The influence of parental language policy on bilingual child language preference at home

Case studies of two Iranian families in Sweden

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“Immigrant children should be given bilingual education not only to develop command of two languages but moreover to gain roots of identity, security and self-confidence. It is also important for the intellectual and emotional development of a child to be allowed to develop its first language. Furthermore, bilingual education offers possibilities to express cultural identity and to take part in cultural activities” (Jakobsson, 1981)

Abstract

Scholars in the field are of the opinion that early simultaneous bilingual and bicultural exposure not only does not harm the bilinguals, but also strengthens their social and cultural foundations and keeps them from getting vulnerable to external environment (Deuchar and Quay 1999, 2000; Genesee 1989; Genesee, Nicoladis, and Paradis 1995; Holowka, Brousseau-Lapré, and Petitto 2002; Lanza 1992; Meisel 1989; Petitto et al. 2001). Also it has been demonstrated that bilingual children have differentiated systems to provide them with the ability to distinguish between their two input languages from the beginning of language acquisition (Petitto & Holowka, 2002). However, the driver of the children’s language preference patterns at home needs to be further explored. The present study is indeed an attempt to answer the question of why it is that some children regularly exposed to their first language from a very young age actually continue to actively use it, and other children involved in similar parental policy about bilingualism do not? The study aims to examine the impacts of parental language strategies during the childhood on children language preference at home after they achieve the key competences in each of the two languages. The foci are parental attitudes towards the patterns of language choice and their influence on child language preference. Data were collected from two Iranian immigrant families; one has been experiencing additive bilingualism, while the other has been involved in the process of subtractive phenomenon. Some implications for parent-child closeness and the risk of language contamination are touched on briefly.

Keywords: Child language preference, parents’ attitudes, additive & subtractive phenomena
1. Introduction

A firm agreement seems to be established among the researchers on “differentiated language system hypothesis” (Deuchar and Quay 1999, 2000; Genesee 1989; Genesee, Nicoladis, and Paradis 1995; Holowka, Brosseau-Lapré, and Petitto 2002; Lanza 1992; Meisel 1989; Petitto et al. 2001) whereby, infants are able to differentiate their two input languages from early on. But despite this notion and the assumption that bilinguals have greater “cognitive flexibility”, “creativity”, “divergent thought”, or “problem solving quality” than monolinguals (Lambert, 1981), “the bilingual paradox” (Petitto et al. 2001) has been still a controversial issue which put the parents at the center of making decision about their children’s bilingualism learning systems and pose a dilemma for parents. What steps should parents take to meet their demands? This paradoxical view can mislead adults to hold back one of the bilingual child’s languages in early life in order to prevent the negative consequences of language mixing, confusion, and language contamination. This group indeed prefers to adopt sequential bilingualism as their child language acquisition system in which the child is exposed to one language before the second language is introduced. In a different manner, in spite of this prevailing idea about childhood bilingualism, by considering the issues of maintenance of ethnic identity and family integration on the one hand, children’s social adaptation, conformity, community acceptance, and academic development on the other hand, some parents apply simultaneous acquisition early in the child’s language learning process.

The community language, the parents’ first language, and how the parents address the child are factors which directly impact on early childhood bilingualism (Lanza, 1997: 13), which associate three influential aspects of bilingual acquisition in childhood: social environment, family environment, and parent-child interaction. Lanza discusses a broad spectrum introduced by Vihman and McLaughlin (1982) which classifies three basic types of language use through which home and community as child’s stimulating environments may be characterized: (1) one person using one language; (2) mixed use by one person; and (3) an environment-bound language, with one language at home and another in the community. Language use patterns in the child’s daily life are crucial to be taken into account before investigating whether the child has been exposed to only one language or to both (ibid).
2. Aim of the study

The purpose of this survey is to describe the mainstream parents’ strategies in language learning process of bilingual children in order to get a greater insight into parents’ attitudes towards bilingualism and their influence on child language preference at home. It aims to deal with the preferences, expectations, and goals that parents have for their children in a bilingual environment and also the common concerns related to bilingual childrearing. Data were collected from two Iranian families through an empirical study using questionnaire and interviews with both parents and children. This study explores how children’s language development is influenced by parents’ policies concerning their language acquisition in these families. It will also briefly characterize the influence of parent-child emotional closeness and dependency on the child’s propensity to use their first language at home, discussing how children’s language use patterns change over time and in accordance with different affecting factors. This study aims at examining the following questions:

- How do parents’ beliefs and attitudes towards bilingualism at the very early childhood impact on child’s bilingualism development?
- What are parents’ expectations and their concerns related to bilingual child rearing?
- Which factors influence child’s language preference at home?

3. Theoretical background

As a scientifically productive field within language sciences, the child’s bilingual development has been traced in connection with contributing factors to bilingual acquisition in childhood like language choice, language ideology, and the interaction between father and mother as well as individual factors, such as the exposure rate to each language, the parents’ consistency in language use, and the individual personality and acquisition policy of the child (Lanza, 1997). In this regard, the present study by referring to De Houwer (1998), deals with parents’ roles in the children’s bilingual development and the importance of parental attitudes towards the language choice and children’s linguistic behavior at home.

It is assuredly impossible to discuss bilingualism and language acquisition without acknowledging Wallace E. Lambert who considered sequential and simultaneous systems as two
effective forms of bilingualism in bilinguals’ early childhood, and who introduced subtractive phenomena as a destructive form of bilingualism in the process of second language acquisition.

4. The organization of the study

Besides conducting a more detailed survey of the field and previous studies on bilingualism and the literature on bilingual children I organized my research around four centers of interest: familial approach to bilingualism, child language preference, additive versus subtractive bilingualism, and parental common concerns related to child bilingualism.

In the first part of my project, taking a lead from De Houwer, Lambert, and Lanza, I focus on parental attitudes towards child’s language acquisition. The next stage of my research is allocated for bilingual children’s “sociolinguistic environment” (e.g. Meisel, 1989) by examining the influencing factors on their preferred language (Petitto, Katerelos, Levi, Gauna, Tetrault, & Ferraro, 2001). To look at “subtractive bilingualism” introduced by Lambert (1974) is the third part of my research. In this part subtractive phenomenon and also the transformation of subtractive to additive bilingualism are studied by pointing out Blackledge (2001). By referring to the scholars like Wong Fillmore, Petitto, and Holowka the final stage deals with parental concerns about child bilingualism such as first language loss, language mixing and language contamination.

5. Familial approach to bilingualism

A tendency to preserve linguistic and cultural ties with the parents’ heritage language, to make children adjust more effectively to the educational and occupational demands of the majority society, and to support multilingualism and multiculturalism can be seen as reasons that strengthen parents’ preference toward bilingualism (King & Fogle, 2008). Sequential and simultaneous systems are two forms of bilingualism that are effective in enabling child bilingualism and generally are controlled by events and exigencies within families or communities (Lambert, 1981: 14).

Sequential or successive acquisition is a process in which the establishment of one language occurs before a second is introduced (Goodz, Naomi S., 1994: 61). Distinctively, in simultaneous bilingual acquisition, children are exposed to two linguistic systems from a very early age (Tabors P.O. & Snow, C.E., 1994: 105). Most researchers in childhood bilingualism have adopted the age convention set up by McLaughlin (1978) that the acquisition of two
languages during the child’s first three years is termed *Simultaneous Bilingualism*, whereas exposure experience in second language only after the age of three is referred to as *Sequential Bilingualism* (Lanza, 1997: 12).

### 5.1. Parental attitudes towards child language choice

Bilingual parents’ linguistic behavior directly emerges from parental beliefs and attitudes towards child language acquisition method, parents’ roles in the development process, and their attitudes to particular types of language choice (De Houwer, 1998: 81). Parents’ attitudes towards the aspects of language choice can be positive, neutral or negative, which determine their interactional policies in a conversation with their children and the use of single-language utterances or mixed utterances and inter-sentential code-switching (ibid: 82). Inter-sentential code-switching happens when a speaker switches code at sentence-utterance boundaries, within a turn (Poplack, 1980). De Houwer (1998) pointed out the possible role of the environment’s attitudes in the language acquisition process, but emphasized that development of early active bilingualism strongly depends on the parents’ positive attitude to both languages involved and their significant support for child bilingualism. Moreover, the importance of parental attitudes towards the patterns of language choice is indicated in language use outside the parent-child domain, and relies on the family position in a majority community (i.e. socially isolated or integrated) (ibid: 88).

### 6. Child language preference

Language preference refers to the children’s propensity to use one of their languages more than the other (i.e. differential bilingual language use) which corresponds to the language of child’s primary sociolinguistic group and could change over time and is different from child to child (Petitto, Katerelos, Levi, Gauna, Tetrault, & Ferraro, 2001: 483). In essence, the level of intimacy and interaction rate between a child and a person or group in his/ her everyday life determines the child’s sociolinguistic environment (e.g. Meisel, 1989). A child’s preferred language can be influenced by three elements; home environment (i.e. the language of parents at home), peer relationship (i.e. the language of siblings and friends), and academic environment (i.e. the language of teacher) (Petitto, Katerelos, Levi, Gauna, Tetrault, & Ferraro, 2001: 483). The base of parent-child interaction is virtually formed from the parents’ assessment of the child’s linguistic ability during the process of language development (Mishina, 1999: 337). For instance, in a study of six French-English children participating in an experimental group, it was
demonstrated that the children’s language choice could change depending upon the specific language of interlocutors (Petitto, Katerelos, Levi, Gauna, Tetrault, & Ferraro, 2001: 479).

7. Additive versus subtractive bilingualism

“Subtractive” bilingualism is a term in a sharp contrast with “additive” form introduced by Lambert (1974) to deal with the problem of loss of first language due to acquisition of second language. Blackledge (2001) believes that the erosion of first language while learning academically the second language may decrease children’s ability to understand the complex concepts and knowledge of their second language. Therefore, he considers a positive association between the maintenance of first language and the growth of second language. Also, in this regard, Cummins by referring to 150 empirical studies on the bilingualism education concluded that additive bilingualism could positively impact on bilingual children’s linguistic, cognitive, and academic development (2000:37).

Lambert (1981) emphasized that bilinguals possess valuable cognitive and linguistic potential, thus to release that potential, their subtractive experiences should be transformed into additive ones. It should be considered more than an audio-lingual language. Minority children should have the chance to learn subject matters via their first language while learning a second language and be provided with strong educational experience in their own heritage traditions and language before they can cope in the majority community.

Lambert considered “national educational policies and social pressures” the main factors and external ones that make ethno-linguistic minorities feel insecure in society. Therefore, to achieve social acceptance, these minority groups try to acquire a more necessary and prestigious national language at the expense of their heritage language (1981: 12). On the other hand, Blackledge (2001) argues a different public opinion in western developed countries; where the minority populations are considered ‘functionally illiterate’ (Cummins, 2000), the most responsibility for minority-group failure in learning languages is laid on children’s own deficiencies and parental inadequacy in minority families not the majority society and educational system.
7.1. Language maintenance and parental role

The past and present immigrant generations in the United States have been the minority groups, which have widely experienced the phenomenon of subtractive bilingualism (Wong Fillmore, 1991). In this regard, Wong Fillmore (2000) surveyed the issue of subtractive process in a Chinese family, who had immigrated to the United States. In this study the author shows how language shift and first language loss happens to the younger members of the family under the influence of the process of acquisition of second language in school. Consequently, the children experienced a subtractive process, with English as second language displacing and replacing Chinese, that is their first language. Since Chinese was the only spoken language their parents and grandmother knew, this phenomenon led to the disintegration of family relationship. Through this study Wong Fillmore (2000) concluded that the parents are the pivot of minority language maintenance and play a vital role in making their children motivated to keep their heritage language and culture alive. From her perspective, a base on which this goal rests must be prepared by the family at home while the children are growing up. A sense of belonging to their own ethnic identity; knowledge of their origin and culture; an understanding of important aspects of their life; the ability to cope with adversity; and knowing their responsibility to self, family, and community, are fundamental elements in order to help the process of first language maintenance succeed (ibid).

8. Parental concerns related to child bilingualism

The main reasons which lead to the fact that the parents support their children's bilingualism are the advantages they think their children can have of two languages such as better employment opportunities, positive self-identity, and efficient communication within both communities (Wong Fillmore, 1991: 226). But bilingualism has always been a challenging issue for many parents. Parents’ ideas about first language loss, language mixing, and language contamination were examined in this study, and found to be the main parental concerns in raising bilingual children.

8.1. First language loss

The home language is nothing; it has no value at all, is what many parents are afraid to hear from their children. Language loss is the result of both internal and external forces operating on immigrant children. On the one hand, their tendency towards social inclusion, conformity, and
social interaction as internal factors; on the other hand, the socio-political forces against outsiders, differences, and diversity as external ones accelerate the process of language loss (Wong Fillmore, 2000). Although the processes of language loss and social adaptation may differ in detail across individuals, after attending schools many immigrant children are at risk of losing their primary language and especially if the parents do not pay attention to the gradual language shift that is happening in their children's speech (ibid).

Concerning this, Wong Fillmore referred to Cummins (1996) and emphasized the role of children’s psychological and emotional prosperity in the process whereby they assimilate into society, rather than their educational development (ibid: 5). The gradual erosion of trust and understanding among family members, the loss of parental control, the loss of the spiritual and emotional bonds between parents and children, the silence at home because of fewer words passing between parents and children, and children becoming alienated from parents are some tangible consequences that are experienced by a family in the process of language loss (ibid). The majority of parents are unaware of the negative outcomes language loss may cause, thus they take no measures to prevent it. The parents witness changes in their children's language behavior but consider it as a social adaptation that is making them more independent. When they find out that it is too late, the family loses its intimacy and unity (ibid).

Wong Fillmore argues that “the loss of a primary language is rarely total”, but to be further developed, she strongly emphasizes actively using the primary language in everyday interactions of the family. Hanging on to their first language during the process of second language acquisition is challenging for children as much as issues such as dealing with the community and learning second language (ibid: 5). Therefore, parents should give serious attention to the matter of their children’s behavioral changes as they strive to assimilate into the community. In such situations, the children may face emotional problems in the process of adjustment, and the parents should be supportive of their children to avoid their becoming detached from family involvement (ibid: 8).

8.2. Language mixing

Contrary to “differentiated language system hypothesis”, some of the researchers are of the opinion that early bilingualism involves the internal fusion of two linguistic systems which results in language mixing, but most researchers do not consider language mixing in the young
bilingual children an index of language confusion, rather they explain that the bilingual children reproduce their two input languages in a distinctive way from an early age (Petitto & Holowka, 2002: 5). In addition, they believe that bilingual children’s rate of language mixing is directly dependent upon sociolinguistic and environmental factors such as their sensitivity to the specific language of their interlocutor, their parents’ rate of language mixing and also the child’s emerging language preference (Petitto, Katerelos, Levi, Gauna, Tetrault, & Ferraro, 2001).

8.3. Language contamination

Petitto and Holowka (2002) conducted research to evaluate attributions of delay and confusion of languages in young bilinguals. According to their observations, the main concerns of many parents raising bilingual children about early simultaneous bilingual exposure were language confusion and its result, language delay, which is associated with “Language Contamination” (Crawford 1999). Thus sequential bilingualism was preferable for them to simultaneous one in order to avoid making the children feel incompetent in both languages (Petitto & Holowka, 2002: 5).

Is indeed the claim that simultaneous bilingual language exposure causes children to be language delayed and confused, rooted in an undue concern? This is the question that Petitto and Holowka (2002) dealt with and reached a conclusion in parallel with the “differentiated language system hypothesis”, according to which very early simultaneous bilingualism owing to achievement of the classic linguistic milestones and the semantic and conceptual reinforcement of all natural languages, does not result in language delay and language confusion respectively.

Through this survey, they rejected the notion of “language contamination”, and the appearance of language delay and confusion in the simultaneous bilingualism domain. More importantly, they also demonstrated that bilingual infants have differentiated systems to provide them with the ability to distinguish between the two input languages from the beginning of language acquisition. Petitto and Holowka also support the statement that “the neural pathways used in the bilingual brains have areas similar to those areas seen in monolinguals” (e.g., Poutratian et al. 2000), and accordingly the notion of Klein et al. (1995), whereby bilinguals are able to achieve “equal language-processing capacities” in both of their languages- but only if they receive the earliest possible bilingual and bicultural language exposure. Therefore, they suggest that serious attempts should be made to scrutinize the contradictory bilingual views in
order to investigate them; additionally, they emphasize the need for new policies in educational areas to help the youngsters successfully match themselves with a multilingual and multicultural environment (Deuchar and Quay 1999, 2000; Genesee 1989; Genesee, Nicoladis, and Paradis 1995; Holowka, Brosseau-Lapré, and Petitto 2002; Lanza 1992; Meisel 1989; Petitto et al. 2001).

In parallel with Petitto and Holowka research, Lambert (1981)’s study on the impact of bilingualism on thought and language is worth taking into account here. In the survey he presented evidence opposing the common-sense notion that “becoming bilingual-having two linguistic systems within one’s brain- naturally divides a person’s cognitive resources and reduces his/her efficiency of thought or language”. Lambert hypothesized that “bilingualism provides a person with a comparative, three-dimensional insight into language, a type of stereolinguistic optic on communication that the monolingual rarely experiences. Bilingualism also helps protect a person against reification”. From Lambert’s perspective, in bilingualism two languages can thrive as media of thought and expression upon the condition that they receive enough social value and respect. In this case, a bilingual can achieve language competence and mastery along with cognitive and social development (ibid: 10). He strongly believed that bilinguals enjoy a more expanded “structure of intelligence”, more “flexibility in thought”, and a wider spectrum of “language competence”.

9. Data and Methodology
The present study investigates the influence of parental attitudes towards bilingualism on children’s language choice at home in two Iranian families based on a qualitative method including semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire. The interviews are conducted in both Persian and Swedish, according to the participants’ choice of language, and the focused phenomena are transcribed and translated into English. It is worth mentioning that in this study Persian is considered as the families’ first language and Swedish their second language. The interviews were conducted wherever the participants felt comfortable. As the interviewer I collected my data in the forms of audio-recording, semi-structured interviews, and written notes. During the interviews three questions were asked to obtain information about parents’ adopted policies on raising bilingual children; concerning a) parents’ attitudes toward bilingual acquisition at the very early childhood and child bilingualism development, b) the degree of children’s dependency on parents c) parents’ expectations and their common concerns related to
bilingual child rearing. Also some data were collected through an informal interview with the children. I got informed consent from the parents for ethical reasons and pseudonyms have been used to protect the identities of the participants.

9.1. Participants

Two immigrant Iranian families with Persian/Swedish bilingual children and their parents participated in the study in 2013. In both families, the parents are native speakers of Persian with positive attitudes towards the children’s early bilingualism and had been practicing the simultaneous method of language acquisition before the children entered kindergarten. Swedish is the societal language and Persian the minority language of the children. For the children, Persian is restricted to the family, Persian-speaking relatives and a limited number of Iranian friends. The children included in the study are Abtin, Sara, and Aida who were all born in Sweden. Abtin is 11 and the only child in his family. Sara is 14 and had no sibling until the age of 7 when her younger sister Aida was born.

9.1.1. Family #1

Like many Iranian immigrants that have come to Sweden over the past three decades, the parents in the first family are both highly educated and employed as teachers. They have two children - the Swedish born Iranian members of the family, both girls, Sara (at the time of data collection 14), and Aida (7 years old). In this family, the main focus is on the older daughter; Sara a first-born child experiencing subtractive bilingualism. Her Persian proficiency has been gradually diminishing after entering school. She has lost her ability to use Persian in everyday family interaction. Aida, her younger sister was not immune to Sara’s home language shift from Persian to Swedish, in a way that she has never admitted Persian as her home language while speaking with the other members of her family and speaks only Swedish.

9.1.2. Family #2

Abtin is the only child of the second family, an additive bilingual with perfect competence and mastery in two languages of Persian and Swedish. Abtin is approaching his 11th birthday. His parents are both employed and strongly supported Abtin’s development of bilingualism. He has a strong inclination to his parents’ first language and his preferred language at home is Persian.
9.2. Instrument

The questionnaire on bio-data contained 40 questions using the Alberta Language and Development Questionnaire (ALDeQ) (ALDeQ: Paradis et al., 2010). The information requested on the form concerned the following: (a) personal background (e.g. the highest educational attainment of Parents and their occupations), (b) immigration status (e.g. the family’s place of residence and family members citizenship), and (c) proficiency levels in Swedish and Persian (e.g. the language(s) spoken at home by the mother, father, and each child living in the home). The role of sibling status was also briefly discussed. After the participants completed the questionnaire at the beginning of the study, they were asked to participate in an interview. The interviews were divided into two parts. The first section comprised of 2 basic questions about the parents’ attitudes toward bilingual acquisition for their children and parental expectations and concerns about bilingualism acquisition. This part also contained one item to determine the level of parental satisfaction with their children’s proficiency level in both Persian and Swedish languages. The second section as a semi-structured interview included the items about the ways in which the parents assist their child in meeting the laudable family goals. Finally, the children were asked about their language use and preferences, whether they would usually use Persian or Swedish in specific interaction and whether they would prefer to use Persian or Swedish at home. They were also asked about how emotionally dependent they are on their parents; moreover, about their feelings when they speak Swedish in a Persian environment (e.g. in Iran while playing with Persian-speaking children) and the reasons for these feelings.

10. The case of subtractive bilingualism (Family 1)

According to data obtained from family 1, the parents provided the same strategy for the caretaking of Sara and Aida, that is, the mother was the girls’ caregiver until the age of 13 months, at which time Sara and Aida entered kindergarten. They did not have regular contact with their Persian-speaking grandparents, and other family members and friends during infancy and early childhood. They were essentially exposed to both Persian and Swedish at home with more focus on the community language. Nevertheless, during her childhood, Sara-the older sister- spoke in Persian with her parents and kept it as her home language until she entered preschool when as her mother said she gradually lost her tendency and ability in Persian speaking. Although the parents were reportedly aware of Sara’s language change, they not only
took no measure to prevent her language shift from Persian to Swedish, but actually supported it. They considered Sara’s language shift to be a social adaptation and a turning point in her life.

10.1. Children’s language preference

As it was mentioned above, the parents in family 1 maintained that they approximately followed the same policy towards Sara’s and Aida’s early bilingualism, yet the children’s output was rather different. Sara chose Persian as her home language during her childhood but after entering at the school environment, changed her language behavior. She got quite involved in language mixing which made the parents worry about her language acquisition process. Eventually, she adopted Swedish as her preferred language both at home and society. But as the parents revealed in the interview Aida- younger sister-’s language preference has been Swedish from the start and she has always tended to use Swedish in everyday interaction, while later in this study by giving an example, it was indicated that she has been able to properly express herself and communicate in Persian.

In practice, “a child’s socio-linguistic group is the language of the person or group with which the child had both the strongest bond and the most constant contact” (Petitto, Katerelos, Levi, Gauna, Tetrault, & Ferraro, 2001). Therefore, it was explored that since the language of Sara’s primary socio-linguistic group was her parents’ language- Persian; she adopted it as her preferred language during her childhood when she was mostly at home and in contact with her mother. But her language preference changed over time under the influence of the school environment where she was spending most of her time away from home. As Sara and her parents reported, to establish herself socially with her classmates, Sara changed her language use pattern, avoided retaining her primary language. Consequently, she shifted her language preference to Swedish and rarely said anything in Persian.

Aida, the younger sister had quite a different experience. She was born when Sara was at the age of 7, when Swedish was firmly established as Sara’s preferred language. Actually, Aida’s sociolinguistic group was her nuclear family composed of father, mother, and Sara. According to the parents in family 1, the process of Sara’s language shift was completed at that time and she only relied on Swedish language in her everyday family interaction. Although Aida had some exposures to Persian language through her parents; she tended to admit Swedish-the familial-shared language- in which they all were skilled and able to well communicate. Consequently,
Sara, as Aida’s sibling- a member of her socio-linguistic group- can be considered an effective element in Aida’s language choice.

During the interview Sara and Aida were asked separately about the reason why they prefer to use Swedish in everyday interaction with their parents in different situations, for instance, in making a request or asking for something or some action that their parents are unwilling to agree with. They replied that they see themselves as dominant in this language and know many more Swedish words and terms than Persian, which allows them to more easily persuade their parents.

10.2. Parental attitudes towards bilingualism

Based on the information received from family 1 during the interview, even though Sara and Aida had some exposure to Persian and also their parents’ spoken language with them was Persian in their early childhood, the parents had never provided a rich Persian environment at home in comparison with Swedish. Television has been just limited to the Swedish channels and programs, regardless of the fact that as a major source of information and entertainment, TV could positively influence the children’s sense of ethnic identity. The family had mostly contact with its Swedish-speaking friends; moreover, the children were only exposed to Swedish books and stories. As Iranian families come from a culture with a rich oral tradition, the parents have had the potential to share many Persian stories and histories with Sara and Aida.

Generally speaking, as family 1 reported, the parents’ most frequent concerns were risks of children experiencing developmental delays, lesser academic functioning, and school problems. In fact, rather than maintaining the minority language; the children have been encouraged by the parents to learn the language of the society in order to take full advantage of the educational facilities provided by the society. The parents tried to restrain their children from identifying themselves with more than one culture. As they said in the interviews, they chose Swedish identity rather than Persian one, because they believed that identifying with Swedish culture helps the children feel they belong to the majority community and gives them a sense of security in the society in which they are going to establish their personal goals, such as educational development, occupational achievement, and social inclusion.

Parental beliefs and attitudes are the basis of parents’ language behavior towards children, which can be considered an effective factor in children’s patterns of language use (De
Houwer, 1998: 76). The parents reported they had never had a bias toward their first language. Therefore, the lack of the sense of belonging to their ethnic culture and language can be seen in family 1 as a main reason that led both children-Sara and Aida- not to be successful in the process of their first language maintenance. During the interview the mother revealed that Sara gradually lost her ability to use the first language easily in the early years of school and Aida was not immune to her sister’s language shift and hence has never adopted Persian as her preferred language at home even during her early childhood. Although, the effect of Sara’s language shift on Aida’s language choice is not deniable, the parents believe that it has had no significantly negative impact on the family relation, because they learned Swedish properly. Their preferred language at home was most the time Swedish and family members were completely skilled in and could understand each other. Indeed, the parents insisted that Swedish has met their expectations of children’s responsibility to both family and community.

10.3. Experiences in the homeland

The fact that children who are exposed to two languages from an early age can understand two languages perfectly, although they limit themselves only to one in everyday interaction (De Houwer, 1998), was also examined through the experience that family 1 had in 2011 in a travel to their homeland -Iran- where they surprisingly witnessed that after one week their younger daughter-Aida- began to communicate well in Persian while playing with her Iranian peers, whereas before she had never shown any desire to use Persian at home while speaking with her parents. Rather as the parents reported during the interview, Aida always showed an inability at home to understand Persian words by asking their Swedish equivalents from them. In other words, it was incredible for the parents that Aida revealed such a great competence in Persian,because unlike Sara, she has never attended Persian- learning classes and never had a powerful background in her first language.

Concerning the mentioned experience, I asked Aida about her feelings about being with her cousins, since Persian was the only spoken language they knew.

Excerpt 1

- Aida (smiling)        Jag gillade det!
  (I liked it!)
In the interview, Aida refused to explain about why she started speaking Persian in Iran after one week, while she liked her sense of being different from others. Instead she tried to hide behind her mother, (what she did during the interview whenever I asked in Persian and my words seemed too difficult and long for her to understand).

The following excerpt shows that although Aida’s home language preference has not changed in interaction with her parents and Sara after they returned to Sweden, her experience in Iran seemingly made her interested and motivated in her first language.

**Excerpt 2**

- **Interviewer**  
  *Varför?*  
  *(Why?)*

- **Aida**  
  *Jag var inte som alla andra.*  
  *(I wasn’t like all others’.)*

She paused for a while and then she began whispering the answer in Swedish to her mother, in a way that I was just hearing some soft low sounds using the breath.

- **Mother**  
  *Aida mige ke dust dare farsish khub she ta kalamehaye*  
  *bishtari balad bashe ta harvaght mire Iran estefade kone!*  
  *(Aide said she likes to improve her Persian, learn and know more difficult words to use them whenever she goes to Iran.)*

- **Interviewer (to Aida):**  
  *Aida! Vaghean! To bekhatere dustat tu Iran mikhay farsit khub*
she?

(Aida! Really! Do you want to improve your Persian because of your friends in Iran?)

- Aida

Are!

(Yes!)

Though Aida liked her sense of being different from her cousins due to her language difference, after one week she avoided speaking in Swedish in Iran and started interacting in Persian with the kids of his age. To examine the reason of her decision on language shift in Iran (i.e. from Swedish to Persian after one week), it has been referred to Wong Fillmore (2000) and his statement on “Children are aware of the underlying sentiment. They interpret it as saying to them: To be different is to be unacceptable. Thus children do what they believe they must to rid themselves of what makes them unacceptable. Language is an obvious difference, so it is the first to go”. Therefore, it can be seen that the sense of being different albeit enjoyable at first, led Aida to feel unacceptable later on. In such a situation where Aida felt nobody understood her, to get rid of being outsider she shifted from Swedish to Persian in order to express her own personality, feelings, or ideas through speech and to show she was no longer an outsider, not foreigner and not quite as different as before. Indeed, her preference for being the same over being different affected her language preference as well and led her to use Persian instead of Swedish in that special situation.

Through this experience, environment and peer-group intimacy in Iran can be seen as two powerful contributing factors in Aida’s patterns of language use in her homeland. On the one hand, Iran as a Persian language rich environment; on the other hand, a temporarily closeness to her cousins (during the interview she told that she missed them, especially Matin, one of her cousins who is 5 years older), indeed prepared an opportunity for Aida to reveal her latent talent in Persian. These factors can be assumed as the unexpected facilities that brought Aida to a realization of self-expression and in time finding pleasure in Iran.
10.4. Parent-child intimacy

A close relationship has been assumed between the strength of the family bond and children’s tendency to maintain their parents’ first language (i.e. the more tangible parent-child intimacy is, the more motivated the child would be to use his/her first language) (Tannenbaum & Howie, 2002: 411). In this regard, in the study, family 1’s intimacy was assessed by both children’ and the parents’ perception of their mutual relationship based on asymmetric (parent-child) interaction. In this case, the child’s age and the parents’ care-giving behavior have been seen as two influential factors affecting the quality of an intimate relationship between parents and the children in family 1.

10.4.1. Age

In family 1, the first-born child, Sara is seven years older than Aida. As the parents reported, she rarely has daily contact with her mom or dad and spends most of her time out of home, being at school and hanging out with her friends who speak Swedish only. When she is at home, she not often lacks face-to-face contact with the family, sitting much of her time in her room in front of computer or listening to music. She seldom engages in the daily routines like joining the family members for meals. She regularly brings a plate of food to her room and spends her mealtime alone while working with the computer.

Although according to Ainsworth (1989) dependency patterns change over time, from parent-like figures in infancy to romantic partners or close friends as development progresses, Daniel (2006) emphasized that contrary to the idea of replacement of childhood dependency by emotional independency in the young adult, normal human beings show dependency behaviors in times of danger, vulnerability, or illness. This matter was also observable in Sara’s behavior, as her parents reported. She is very silent but whenever she has a problem with school or her daily activities and feels troubled, she gets more close to her mom and dad and talks with them like a friend (as it was reported their conversation is only in Swedish in different situations).

In practice, for Sara, as development progressed, the most important dependency patterns have become her friends, while Aida is still involved in parent-like dependency. Fluency of parent-child discourse, emotional openness, and representation of intimate relationships were evident during the interview with Aida. She sat beside her mother and leaned her head on her mother’s shoulder. Whenever I asked questions in Persian and my words seemed too difficult
and long for her to understand, she felt shy and instead of answering, hid herself behind her 
mother. Her mother started talking into her ear and softly repeated my words in Swedish. After 
that, Aida whispered her reply in Swedish to her mother without having any eye contact with me. 

Although the age difference between Sara and Aida could affect their dependency 
behaviors, as the parents reported since her childhood Sara has always been a more self-reliant 
child and less attached to her parents, which they thought it was a result of their stricter control 
exercised over Sara during her childhood than Aida.

10.4.2. Care-giving behaviors
In family 1, the parents were also asked how they treated Sara during her childhood compared 
with Aida. According to the parents’ responses, the parental styles for each child differed 
significantly. They placed different demands and had different expectations of their children 
according to their birth order. During the interview they reported that they were inexperienced 
with their first-born child, showing more vigilance and care to Sara compared to Aida. They had 
an incentive to be stricter with Sara and encouraged better performances, while they were more 
relaxed with Aida. Their parenting experience with Sara made them find a balance in child-
rearing that meant that Aida went easier than Sara through the period of adjustment (i.e. her 
adjusting adaptation to a harmonious relationship with the family).

It seems that authoritarian control in childhood restricted Sara from the opportunity to engage in 
daily interactions with her parents, and in later years to seek to feel freer. The parents believed 
that as they disciplined Sara much more severely than Aida due to inexperience, after Aida’s 
birth, maybe the fact that she feared she was not as good as Aida in doing things the right way 
made Sara more emotionally distant and detached from the family and as a result, less reliant on 
her parents and apparently more independent (During the interview the mother mentioned that 
she deems Aida smarter than Sara, for example Aida seems more able and talented than her older 
sister in learning languages).

10.5. Transformation of subtractive to additive bilingualism
Over the past three years, family 1 has expanded its relationship with other Iranian families, 
which encouraged the parents to pay more attention to the improvement of their children’s 
Persian language. Such a relationship prompted the parents, especially the father to somehow
switch over to Persian with the children at home. During this period the father started to read Persian books and newspapers and follow Iran’s news by listening to Persian broadcasts. Before, there had been no exposure to Persian programs at home.

In this study, interviews indicated that Aida revealed more tendencies to her first language and transformation from subtractive to additive bilingualism than Sara. Then as it was reported from the interviews and observation, Aida is in the process of additive bilingualism development. Although, unlike Aida, Sara had academically exposure to Persian language at school, she has little tendency to cope with the barrier of subtractive phenomenon, which can be considered due to two effective factors of age and dependency. As she grew older, she showed more self-reliance and independence and less interest in using and developing Persian as her home language.

Choosing Persian as the home language, exposing to Persian broadcasts, reading Persian stories and books for children, sending them to Persian learning classes, and bringing Persian-speaking friends home, especially these who have the same age children have been the particular practices that the parents have considered to help their children overcome the barrier of first language loss. In the process of transformation from subtractive to additive bilingualism, the parents in family 1 have encountered different obstacles.

They realize that the children’s age is significant out of making them interested in their Persian maintenance, especially as concerns Sara. On the other hand, as the parental involvement in the children’s remedy practices requires a lot of time and energy, they believe that it has always been a challenging issue for them as both are employed and spend most of their time out of the home. They complained about the schools’ system in teaching minority languages. According to family 1’s experience, the Persian-learning system in Sweden is problematic for bilingual children with Iranian origins. The system is based on a lot of assignments and a brief period of time (45 minutes to 1 hour a week). Sara experienced a teacher-centered environment during the period she was taking the Persian classes at the age of 7-8. She attended a multi-age classroom that contained students of different ages and grade levels, who all stayed with the same teacher and had to deal with overwhelming assignments during their studies. As family 1 experienced such a challenging situation with Sara, they lost trust in the present education system and have never encouraged Aida to attend Persian classes at school. They believe that
such a system not only had no positive impact on Sara’s language learning development, but also might have caused her to withdraw further from her first language.

In family 1, the parental practices of Persian learning are usually done on the weekends when the parents are at home. They try to only focus on Persian while speaking with each other or with Sara and Aida, reading Persian books for them, and teaching them the Persian alphabet and sentences. As the mother reported, Sara, the older sister, shows no interest in participating in such practices, and often prefers to leave the others and go to her room. But Aida, the younger sister, shows willingness to learn more and more.

Like most bilingual Iranian children whose first learned alphabetic system (Latin-based) is drastically different from Persian (Perso-Arabic script), Aida also has problems with the Persian orthographic system. Due to the lack of practice from early childhood, she has no ability in reading and spelling Persian. In addition, the parents believed that the children’s books available in Persian are quite different in style and content from Swedish ones. They contain difficult subjects, more related to adult literature than children’s stories, which even make it difficult for parents to go through them and fully understand the contents.

11. The case of additive bilingualism (Family 2)

Abtin’s father and mother have been living in Sweden for about 40 and 20 years respectively. Abtin is the only child in family 2, but he has two half-sisters, Tara 29 and Raha 23, with the same father. They are older than Abtin and live independently in other cities. Abtin has a close relationship with his half-siblings and their interaction language is Persian, while they are all dominant in Swedish. During the interview Abtin was able to communicate well with me in Persian. The family’s home language has always been Persian, while all the members are fluent in the majority language spoken in the community- Swedish.

11.1. Parental attitudes towards bilingualism

According to information received from family 2, the parents’ policy about Abtin’s bilingualism was actually affected by father’s experience in bringing up his daughters, Tara and Raha. During Abtin’s childhood, the parents tried to provide exposure to both languages all the time. The family relied on Persian in their daily interaction and Abtin was practically exposed to it as the home language from birth. On the other hand, exposure to Swedish TV programs and
storybooks, having contact with Swedish-speaking friends were the practices by which Abtin also received input in Swedish before the age of 13 months when he entered kindergarten. As the parents reported during the interview, the school environment facilitated the process of his Swedish development, in a way that he has had no problem in establishing relationship with his Swedish peers. Besides, the parents avoided radical changes in their strategy about language choice at home. They maintained Persian as the family’s interaction language; additionally, they were aware of Abtin’s language behaviors to ensure his consistency and success in both languages. They were not worried about language delay or language contamination due to the father’s experience with Tara and Raha.

Family 2 has regularly scheduled outings with their Iranian friends to give Abtin a way into friendships in an Iranian environment and encourage him to meet new Iranian peers. Abtin revealed during the interview that he has no problem in making close relationships and likes to socialize or engage in activities with both Swedish and Iranian friends, but he mostly prefers to spend his time at home and be off by himself. He is almost glued to an online game and he prefers to interact with his cousin, Sina who lives in the UK through the online game or on Skype after school and on weekends rather than meeting with his friends face to face (as Abtin reported, his interaction language with Sina is English, while for both Persian is their home language).

Like most of bilingual children, Abtin is also involved in language mixing; sometimes Swedish interference has been observed in his spoken Persian; whereas, while speaking Swedish, no Persian mixing has occurred. As the parents reported more importantly, an increase of language mixing and code-switching in his spoken Persian are evident through his language behavior in response to anxiety and whenever he get stressed and nervous. His parents knew Abtin’s language mixing was a natural aspect of his bilingualism system. During the interview, Abtin’s language mixing was only limited to specific names such as numbers and names of the months.

**Excerpt 3**

- Interviewer:  
  
  *Abtin! Chand salete?*  
  
  (Abtin! How old are you?)

- Abtin:  
  
  *man Augusti miram tu elva*
(I will be eleven on August)

Or

- Interviewer: Ba dustaye Iranit be che zabani sohbat mikoni?
  (What language do you speak with your Iranian peers?)

- Abtin: Ma hame Persiska baladim, ama Svenska hamishe harf mizanim.
  (We all know Persian but we always speak Swedish.)

The parents said that they have not always tried to correct Abtin and sometimes they like
the way in which Abtin pronounces some of his words in Persian due to missing some
grammatical rules or mistakenly using a single word instead of another because their apparently
related meaning calls up the same image of them in his mind. Indeed, sometimes language
mixing and some confusion seemed pleasant and amusing to the parents. For example, to say
‘fasten’ in Persian, he uses ‘la mundam’ meaning ‘ply’ instead of ‘gir kardan’.

Also during the interview Abtin as an 11 years old bilingual child displayed such
confusion as below which does not make any sense in Persian, while monolingual Persian
children of the same age are rarely involved in these types of mistakes.

Excerpt 4

- Interviewer: Abtin! Dust dari vaghtaye azad chi kar koni?
  (Abtin! What do you like to do in your free time?)

- Abtin: Dust daram pahluye khodam basham!
  (I like to be beside myself)

In response to my question he used ‘pahluye khodam’ means ‘beside myself” instead of
‘tanha’ meaning ”by myself”.

In this regard, the father referred to his experience with his daughters. During Raha’s and
Tara’s childhood, he made attempts to correct all their mistakes in Persian speaking; while, they
were mostly exposed to Swedish as their academic language, this policy was not as effective as
the parents expected. Therefore, by considering it as a natural issue in the process of children’s language development, Abtin’s parents avoided giving him corrections frequently and regularly for all of his language mixing, language interference and misunderstanding. In family 2, the parents established their policy in order to help Abtin’s language development, not to make him anxious and withdrawn from his first language by correcting him regularly and overtly.

11.2. Abtin’s language preference

According to information received in family 2 from Abtin and his parents, Abtin can be seen as a case of a bilingual whose language preference is directly influenced by the language of the sociolinguistic group with which he is interacting and his language preference changes depending upon the language choice of his interlocutor. Abtin and his Iranian peers’ interaction are based on Swedish, regardless of the fact that their home language is either Persian or Swedish. Abtin told about the situations in which he interacts in Swedish (e.g. hanging out with his friends), after an Iranian adult like one of his parents joins such a situation his language preference can suddenly change depending upon the language choice of the adult.

The other examples are given based on information obtained from family 2 about Abtin’s interaction with his half-siblings and one of his cousins who lives in the UK and has an Iranian origin. The family claimed that from the start, Raha and Tara -Abtin’s half-sisters - chose Persian to interact with Abtin and hence, Abtin adopted their language choice as his preference in the siblings’ interaction. Additionally, by having a look at Abtin’s relationship with Sina, his cousin, it can be seen how adaptable he is to rely on his addressee’s choice of language. As it was mentioned before Sina, lives in the UK, and Abtin mostly interacts with him through computer games or on Skype. Although, both are competent in Persian and use it as their spoken language at home, Abtinsaid that according to Sina’s language choice, he talks with Sina in English.

As was revealedin the interviews with family 2, silence is Abtin’s reaction to the situations in which he has no efficiency in his interlocutors’ language. For the first time, Abtin visited his motherland at the age of 4, when he was still not proficient in speaking Persian. As he and the parents reported, there, he went through a silent period, when he was first exposed to such a large number of Persian speakers. Since he found himself unable to express himself through spoken communication or come to a mutual understanding with his addressees, he isolated himself from them and just stuck with his parents.
11.3. Abtin’s attitudes towards Persian

Based on information received from Abtin during the interview, his persistent use of Persian at home can be assumed in the light of his feelings of being intimate due to the support and openness his parents have given him. Furthermore, fear of being different and separate from the family may have led Abtin to keep his parents’ language as his home language and provide a tendency to being emotionally oriented to them. The father said that whenever they shift to Swedish while speaking with him, he complained and asked them to talk in Persian. Abtin was asked about his feeling whenever his parents speak in Swedish with him. He replied that it seems ridiculous for him to interact in Swedish with his parents. The parents believed that bilingualism has provided members of the family with a special way of speaking which established a common language based on a vocabulary special to the family that is considered as their “family mystery”. This can be interpreted as the marked importance of home language for them based on which they try to define their family identity.

Abtin replied all to the questions of the interview without pausing and sounded more dominant on his first language than expected. A part of the interview was about how interested he is in visiting Iran again.

Excerpt 5

- Interviewer: Aya dust dari bazam beri Iran?
  (Do you like to go to Iran again?)

- Abtin (frowning): Hmmm! Are ama na alan president esh khub nist, bayad bemunam ta bebinam president e badi chetore.
  (Hmmm! Yeah but not now! The president is not good; I should wait to see how the next president would be.)

In this excerpt, Abtin showed his strong attention to Iran’s current situation. The parents said that they have never directly exposed Abtin to political issues in Iran and it can be due to his ability in Persian and his affection toward the motherland that stimulates him to develop a sense of curiosity about himself and his heritage identity and pay attention to his minority world around him.
While Abtin felt that he was different from the other kids of his age in Iran, he saw no real difference between himself and his peers in Sweden. But he believed that the privilege that came with knowing Persian is that he is dominant in a language other than Swedish and English compared with his Swedish peers and classmates.

11.4. Parents’ attitudes towards Persian

In family 2, along with better employment opportunities and family integration, heritage identity maintenance was a crucial issue that led Abtin’s parents to take efforts to enhance his Persian language. Unlike Sara’s and Aida’s parents in family 1, the parents in family 2 said that they have always had a bias towards their ethnic culture and language, which became even stronger after the first experience they had with Abtin in Iran. It sounded like Abtin was having a hard time connecting with and developing closeness to the kids of his age in Iran. Therefore, to appreciate his efficient communication within his own ethnic community and to provide him with a positive self-identity, the parents tried to get more curious about the process of his first language development. For instance, they used more positive and entertaining methods (e.g. engaging in his interests with him such as Persian TV programs, Persian music, and computer games) in order to encourage him to use the first language. The parents believed that their positive attitudes towards his first language acquisition, helped Abtin avoid the habit of isolating himself, but rather got him to do things with other kids his own age when after two years the whole family visited Iran for the second time.

Like family 1, family 2 also had problems with the Persian teaching system at school. The parents believed that the lack of an appropriate education system in minority languages acquisition (e.g. Persian) at schools caused them to see most of the responsibility laid with them. Accordingly, they felt that Persian as a minority language in Sweden lacks enough community support. They did not trust the educational system to help Abtin maintain his first language and culture in a way that matched their expectations.

The parents in family 2 wished they had paid more attention to improve Abtin’s Persian writing skills, but they believed that Abtin’s speaking proficiency like a bridge would connect him to his heritage culture and identity in the future and encourage him to deal with and minimize the gaps such as his deficiency in Persian writing skills in the process of his first language development.
12. Conclusion and Discussion

In an attempt to shed light on the issue of bilingual child language preference at home, in this paper we have analyzed familial approach to bilingualism, investigating parental beliefs and attitudes towards child language acquisition, parents’ roles in the development process of child bilingualism, and parental attitudes to particular types of child language choice (De Houwer, 1998).

Although language contamination and the appearance of language delay and confusion in the simultaneous bilingualism domain has been demonstrated as an undue parental concern (Petitto and Holowka, 2002), some parents still show negative attitudes towards their children’ early simultaneous bilingualism. Therefore the primary goal of this study was to evaluate the extent to which parents in bilingual families emphasize the importance of their children’s bilingualism. Two Iranian families living in Sweden were visited and interviewed. The data revealed that despite the fact that both families were practicing simultaneous bilingualism in early childhood, they have been experiencing two different language behaviors after the children became assimilated into the school; family 2 has been experiencing additive bilingualism, while family 1 has been involved in the process of subtractive phenomenon.

It has been seen that the parents’ positive attitude to both languages involved and their significant support for child bilingualism strongly depends on the advantages the parents believe their children can have of two languages such as better employment opportunities, positive self-identity, and efficient communication within both the minority and majority communities (Wong Fillmore, 1991).

Parental failure in family 1 to maintain Persian as their home language appears to be elicited by a variety of factors. Family 1, as the language loss family, established their policy about the children’s early bilingualism relying only on the fact that the children could take the advantage of better employment opportunities in the future. In this case, the parents’ failure to control the process of their children’s first language development was partly a direct result of the parental negative attitudes. As the parents in family 1 reported they have had no bias toward their first language and culture, paid no attention to the children’s language behaviors as they became adjusted to the new world of school and society, and more importantly, encouraged the radical changes to the children’s language environment (i.e. home language shift from Persian to
Swedish). According to Genesee (2006), such changes can prevent language development and cause difficulties for the children.

On the other hand, research on family 2, the language maintenance family, has shown that the parents seem to be very sensitive to the changing characteristics of the child (Abtin) and have always had positive attitudes towards Persian. The practical advantages of the first language such as better occupational opportunities, heritage identity maintenance, and efficient communication within their own ethnic community were the most important issues that gave the parents in family 2 valuable insights into their child’s early bilingualism. They supported their child’s development of bilingualism with a strong commitment to his first language maintenance.

As the interviews show, by avoiding the view of language contamination, providing a rich-stimulating Persian environment at home, being aware of negative outcomes of first language loss, paying serious attention to the child’s language changes in the process of his adjustment to the social world of school, and encouraging interesting activities and entertaining methods, the parents in family 2 strived to promote their positive attitudes towards Persian in order to efficiently expand the child’s first language learning.

In addition, parent-child intimacy in both families was explored as an effective factor in the development of the children’s home language. In family 1, due to the parents’ ignorance of the children’s behavioral changes and the loss of their parental control, the emotional bond with their first-born child (Sara) was diminished under the influence of the factors such as Sara’s age, her social networks, and the arrival of a new sibling (Aida). Therefore, under such circumstances, the appearance of change in Sara’s dominant language was not inevitable. It was also described in family 1 to what extent the strength of family bond could affect the transformation from subtractive to additive bilingualism in the children. As expected, the dependent child, Aida, showed more tendencies to the parental practices of first language learning and was more willing to accept their advice.

According to the findings, in both families, the birth order has been seen very influential on the parent-child closeness. Through the survey, it was revealed that the dimensions of parental caretaking patterns were more extensive, influential and helpful about the second or third child than first-born child owing to at least one of the parent’s caregiving experiences.
Finally, by referring to Lambert (1981) that bilinguals possess valuable cognitive and linguistic potential, thus to release that potential, their subtractive experiences should be transformed into additive ones, it has also been concluded through this study that the subtractive bilingual children in family 1 (Sara and Aida) who were exposed to their two languages in their early childhood have had a latent talent in their first language that must be cultivated by the parents in order to attain the full scope and range of the child’s ability in bilingualism. Interest, stimulation, appreciation, and practice can be the items that parents should pay more attention to.
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