only uses Shandong dialect when he is calling his grandparents. There are only a few words in Shandong dialect he can remember, and he cannot complete a sentence in dialect. I don't worry about it because now he speaks Mandarin fluently, and his pronunciation is good.)

4.3.3.2 Improving English

The mother in this family was responsible for improving the child's English at home, because she was not busy with her work. There were several methods she used to improve her son's English ability.

Within families, it was observed that the mother supervised her son's homework, asked him to recite English texts, and corrected spelling mistakes in his composition.

Outside the family, the mother preferred an English cram school for her child, and she hired a home tutor last year because the child had difficulties with English grammar.

The mother reported that her grammar was also poor.

The reasons for choosing a cram school and a hiring home tutor were stated as follows:

M2: “英语补习班的学习气氛比较活跃，孩子可以边玩边学。平常在学校上课就很死板。”

(The atmosphere in the cram school is quite free and easy, children can learn a lot while they play there. The curriculum in regular school is very rigid.)

M2: “孩子有不懂得地方就可以直接问，家教还可以帮着检查作业，分析孩子的试卷。家教的英语要比我好多了，这样我也省事，不用自己去辅导孩子的英语。”

(Children can ask the home tutor questions directly, and the home tutor is in charge of checking homework, analyzing the exam papers. The tutor's English ability is much better than mine, and she also saves me having to coach my child in English.)

The mother indicated that, as well as the methods mentioned above, she encouraged her son to download some games onto an iPad with English instructions, such as *Candy Crush*, a game popular at that time. The child learnt new words from the games, like “ingredients, jelly.” The mother usually took her son to watch Hollywood and Disney movies. The strategies used to correct the child's pronunciation were narrated by the mother, because they were used when her son was younger. The methods employed to improve the child's English were proved by the observation data.

The parents of this family came from different places in China, and spoke different dialects, so Mandarin was the lingua franca used among family members. English was fully supported by the parents, because they saw that not learning English could bar their son from accessing more advanced educational and economic opportunities. They employed several methods to improve their child's English competence, but they barely spoke it with their son at home.

4.4 Family 3

The participants from the third family shared the same language background as the first family. The mother of this family spoke two languages: Mandarin (first language) and English; the father was capable of three languages: Shanxi dialect (first language), Mandarin and English. The child participant of this family spoke two languages: Mandarin and English. The data are analyzed in the following sections.

4.4.1 Actual Language Practice

The variety of modes used within the third family for daily interactions between family members is presented in the following table (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3 Patterns of language use: in which language do you speak to each other?

Variety of modes	Language(s)
Wife – Husband	Mandarin, English (occasionally)
Mother – Child	Mandarin, English (occasionally)
Father – Child	Mandarin
Mother – Grandparents (on both sides)	Mandarin
Father – Grandparents (on both sides)	Mandarin
Child – Grandparents (on both sides)	Mandarin
Child – siblings/peers	Mandarin, English (sometimes)

Through the interviews, the researcher found that the dominant language in this family was Mandarin, followed by English. English was used in this family more frequently than in family 1 and 2.

According to the data collected from interviews, the dominant language used for communication among different family members was Mandarin. Shanxi dialect as the father's first language was used less frequently than Mandarin and English in this family, and the father stated the reasons in the interviews as follows:

F3: 我老家是山西的，最先学的也是山西话。后来我跟着我父母搬到北京，基本上就都说普通话了，现在除了跟老家来的亲戚，或者工作的时候遇到老乡会说山西话...因为我是在外企工作，所以工作的时候能用到英语，经常出国什么的。在家的话，平常我们就说普通话，我女儿偶尔蹦几句英语吧。

(My hometown is Shanxi province, and I learned Shanxi dialect first. After I moved to Beijing with my parents, we spoke Mandarin predominantly. I speak dialect only when I talk to my relatives in my hometown or meet someone at work whose hometown is Shanxi... I'm working in a foreign company, I need to use English at times and my work takes me abroad a lot. If I stay at home, we prefer to speak Mandarin, and my daughter speaks English occasionally.)

The mother reported that she spoke Mandarin with all the family members, as well as her daughter; however, she usually encouraged her daughter to speak English at home.

The observation data were supported by parental responses during the interviews.

When the family participants had conversations during dinner, they spoke Mandarin to each other all the time.

According to the data recorded in the field notes, instead of speaking English at home, the participants played games with English instructions on the television by using Wii.

When the father and daughter were playing a tennis game on TV, they spoke English to each other. For example: ready, you go to the left, oh no, are you kidding. The mother asked her daughter to translate the English instructions for cosmetics into Chinese, and the daughter translated the instructions fluently. Later the mother explained during the informal conversation:

M3:其实那英文说明书我大概明白,就想锻炼一下她,让她多认识一些单词。你像化妆品用英语说,在学校根本就学不到啊,老师也不教这些。
(Actually I could understand the English instructions, but I want to help my daughter to expand her vocabulary. There are some words you cannot learn at school, such as the English names of cosmetics.)

In addition, the father had collected many English magazines which were related to business, as well as Chinese daily newspapers. The father explained these magazines were related to his work, and the newspapers helped to update him. When asked if he could understand all of them, the father laughed and responded:

M3:跟我工作有关的我还行,其他的还差点。
(I can understand the English news or articles which are related to my work, but the others I cannot fully understand.)

By observing the child participant's language use, the researcher found that the daughter from this family preferred to read English-Chinese novels, and she used to buy the *New Oriental* English magazine every month. She introduced her favorite singer to the researcher, Avril Lavigne, and said that she could sing all her songs, and she used to sing one of these songs in school performances. In other words, the

language practice within this family was dominated by Mandarin, followed by English. English was used during games with English instructions, or used for reading newspapers, magazines; it was not really used in daily conversations.

4.4.2 Parental language ideologies

Parents' ideologies could be divided into two sections: ideology about Mandarin, and English. Each of them is analyzed in the following section.

4.4.2.1 Ideologies about Mandarin

The parental attitudes towards Mandarin were the same as those of other parent participants. They repeated 'Mandarin is the national language of China; Chinese people have to speak Mandarin' during the interviews.

4.4.2.2 Ideologies about English

The father indicated that he would like to provide a positive language environment for his daughter to learn English. He thought English was more than a school subject, it could be widely used all around the world, and he would like his daughter to be familiar with foreign culture. In his own experience, English ability was used as a person's 'social marker.' A person who spoke English fluently was considered as 'high class.'

Differently from the father's English ideology, the mother's was mainly focused on her child's school performance. She mentioned that English was one of the most important subjects at school, and it affected education and careers in the future.

When asked attitude about Shanxi dialect, the parents took the same view that dialect was only a local language with many limitations. As their daughter was born in Beijing, dialect was unnecessary. The broader sociopolitical and economic factors were still the main sources of influence on parental ideology about English. The father from this family addressed the sociocultural value of learning English. He wanted his daughter to become familiar with foreign culture by learning English, and he had made great efforts to get her exposed to English as much as possible, as discussed in the following section.

4.4.3 Language Management

The parents made efforts to support their daughter to learn English. The mother reported their strategies during the interviews.

M3: 因为她爸爸经常出国，总是给她带各种礼物回来，基本上都是英文的，让她从小就接触，连家里的咖啡机，面包机也都是，上面的说明都是英文。我们也请过家教，也送她去补习班，夏令营什么的，做最大努力给她创造机会学英语吧，在中国这语言环境学习英语还是有难度的。

(Her father usually goes abroad, and brings her many kinds of gifts; in general all have English text. He hopes our daughter will be familiar with English as early as possible. Even the coffee machine and bread maker come with English instructions. We hired English home tutors, or sent her to the cram school, English camp. We tried our best to provide opportunities for her to study English, because the language environment in China is not suitable for learning English.)

In addition, to practice the daughter's English, her parents took her to Thailand, Australia, and Singapore. The father mentioned that these countries were a positive language environment for practicing English, but in China, there were no opportunities to use English.

According to the data collected from observations, it was evident that the parents made great efforts to build a positive family language environment for their daughter. For example, there were more than 10 English fairy tale books, which the father had bought abroad for his daughter. In conclusion, the parents of this family employed several strategies to help their daughter to learn and speak English. They hired a home tutor, chose a cram school to improve the child's English performance at school, they sent the daughter to the English camp, and took her abroad to encourage her to speak English with foreigners.

The dominant language of this family was still Mandarin, but the parents made great efforts to provide a positive family language environment for their daughter to learn English, to expose her to English as much as possible. English was treated as more than a school subject, as a national language that related to foreign culture.

4.5 Family 4

The mother of this family was born in Sichuan, and her mother tongue was Sichuan dialect; she also spoke Mandarin and English. The father and the child spoke Mandarin and English.

4.5.1 Actual Language Practice

The variety of modes used within the third family for daily interactions is presented in the following table (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4 Patterns of language use

Variety of modes	Language(s)
Wife – Husband	Mandarin
Mother – Child	Mandarin
Father – Child	Mandarin
Mother – Grandparents (on her side)	Sichuan dialect
Mother – Grandparents (on her husband’s side)	Mandarin
Father – Grandparents (on both sides)	Mandarin
Child – Grandparents (on both parental sides)	Mandarin
Child – siblings/peers	Mandarin, English (sometimes)

Table 4.4 shows that the dominant language in this family was Mandarin, and English was not actually used among family members. Both the parents indicated that they used English at work occasionally, for e-mails and reading proposals couched in English. When asked why they did not speak English with their child at home, they explained that:

M4: 我的英语口语不好，发音不准确。不经常说，以前学的东西都忘了。
(My oral English is bad, and my pronunciation is not standard. I do not speak English frequently, I have almost forgotten what I have learned before.)

F4: 我一般不说英语，我在家的时间很少，应该对孩子没什么影响。我们在家就说普通话，说英语不太习惯，我觉得中国家庭说英语的还是少吧。
(Normally I don't speak English at home, because I do not spend too much time at home, and I do not think it has too much impact on my child. We only speak Mandarin at home because we are not accustomed to speaking English. I think not many Chinese families speak English.)

The child participant of this family indicated that he did not speak English at home. He thought it would be weird, because his parents barely speak it. According to the observation data, the child spoke English with his friend sometimes, mainly for a joke.

For example:

The child participant was talking with a friend on the phone.

C4: Good morning 啊，胡老师。（...）我的英语 very good 啊。（...）OK, no problem.

（...）

[Good morning, teacher Hu. (...) My English is very good. (...) OK, no problem.]

The child participant explained that he had relaxed conversations with his friends, and they liked to make jokes or have fun with each other by using some simple English words and phrases.

The dominant language his parents used for entertainment was Mandarin, but they preferred to watch English movies than Chinese. The child showed a collection of his favorite English movies, such as *Toy Story 1-3*, *Madagascar 1-3*, *Kung Fu Panda*, *Transformers*, etc. The mother proved that her son preferred English movies to Chinese.

4.5.2 Parental Language Ideologies

Parents' ideology could be divided into three sections: ideology about Mandarin, English, and Sichuan dialect. Each of them is analyzed in the following section.

4.5.2.1 Ideologies about Mandarin

The ideas that the parents held were the same as those of parents from the first three families. They thought Mandarin should be the basic language used every day and as Chinese, it was necessary for them to speak Mandarin.

4.5.2.2 Ideologies about English

The parent participants had thought a lot about English, and the most important reason was related to policy in education. During the interviews, they said that:

M4: 英语在学校是必修课，英语学不好，那肯定是会影响成绩的。中国是应试教育，考试决定孩子的未来。现在最重要的是把课本的东西学好，一切为了考高分为主。

(English is a compulsory subject at school, so a poor command of the language will definitely impact results. The Chinese education system is exam-oriented, where test scores determine a child's future. Our main concern right now is for our child to prioritize passing examinations by mastering everything in the textbooks.)

F4: 孩子在学校每天都要学英语，这就跟语文数学一样，必须要学的。学不好，以后肯定要影响高考的。

(My child learns English at school daily just as it is compulsory for him to learn languages and math. If he does not master it, it will definitely impact his university entrance examinations.)

The parents indicated that they supported their child to learn English mainly because it was a compulsory course at school, and his school performance would influence the child's university entrance examinations.

4.5.2.3 Ideologies about Dialect

The mother's first language was Sichuan dialect, and the grandparents spoke dialect to the child, but the child answered in Mandarin. The mother's attitude toward speaking dialect was expressed during the interviews.

For example:

R: 孩子爷爷奶奶说方言，那孩子听得懂吗？会不会觉得孩子不会说家乡话，会跟家里的亲戚很疏远？

(Does your child understand the dialect spoken by his grandparents? Do you feel that the inability of your child to converse in dialects will distant him from your relatives?)

M4: 虽然孩子的爷爷奶奶都说方言，但孩子也都习惯了，她可以听得懂，但她回答还是用普通话回答。从小就养成了这种习惯，不觉得如果孩子不说方言，就跟爷爷奶奶或者老家的亲戚们感觉不亲。

(Although my child's grandparents speak dialects, my child is already accustomed to it and can understand them. It's just that it is his habit to answer them in Mandarin. Therefore, I do not see this as an issue that will cause his relationship with his grandparents or hometown relatives to be distant.)

A: 那您是不希望自己的孩子学四川话吗?

(Then you do not wish to teach your child Sichuan dialect?)

M4: 我就想让我的孩子做个地道的北京人, 在北京说方言一点用处都没有。

(I just hope that my child can be a true Beijinger, as speaking dialects is of no use at all in Beijing.)

This mother participant also believed that dialect was useless, and more importantly, her child's identity as a native Beijing person was the main factor which influenced her ideology. Like the parent participants discussed earlier, when talking about their ideology about dialect, they indicated that speaking dialect would influence their child's pronunciation, and their child would sound like an 'outsider.' They wanted their child to be a native Beijing person.

4.5.3 Language Management

According to the data collected from interviews and observations, the language management employed by the parents of this family was mainly reliant on external management. The mother stated that they did nothing special at home to improve the child's English proficiency, and she showed the researcher some English textbooks that she had bought for her child: they were in nearly mint condition, almost new. Because her son enjoyed watching cartoons, instead of downloading them from the Internet, she bought the original versions with both English and Chinese subtitles. During the informal conversation, the mother said:

M4: 前一两次看电影的时候，我给他选择中英文的，等他熟悉了，再给他看的时候就只有英文了。这样多多少少也有点帮助(学英语)。

(I choose subtitles in both Mandarin and English for the first and second time he watches the movie, and when he gets familiar with the movie, I show him the English subtitles only. Somehow, it helps him to learn English.)

The mother indicated that effective methods to improve her child's English proficiency were tuition classes and hiring a home tutor. The atmosphere in English tuition was more dynamic, so the child could play and learn at the same time. The teacher was a native English speaker, and the child could learn the correct pronunciation of English. Hiring a home tutor saved the parents a lot of trouble. The home tutor could help with the child's homework, and if the child had any questions, he could ask the home tutor directly.

The mother indicated her ideas during the informal conversation as follows:

M4: 顾个家教或者送孩子去补习班比我们自己教他要靠谱多了。而且成绩提高的也快，我们也省心。

(Hiring a home tutor or sending our child to cram school was much more reliable than teaching him by ourselves. His results improved quite quickly, and we were less worried because of this.)

The participants in this family used English less than the other families. The child spoke English occasionally with his friends, but he did not speak English at home.

The parent participants relied heavily on external language management (home tutor, and cram school) to improve their child's English proficiency. Their ideology about English was mainly influenced by education policy, and that English proficiency would influence the child's university entrance examination in the future.

4.6 Family 5

There were only two languages used within this family – Mandarin and English. Both of the parents spoke Mandarin as their first language and learned English formally at school. Their child was also capable of using these two languages. The actual language practices, parental language ideology, and management are analyzed in the following sections.

4.6.1 Actual Language Practices

Within this family Mandarin was the only language used. According to the parental data from interviews, they did not really speak English at home. The mother indicated that:

M5: 孩子小的时候我会教她一些简单的词，像水果，动物，数字之类的。孩子上学以后词汇量也扩大了，我就不怎么不怎么教她了,因为我怕影响她。
(When my child was young, I used to teach her some simple English words, like fruits, animals, numbers, and so on. After she went to school, her vocabulary expanded, and I stopped teaching her; I am afraid of being a bad influence.)

According to the father's response during the interview, speaking English at home was a burden for him, and he preferred to relax at home. He indicated that he could speak English with his child at home, but with regard to the child's school performance, he did not think his English was good enough, and he might be a bad influence. According to the data gained from observations, Mandarin was the only language used in this family. The child participant did not speak English with her

parents; instead she spoke English occasionally with her friends. For example, the child participant was chatting with her friends in Starbucks:

C5: “你看那个 broken girls 了没，就是那个破产姐妹。我觉得 Max 太搞笑了。”
(Have you seen the Broken Girls? The one called ‘Broken Girls’. I think Max is so funny.)

C5: 你有这的卡吗？ (Do you have the member card of this place?)

Friend: 啊？啥卡？ (What? What card?)

C1: 这的，*Starbucks* 的。 (Here, the card of Starbucks)

Friend: No.

C1: 那你用我的买吧，攒够积分回头换一杯 *Caramel Macchiato*.

(Then you can use my card, when I earn enough points I can have a Caramel Macchiato for free.)

The child participant preferred to speak some English phrases or name something in English instead of Mandarin. When asked the reasons, she explained:

C5: 我跟我朋友经常这么说，就习惯了…… 我觉得说英语挺好的。

(I always talk to my friends like this, I have got used to it... I think speaking English is quite good.)

For the entertainment within this family, the parent participants preferred Mandarin, and their daughter preferred English to Chinese. She watched the English TV series like *Friends* with English subtitles, which was recommended by her teacher, and the English movies like *Rio* and *Puss in Boots* with English subtitles. She sent messages in English to her friends, like “Thank you; where are you; it’s OK” and so on. She explained that sending English was cool and much simpler than typing Chinese.

4.6.2 Parental Language Ideologies

The parental language ideology about Mandarin and English were not different from those of the other families who participated in this study. There ideologies could be

divided into two sections: ideology about Mandarin, English, and Sichuan dialect.

Each of them is analyzed in the following section.

4.6.2.1 Ideologies about Mandarin

The parents thought that it was necessary for Chinese people to speak Mandarin, and

Mandarin was still the most commonly used and most widespread language in China.

So they insisted that their child should learn Mandarin first.

4.6.2.2 Ideologies about English

When talking about English, the mother participant said during the interview:

M5: 考虑到以后的发展，现在的重点是把英语学好，英语更重要一点。英语现在在中国也挺普遍的了，考大学，找工作对英语都有要求。出国的话，不管去哪个国家，英语都能通用。所以还是挺重要的一个语言。

(Taking into account her future development, I would say it should be a priority to master English. English is more important. English is also quite common in China nowadays as you need English for university admissions and for job hunting. If you go overseas, you would still be able to use English regardless of which country you go to. Thus, English is still a significantly important language.)

Like other parents in this study, these parents evidenced that education policy and socioeconomic factors played a notable role in influencing their ideology about English.

4.6.3 Language Management

The methods employed by the parents in this family were mainly internal management strategies. The mother participant involved herself in helping her

daughter's English learning. During the interview, the mother participant indicated that:

M5: 背课文可以帮助她记单词，也可以培养语感，我经常检查她背课文。因为在学校老师也要求背课文... 监督她写作业，有时间让她多做练习题。

(I always check on her when she is reciting texts because reciting texts will help her in remembering words and instill a better sense of the language. Even the teachers at school require the children to recite texts... I supervise her as she does her homework; ask her do more exercises when she has time.)

During the observation, it was evident that the mother participant reminded her daughter to recite English text and to do the English exercises before she went to work, and she always checked her daughter's homework after dinner. During the weekend, the mother allowed her daughter to watch American TV series and movies with English subtitles. In terms of external management, the child participant had had tuition once before. The mother explained as follows:

M5: 现在她的英语还行，就没参加补习。如果英语退步了，我就会考虑送她去补习班或者请个家教。

(We did not send her to the cram school this year because we feel that there is no necessity for it as her English proficiency is still satisfactory. If her English regresses, I will consider sending her to a cram school or hiring a home tutor.)

According to the parental responses during the interviews, and proved by the child's data, the parents took their daughter to Australia, Singapore, and Malaysia. They found that the language environment abroad was positive in terms of their daughter's practicing English. She spoke English much more frequently than in China, and she had learned much more than in school.

Mandarin was used as the only language among family members. The child participant preferred to use English frequently with her friends, even though it was limited to some simple words or phrases. Her parents fully supported their child's learning English, and the mother involved herself in helping her. The sociopolitical and economic forces were the dominant factors that influenced parental language ideology.

In this chapter, each family was analyzed separately in the above sections. According to the data analysis, Mandarin was the dominant language used among participating families, even though the parents thought highly about English and they fully supported their children to learn English, English was not actually used in their daily conversations. The participated parents preferred external forces to improve or to help their children to learn English, such as cram school, home tutor, instead of speaking English with their children by themselves.

Chapter 5 Discussion

Each family was analyzed separately in the above sections. The findings are discussed in this chapter with a view to answering the research questions and uncovering specific features of language usage and learning within the selected families in this study.

5.1 English was not really used in daily conversations

Data collected from interviews and observations showed the dominant language used among the participating families was Mandarin. English was used less frequently, but the researcher found that there were English novels and storybooks in these families and the parents preferred to watch English movies sometimes. According to child participants from the first and the third family, the parents texted them in English on the phone sometimes, such as “OK; thank you; see you; goodnight; love you, etc.” However, English was not actually used in daily conversations at home. Although the child from the first family spoke English to the parents occasionally, the parents moved on in Mandarin.

Child participant language use showed a visible shift from Mandarin to English among parents and children. The children from these five families preferred to use English more often than their parents did, especially when they were interacting with peers. Within families, the children barely spoke English with their parents, except some simple words like “wait, why, OK.” They preferred to watch English movies,

TV series, play games with English instructions, and read English books at home. When they were interacting with peers, English was used more frequently, and they usually switched to English from Mandarin, especially when they were talking about topics like American TV series, movies, and famous brands, or when they were having a relaxed conversation, telling jokes, making fun. Nevertheless, they preferred to use only simple English words and phrases, rarely having a complete conversation in English. The child participants also preferred to send messages to their friends using English words or phrases like “where r u; 5 mints”, when asked for the reasons, they explained that typing English was cool and easier than typing Chinese. The child participants also indicated that they did not speak English at home, because it felt weird and their parents did not speak it either. This finding agrees with studies carried out by Caldas (2006) and Luykx (2003), who identified the crucial role of peers and friendship networks in shaping shifting patterns of language use and preferences over time for children.

The parent participants in this study had learned English formally and they had English certificates. The data from interviews showed 7 out of 10 parents used English at work but none of them spoke English at home. The reasons are summarized as follows.

- (1) Parents’ English proficiency was not good. All the parent participants involved in this study, especially the mothers, indicated that they used to teach their children

some simple English words or phrases, but after the children went to formal school where they could learn English formally, the parents were not confident of their own English and were afraid of having bad influences on their language development. Therefore, they preferred not to speak English with their children rather than speak it wrongly.

(2) Speaking English was a burden for parents. The parents in this study intended to raise their children bilingually, and they had planned to speak English with children as soon as they were born, but in fact, they did not do so. Two father participants indicated that the family was a place for rest and relaxation, but speaking English was a burden, especially speaking English with children. Because English was a foreign language, they had to think carefully before speaking it, especially the grammar and the pronunciation. Instead of speaking English themselves, the parent participants encouraged their children to watch TV series and movies with English subtitles, to read English fairy tales, and to play games with English instructions.

(3) It is common to speak Chinese among Chinese families. Some parent participants (from family 4 and 5) were more traditional than others, and they thought speaking English at home was weird, and they assumed not many Chinese families spoke English at home. They insisted that Chinese families should speak Chinese. Although they wanted to raise bilingual children, they employed other

methods instead of speaking English themselves.

Pearson (2007) developed a model called the “input-proficiency-use cycle” that demonstrates use and input of the home language. He believed that “Without interacting with people using the language, no learning takes place. Without enough interaction, learning can take place, but the children do not reach enough of a comfort level in the language that they will willingly use it” (Pearson, 2008, p. 126). Other studies have proved that the role of parents in bilingual language development are most frequently linked to their role as language facilitators in the home language (Collier & Auerback, 2011; Cummins, 2001; De Houwer, 2007). When parents respond to their children in English other than the ethnic language at home, they give children a signal that it is acceptable to use English: “A parental code-switch to English almost always leads to the child using English” (Pan, 1995, p. 323). Given these previous studies, it is obvious that parents involved in this study were not the language models for their children and parents asked their children to learn English without interacting with them and as the language input was not enough, the children did not reach a comfortable level in speaking English at home.

As regards the actual language practices among these families, 5 out of 10 parent participant first languages were dialects, which emerged as communicative languages. The whole picture of patterns of language use among different family members showed that there was a shift from Chinese to English among all generations.

Although there were still parents who used dialects with grandparents, no parents spoke dialects with their children. All parents spoke Mandarin to each other and to their children. English was barely used by the parents, but children participant's language preference for communication with their peers tended more frequently to be English.

By comparing with related studies, it was similar with the language used in the Chinese community in Singapore (cf. Tsou & You, 2001; Xu, Chew, & Chen, 1998) and Malaysia (Kow, 2003; Kuang, 2002; Ting and Mahadhir, 2002; Ting, 2010). English was widely used in the school and workplace whereas Mandarin replaced the Chinese dialects used in families. Furthermore, Sandel and Chao (2006, p.126) found that the most common pattern among Taiwanese families was speaking a dialect (Tau-gi) to elders, mixed Mandarin and dialect (Tai-gi) to peers/ parents, and Mandarin (or mixed) to children. Various dialect groups gave up their dialects and shifted to Mandarin with Mandarin and English the preferred languages used by the younger generations.

5.2 Parental language ideology: sociopolitical, economic, cultural, and linguistic factors

The parental language ideology in this study is divided into three sections: ideology about English, Mandarin, and dialects. In this section, the parent participant ideology

about these languages and how the four external forces influence parental ideology are discussed as a whole in the following section.

5.2.1 Parental ideology about English: sociopolitical and economic forces

The data collected from interviews illustrated how parents perceive English and the different values attached to English by relating it to language development. With regard to the forces underlying the parental language ideology, data indicated the dominant ideology of sociopolitical factors, especially education policy and socioeconomic factors.

All the parent participants thought highly of English and fully supported their children learning English as it was an important school subject and good performance at school could lead to better educational opportunities in the future. During the interviews, parents repeated the government line that English was the first foreign language in China, everyone in China was learning English, and it was a compulsory course at school. The mother participant from the second family also spoke Korean and Japanese but did not transmit these two languages to her child and cited the only reason why as the education policy because English was a school subject and as such Korean and Japanese were unnecessary.. In other words, she had to give up the other two foreign languages and focus on English learning for her child. The father participants from the third and fifth family expressed significant attitudes during the interview on the sociopolitical force of English in China:

F3: 我们现在都生活在中国，孩子在中国的教育体制下学习，国家很重视英语，所以英语才成为一门必修课。

(As we are now living in China, our child has been under the Chinese education system, with the government emphasizing the importance of learning English by making it a compulsory subject in school.)

F5: 在当今社会，国家很重视英语。不管孩子愿不愿意学，它都是一个必修课。

(In today's society, the country gives emphasis to English. Regardless of the children's wish to learn the language, English is a compulsory subject.)

The other broader external factor is the socioeconomic value of English. The parental lexical choices, *better employment, opportunities, advantage, social marker, and promotion*, signify a strong recognition of the economic value of English.

These findings are different from those of Oladejo (2006), which found that many parents in Taiwan feared that learning a 'foreign' language would have a negative impact on the mother tongue competence, which might result in the youngsters ending up being incompetent in both languages. The parents in this study had the same ideas as parents in other studies (Curdt-Christiansen, 2014; Miao et al., Park, 2012; Hsiao, 1998) who believed that learning English was often strongly associated with economic power. Further, that it would lead to better education and employment for their children in the future.

5.2.2 Parental ideology about Mandarin: sociocultural and political forces

Mandarin was the dominant language used among the participant families. Parents held positive views about Mandarin as it was strongly associated with sociocultural and political factors. Almost all parents in this study acknowledged the cultural values and heritage roots of Mandarin during the interviews: comments like “Chinese people should speak Mandarin; it is a must/ it is necessary for Chinese people to speak

Chinese” were repeated by all the parents. Although the comments were simple, they clearly showed that parents recognized the symbolic value of language for identity and that they did not hesitate to teach their children Mandarin as their first language.

As well as the sociocultural force, parent participants also mentioned the government language policy in China. They chose Mandarin as the dominant language because it was the national language and the government promoted it widely.

5.2.3 Parental ideology about dialects: sociopolitical, linguistic forces, symbolic value for identity

Five parent participants spoke different dialects as their first language, they spoke dialects with grandparents, and none of them spoke dialects to their children. They expressed their attitudes about dialects with regard to their child’s language development during the interviews. The sources of their ideology were related to broader sociopolitical, linguistic forces, and the symbolic value of the language for identity of their children.

The national language policy of China allows for the daily use of local dialects in necessary and appropriate situations, combined with promoting the use of Mandarin by government officials and in public interactions. The political and educational power that Mandarin has gained overtly and covertly ‘coerces’ parents to adopt Mandarin. As shown in previous studies, if a language is not supported by the

government, and it is not used in teaching or in public places, a family under this pressure might not speak the particular language to their child to help them get a pure accent in the majority language (Nichole, 2013).

As well as being influenced by the national language policy, some parents indicated that dialects were not good for their children: they used the words “useless, unnecessary, not good, bad influence” to signify their negative attitudes about dialects.

This study took place in Beijing. As the capital city it is the most obvious place to promote Mandarin in China, so the Chinese people in Beijing all speak Mandarin. When parents expressed their attitudes about dialects, their child’s identity was emphasized repeatedly. Parents stressed that their children were born and raised in Beijing. They were native Beijing people and speaking dialects would influence pronunciation of standard Mandarin. The lexical choices, *outlander*, *non-native*, and *other places*, signify the parental pride in being a Beijing native a native of the capital city of China. The parents did not speak dialects to their children to make sure the children would not be influenced by the dialects and would be considered as an “outsider.” The father participant from the first family shared his own experience of Tangshan dialect as his first language, and he still had the dialect accent now, so his colleagues could determine where he came. Therefore, he did not allow his child to

speak dialect. His example provided the reason why parents did not want their children to speak dialect in Beijing.

The parent participants considered that language had a symbolic value for identity. Not being able to speak standard Mandarin in Beijing brought shame on a person and had consequences, as they might be positioned as “outsiders.” The symbolic relationship between language and identity is a deeply rooted conviction, i.e. it is a socially constructed “positional concept” marking the boundaries among groups (Reyes, 2010, pp. 399-400).

According to Li (2000) and Liu (2008), dialects are more than simply a tool for communication, they are a living fossil carrying a culture, which bear witness to Chinese history and truly represent regional culture. Some parents intend to maintain dialects in families because of sociocultural forces. They want to pass on its culture to the next generation and arouse interest in their hometown or country (Miao et al., 2012). By relating to the present study, the culture that dialects carried was ignored by the parents. This proved that the status of dialects in China had obviously fallen and the impact of promoting Mandarin on the use of dialects is so high and unpredictable that Mandarin is taking the place of dialects in many districts of China.

5.3 Language management: internal and external control

The data on language management gained from interviews and observations made it evident that instead of speaking English themselves, the parent participants involved in this study employed other methods to improve their English proficiency. The methods could be divided into external and internal control.

The external control involved sending children to cram schools and English camps, where the teachers were all native English speakers. Four out of five families hired home tutors for their children. For internal language management, parents always helped children with their English homework, bought many English exercise books, English novels, or used their authority to ask their children to listen to an English class online, to recite English text, and to watch English movies with English subtitles. Parents of two out of five families mentioned that they took their children abroad and provided more opportunities for their children to practice their oral English. Among the methods parents used to support English learning, hiring home tutors and sending children to cram school were considered as the most effective ways to improve English performance at school. These methods also had saved a lot of trouble. The parents indicated that the home tutors and professional English teachers were all good at English and they were more reliable than the parents themselves were. The methods the parent participants employed to improve English proficiency were the same as methods identified in existing studies (Schwartz, 2012; Shi, 2008; Caldas & Caron-Caldas, 2002).

In a conclusion, this chapter presented the data analysis in detail and the main findings of this study, which may provide answers to the research questions. First, Mandarin was the dominant language used among the participating families and dialects were lost in the third generation. English was not actually used in participant daily encounters. Nevertheless, there was still a visible shift from Chinese to English among generations, although the English used by child participants was limited. Second, parental ideology about English was greatly influenced by the broader sociopolitical and economic forces. Their ideology about Mandarin was influenced by sociopolitical and cultural forces. Ideology about dialects was influenced by sociopolitical and linguistic forces, especially the symbolic values of dialects for identity. With regard to language development of their children, the sociopolitical and economic values of the language had greater influences on parental language ideology. Third, the parent participants relied heavily on external language management (cram schools, home tutors); within families, the parents involved themselves in helping children with their homework, and used their authority to ask children to do more exercises, to recite English texts, and so on.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

This study focused on a group of Chinese parents from the upper-middle classes who had learned English formally and had the ability to provide a bilingual setting to develop the English proficiency of their children without financial pressure. These Chinese parents are taking the path of raising their child bilingually. This study investigated how these parents perceive languages and how their beliefs were transformed into active language practices and management at home with regard to their English language development of their children.

All parents involved in this study indicated unambiguous belief in the benefits of developing English language in terms of education policy and in terms of providing overt socioeconomic opportunities. However, the actual language practices were not consistent with parental ideology about English. English was not used in daily conversations among participants. Parents fully supported their children's learning English and encouraged them to speak English at home; however, the parents were not confident about their own English proficiency, so instead of speaking English to their children, they employed internal and external language management to improve the English ability of their children.

In conclusion, the path that the focused parents took to raise a bilingual child has just begun. During the process, parents will be faced with many challenges. The first challenge is parental English proficiency. Parents are not satisfied with their own

English and they used it as an excuse to avoid speaking English at home. The second challenge is the educational system in China with its history of a meritocracy-based imperial examination system, i.e. the exam results of a student determine whether they have better educational opportunities. English is an important compulsory course at school and parents made great efforts to improve the school performance of their children. The knowledge children learned at school is mainly for exams, so far, the English exam in China only includes writing and listening, and children seldom have a chance to practice their oral English. Therefore, parents have the challenge of providing more opportunities for their children to practice English. This finding agrees with Chen (2011), who claimed that English education in China focused on English tests instead of English usage ability. There are many English educational institutions in China to provide English learning services and the parents are taking advantage of these services to improve the English ability of their children instead of speaking or teaching English themselves because of the national language policy.

The participating parents in this study did not realize they were the language models for their children, they asked their children to learn English without interacting with them in English, and they tended to leave it all to formal school, cram school, and home tutors. That is the reason why the child participants only spoke simple words or phrases, i.e. they were not comfortable with the language and they would not willingly use it, which could lead to less successful bilingual development.

This study's limitations and findings show that the parents who want to raise their children bilingually were less successful. However, this is a new phenomenon in China and this study is just a beginning. There will be more parents intending to raise their children bilingually in China and this situation will become increasingly common in the immediate future. This study presents the current language situation using a focus group of Chinese families and also provides useful information for parents, i.e. if they want to successfully raise bilingual children, they need to realize that English is not just a school subject but a language and they must speak English with their children at home as well as to provide more opportunities for their children to speak English. The more they speak English at home, the more comfortable the children feel when they speak English. Moreover, it would lead to more successful bilingual development. For future studies, researchers could focus on Chinese parents whose children are newborn or of pre-school age, or families in other cities like Shanghai or Guangzhou, to investigate if English is actually used in their daily conversations and compare those findings with those of the present study.

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