

“I can’t be funny in Finnish!”
A Case Study of Aspects Affecting the Forming of a
Bilingual’s Dominant Language

Bachelor’s Thesis
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Tiivistelmä – Abstract <p>Kaksikielisyys on nopeasti yleistyvää yhteiskunnan ilmiö, ja siten myös kaksikielisten perheiden osuus väestöstä on jatkuvassa kasvussa. Kaksikielisten perheiden vanhempien vastuulla on päättää, millaisia kielivalintoja he kaksikielisten lastensa kohdalla tekevät.</p> <p>Tapaustutkimuksemme tarkoituksena oli tutkia kaksikielisen lapsen hallitsevan kielen muodostumista ja siihen vaikuttavia tekijöitä. Erityisesti tutkimme asuinmaan, koulukielen ja kotikielen vaikutuksia kyseiseen prosessiin. Tarkoituksemme oli selvittää, miten nämä kyseiset tekijät vaikuttivat tutkimukseemme osallistuneihin kaksikielisiin lapsiin. Tutkimusta varten haastattelimme kaksikielisen perheen kolmea lasta ja toista vanhempaa. Perheen käyttämät kielet olivat suomi ja englanti. Haastattelut olivat puolistrukturoituja haastatteluita, jotka litteroitiin. Analysoimme ne sisällönanalyysiä ja vertailuanalyysiä hyödyntäen. Koska otanta on hyvin pieni, ei tutkimuksen tuloksia ole tarkoitettu yleistettäväksi, vaan tuottaa esimerkki siitä, miten kaksikielisen ihmisen hallitseva kieli voi valikoitua.</p> <p>Tutkimuksemme osoitti, että kaksikielisen ihmisen hallitseva kieli voi erota myös saman perheen sisäisesti. Kaksi haastateltavistamme koki englannin hallitsevaksi kielekseen, ja yksi oli tasavertaisesti kaksikielinen. Tähän vaikutti vahvasti lasten koulukieli, joka usein, mutta ei aina, määräytyi asuinmaan mukaan. Myös vanhempien kielivalinnoilla oli vaikutusta, mutta tutkimuksemme ei keskittynyt kaksikielisen perheen lasten kasvatusmetodeihin, joka olisi siksi mielenkiintoinen jatkotutkimuksen aihe.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

Multilingualism is an ever-growing phenomenon due to globalization. According to Ansaldo et al. (2008), over 50 per cent of the world's population is bilingual, and the percentage will likely continue to increase due to the migration of over 100 million people every year. In our study, we focus on childhood bilingualism, which means the acquisition of two languages from birth or before the age of 3, as opposed to learning a second language later on in life (Baker 2006: 4).

Bilingual families' parents have always faced a difficult decision: how do they want to bring up their children, language-wise? What language do they use at home or with each other? What languages do the children use with other people or at school? Which language becomes the dominant one for the child and what affects the forming of this hierarchy? How can they make sure neither language is forgotten altogether, if they so wish? These are the topics we aim to find answers to in this study.

On the contrary to previous research, which has mainly focused on the effect of upbringing on the child's dominant language (Extra and Verhoeven 1999; Pystynen 2013), we will focus on the effect of the country of residence, which has not yet been widely researched. We will be studying a Finnish-English bilingual family, whose children have a varying history with their countries of residence and schooling. This offers us a variety of different data, which was one of the main reasons why we chose to study this particular family. We wanted to find out whether the majority language spoken in the child's country of residence is necessarily the child's dominant language. We also wanted to see if the parents or the language in which the children have done their schooling can have an effect on that. These topics raised our interest, in addition to having many bilingual friends and relatives, who have different skill levels in their two (or more) languages due to a variety of reasons, including their country of residence and schooling.

2 KEY CONCEPTS AND PREVIOUS RESEARCH

The research on the aspects affecting the forming of a bilingual child's dominant language has mainly focused on upbringing, parental influence, views, and attitudes (De Houwer 1999: 75-92; Pystynen 2013), which also acts as the framework for our study. However, the effect of the country of residence has not yet been widely studied and therefore we considered this an interesting and necessary fresh point of view to this topic. Furthermore, even though our own country of residence, Finland, is officially bilingual, there are not many studies conducted on the effect of the languages of the surrounding country on the dominant language of bilinguals.

2.1 Bilingualism

Even though bilingualism has been studied rather widely in the field of linguistics, bilingualism as a term has several different definitions. Hamers and Blanc (2000: 6) define it as “the psychological state of the individual who has access to more than one linguistic code as a means of social communication”. Therefore, according to them, a bilingual person is someone who is fluent in two or more languages.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2018) defines bilingualism as “the ability to speak two languages, the frequent use (as by a community) of two languages, the political or institutional recognition of two languages”. According to this definition, a bilingual person is someone who, in addition of being able to speak two languages, also uses both of them frequently. Bilingualism can also be defined as a more flexible term. Macnamara (cited in Hamers and Blanc 2000: 6) states that a bilingual person is anyone who can either speak, write, read, or understand another language besides one's native language. In our study, we define bilingualism as being bilingual from birth, meaning that a person is born into a family which already has two languages that are used. Baker introduces the same approach in *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* (2006), and we found this way of approach most suitable for our study.

Baker (2006: 2) divides bilingualism initially into two parts: individual bilingualism as a characteristic, and societal bilingualism as a phenomenon in a social group, community, region, or country. Grosjean (2010) divides individual bilingualism further into fractional and holistic views: the fractional view sees bilinguals as “two monolinguals in one person”, the holistic view argues that instead of consisting of two separate parts, a bilingual person has a unique linguistic profile. Baker also makes a distinction between functional bilingualism and language background (Baker and Hinde 1984; Baker 1985 cited in Baker 2006: 13). Language background includes both participative and non-participative language experiences, whereas functional bilingualism concerns one’s personal language skills, such as speaking, writing, and reading.

A common misapprehension of bilingualism is presented by Grosjean (2010: 20): “Bilinguals have equal and perfect knowledge of their languages”. Grosjean describes these as the “real” bilinguals but continues that only a few bilingual people belong to that category. These “less” bilingual people’s skillset in both languages were appraised similar to a monolingual’s skills. A bilingual person might criticize their own bilingualism due to social pressure and, therefore, the person themselves feels their skills are not adequate to be called bilingual even though they would fit the definition. (Grosjean 2010: 21).

As Baker (2006: 2) also points out, bilingualism is difficult to define due to its complex nature. All the different definitions mentioned have their own restrictions and issues. It is not always clear what is native-like competence, fluency, or a minimal proficiency in one’s second language (Hamers and Blanc 2000: 7).

2.1.1. Code-Switching

A common phenomenon regarding bilingual interaction is code-switching. The definition of the term, much like bilingualism, has been defined in various ways by scholars (Nilep 2006: 6), but our paper follows Myers-Scotton’s definition of the phenomenon as “the use of two or more languages within the same conversation”. This definition works best for our study because we are researching code-switching between discrete varieties (Finnish and English), rather than between varieties, i.e. codes, of a single language.

In other words, code-switching means mixing two codes usually without changing the topic of the conversation. Switching can occur both inter- and intra-sententially, for example when the speaker changes in the conversation, when the same speaker starts a different utterance or even within a single utterance. It can also occur at different levels of language, including phonology, morphology, syntactic structures, and lexical items (Abalhassan and Alshalawi 2000: 180).

There is a variety of studies about the reasons behind code-switching and the discourse in which it happens. Communicative and social studies show that speakers switch languages mostly for stylistic and extralinguistic reasons, which include for example cultural associations, ethnic identity, sex and age. Grammatical research about the reasons for code-switching suggest that, even though the switch may appear random, certain grammatical patterns emerged when the whole conversation was analyzed; the switch does not occur at certain syntactic instances, such as between a negative and a verb. This indicates that code-switching is systematic linguistic behavior (Alabhassan and Alshalawi 2000: 181-182).

According to Reyes (cited in Bista 2010: 4), children usually switch codes when they do not know a certain word or phrase in the language being used in a certain conversation. Sometimes code-switching is also done when the speaker feels that the other language conveys the desired meaning more accurately, which can help with avoiding misunderstanding. In addition, code-switching can be a useful tool when adding emphasis to something or wanting the conversation to be more private (Bista 2010: 13). These are the possible reasons why bilingual speakers use code-switching, either unconsciously or on purpose, in different conversational situations.

2.2 Dominant Language

The concept of a bilingual person's dominant language is one of the key terms in our research. The majority of bilinguals favor one of their respective languages over the other, which is known as a psychologically dominant language (Field 2011: 58, Baker 2006: 3). A psychologically dominant language is the language which the bilingual person feels more comfortable using in situations that require, for example, specific knowledge (vocabulary),

fluency (proficiency), or confidence when speaking in the target language. This is the definition of the term “dominant language”, which we will be using for the purpose of this study.

Psychological tests have been created in order to distinguish the power positions between a bilingual person’s languages (Field 2011: 57, Baker 2006: 33-34). The tests focus on reaction time and the quality of responses in word association tasks in both languages, and therefore an imbalanced result in either language indicates a psychological dominance in one of them. However, these kinds of tests are criticized for being too narrow in terms of the skillset they measure (Field 2011: 57).

A language can also be socially or culturally dominant, which essentially means the majority language spoken within the country. The majority language is socially viewed as more important than other languages in terms of the number of speakers and its preeminent role in the government, commerce, education, the economy and media (Field 2011: 58, 83). Minority languages are typically recessive because of their lesser role in the surrounding society (Field 2011: 149), which might drive their users to shift to using the culturally dominant language in order to feel like a part of the society (Baker 2006: 223-224). In a situation like this, language loss may occur, where the maintenance of the minority language might stop, therefore leading to its possible demise in terms of both the number of speakers and the grammatical and lexical knowledge (Field 2011: 102). One of the main questions in our study is to find out whether a bilingual person’s dominant language can be something else than the majority language spoken in their country of residence, but according to the definitions listed above, it would seem unlikely.

2.3 Bilingual Upbringing

Parents have a huge role in the forming of a young child’s language environment. The parents of a bilingual family can decide which languages they use with their child at home and how they choose to execute it. In addition to what languages the child hears at home, schooling languages influence a bilingual child’s language skill set as well, since school is where children spend a majority of their time.

A crucial aspect of language learning, with both bilingual and monolingual children, is the concept of a critical period. The critical period hypothesis was refined by Lenneberg in 1967 on the basis on the work by Penfield and Roberts in 1959 (cited in Vanhove 2013: 1). Neurological findings suggest that after a child has hit puberty, something changes in the brain, which complicates the learning of a new language. Thus, in order to achieve the best possible outcome, language acquisition should be done between the age of two and puberty. According to Lenneberg (1969: 639), the critical period also coincides with the point where the human brain has achieved maturity, therefore suggesting that the lateralization process of the brain finalizes certain functions that are required in language learning as well. However, more recent studies indicate that the evidence for the critical period hypothesis is not sufficient enough to confirm it since the lateralization process of different language functions has different time frames (Vanhove 2013: 1).

The term “advantageous period” is used to refer to this phenomenon (Baker 2006: 98) due to it not being absolutely definitive. One can learn new languages later in life as well; studies show that being bilingual can extend the critical period and therefore make learning new languages easier later on. Kurtcebe (2011: 38, 59) conducted a bilingual extended critical period hypothesis study, the results of which indicated that learning a second language at an early age had a positive effect when learning another new language later in life. This is based on the fact that being bilingual extends the plasticity in one’s brain due to learning two languages at a very early age, thus prolonging the duration of the critical period.

2.3.1 Parental Views

A bilingual child is rarely exposed to both of their respective languages equally and identically, which may affect the child’s level of bilingualism (Hummel 2013: 228). One of the languages might be in more frequent use in the child’s everyday life due to, for example, the surrounding country’s majority language, or each language might be used for different functions, and therefore have associations to different language use situations - which language does the child use with their family, relatives, friends, or at school.

Parents' personal beliefs and attitudes about bilingualism are at the center of their language behavior towards their children (De Houwer 1999: 75-76, Lanza 2007: 52). The parents' linguistic choices, e.g. what languages the child hears at home and to what extent, have a huge influence on the child's language skills. The most famous approach is the One Person - One Language scenario (De Houwer 1999: 77-78, Field 2011: 17, Lanza 2007: 48), created by a French linguist Maurice Grammont in the early twentieth century (Hummel 2013: 234), where each parent only uses their native tongue with the child. This way the child can learn both languages without confusion and renders simultaneous bilingualism, e.g. the child acquires both of the languages at the same time (Field 2011: 160, Hummel 2013: 224). Alternatively, in a situation where both of the parents are bilingual as well (a mixed-language family), they can choose to use both languages with their child (Field 2011: 18, Lanza 2007: 48), which can result into the child confusing and mixing the two languages together. However, very little evidence has been found that the "one parent - one language" strategy is in fact necessary in order for the child to avoid mixing the languages (Hummel 2013: 234).

The decision between using a monolingual, "one parent, one language", or a bilingual interaction strategy also creates the framework of whether or not the child is allowed to use mixed utterances and code-switching in communication situations with the parents. On the contrary to code-switching, where a bilingual person knowingly changes from one language to the next, language mixing indicates that they cannot entirely separate the languages from each other (Hyltenstam and Obler 1989: 13). Whether the child is allowed to code-switch depends on the parents' personal attitudes towards specific bilingual praxis (De Houwer 1999: 80, 82, Lanza 2007: 52). However, a situation where the child is not forced to use a certain language with a particular parent might cause them to avoid speaking that language or limit its usage to short utterances and single-word responses; young bilingual children can show various degrees of passive bilingualism, where a child can understand two languages but produces only one (De Houwer 1999: 77).

2.3.2 Bilingual Schooling

Bilingual education as a term, similar to bilingualism itself, has a number of possible meanings according to what is aimed to achieve (Baker 2006: 207) but basically, bilingual education is

education done in more than one language and intended for language minority, e.g. bilingual, children (Field 2011: 16). The term itself can be divided into two different scenarios: (1) a classroom where two languages are used and promoted, or (2) a mainly monolingual classroom aimed for bilingual students in their minority language. There is a wide range of bilingual education strategies, which include different degrees of language mixing (Baker 2006: 211-250), but for the purpose of our study, this paper will focus on dual language bilingual education, heritage language education, and immersion education.

In dual language education, two languages are used in a classroom where the students speak them both, either as a first language or a second language (Hummel 2013: 49, Field 2011: 59). Usually the languages are the majority language of the country of residence and a chosen minority language (Baker 2006: 223). The language balance among students should be around half and half to ensure the aim of bilingualism and biliteracy. The goal of dual language education is to allow the students to learn from each other and learn to value each language and their cultural heritage. As a side effect, dual language education students might also be more tolerant and equal towards other cultures (Baker 2006: 224-225). This is an example of additive bilingualism, where both of the bilingual person's languages are supported equally and the goal is to be equally fluent in both of them (Hummel 2013: 50, Baker 2006: 222).

Immersion education is a way of learning a language without actually studying it, similar to language showering. The goal of immersion education is to teach the students, for example, biology or history through their second language and therefore enhance their competence in their second language as a byproduct without teaching the language itself (Hummel 2013: 46, Baker 2006: 239). In comparison to dual language education, where the children come from two (or more) different language backgrounds, the students in immersion education classrooms are usually only language majority children learning through their second language (Baker 2006: 244).

Heritage language education, also known as maintenance bilingual education, is getting increasingly more common due to globalization and immigration. A heritage language is a language spoken by a family or an ethnic group in an area, where the majority language is something else (Hummel 2013: 51). In America, the term "heritage language" has been extended from indigenous languages to include immigrant languages, such as Russian and Spanish (Field 2011: 82). In these homes, the majority language of the surrounding country

might not be used at all. The minority language has a high risk of disappearing altogether if it is not used anywhere else than home. Heritage language education is one way of preserving, respecting and using the minority language alongside the majority language (Baker 2006: 233, Field 2011: 82). This can be done via courses at school, other language courses, or day schools (Baker 2006: 233-234, Hummel 2013: 51). The difference between dual language education and heritage language education is that the first one focuses on a balanced language situation whereas the latter attempts to preserve a minority language and culture (Baker 2006: 236).

3 PRESENT STUDY

In the following chapter, we will introduce the research aims and questions of the present study. Then we will continue with presenting our methods of data collection and analysis. We will also introduce the participants of our study.

3.1 Research Aims and Questions

The aim of our study is to find the extent to which a bilingual child's country of residence affects the forming of their dominant language. We will also include the influence of their schooling (in all of the countries of residence they have had) as well as their language situation at home (what languages their parents speak with them/with each other). Since our study is a case study, our aim is not to generalize the possible effects the country of residence can have on forming of one's dominant language, but to provide an example on this very understudied topic.

With our first research question, "How does the country of residence influence the forming of a bilingual person's dominant language?", we aim to find out whether one's country of residence affects the forming of one's dominant language: is it the same as the official language of the country of residence? Is it the other parent's mother tongue? Is it some other language? We assumed that the country of residence could influence the forming of a dominant language more than the language environment at home since the majority language of the surrounding country is so ubiquitous. However, since this topic is rather understudied, we were not able to base our presuppositions on any previous studies.

With our second question, “What kind of an effect does the language with which one has done most of their schooling have on the forming of their dominant language?”, we seek to get an example how one’s language of instructions affects their dominant language: is the dominant language their language of schooling? Since a child spends a significant portion of their days at school and it is possible that the schooling language is different from the majority language, our presupposition was that the schooling language could play a greater role in the forming of a child’s dominant language.

With the last question, “How does a bilingual person define their own dominant language?”, we would like to find an answer as to how a bilingual person themselves defines their own dominant language, or do they feel they have one? Is one language stronger than the other? Does the dominant language depend on different situations? We included this question so we could compare the participants’ earlier answers to their personal views on the subject to see if they coincide.

3.2 Data and Methods

In order to answer the research questions of the present study, we chose to conduct a case study. In this section, we will introduce the participants in our study. Secondly, we will introduce the methodology for gathering our data, and finally, we will present our methods of analysis.

3.2.1 Participants

The participants of the present study are a family of five: Parent 1 (Finnish native speaker), Parent 2 (English native speaker), and their three bilingual children with various language backgrounds and countries of residence. We chose to interview this family because we assumed that due to the differences between the children’s countries of residence and the varying durations of time spent in Finland and abroad, we would have a broad set of data to analyze even though it is gathered from the members of a single family. The participants were found

through researchers' personal connections, and to ensure their anonymity, we will be using pseudonyms when referring to them.

The family had to move from country to country often due to Parent 2's job and, therefore, all of the children have lived in at least two different countries. The two oldest children, Nathan, 22, and Frank, 19, were born in Finland and the youngest, Colin, 12, was born in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Altogether, the time spent in Finland for each child is currently 15 years for Nathan, 9 years for Frank and 6 years for Colin. The children have been brought up as Finnish-English bilinguals and we set out to discover what aspects have had an effect on their language skills and possible dominant languages.

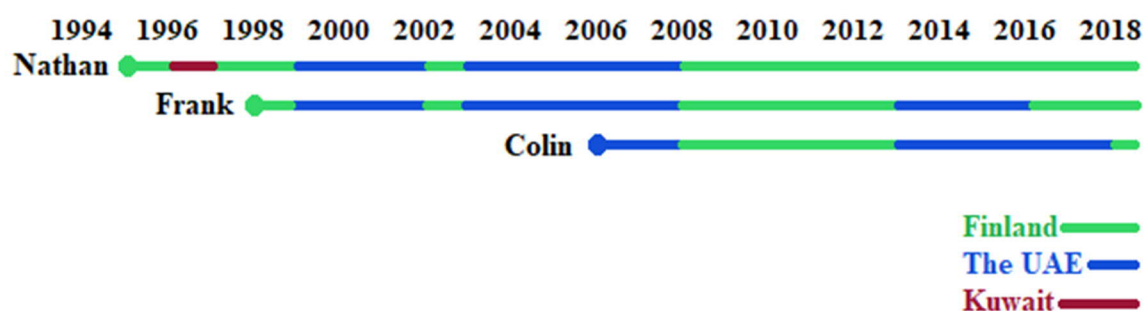


Figure 1. Children's countries of residence.

We believe that by incorporating the parental view to our interviews we would have the opportunity to include topics such as bilingual upbringing strategies and language choices made while raising the children. The parental view would also offer an outsider's perspective on each of the children's introspective views of their own language situations. We interviewed Parent 1, who is from a Finnish-speaking family. As an adult, Parent 1 has lived in several English-speaking countries, and therefore, their work history is mainly in English. Due to practical issues, we were not able to interview Parent 2.

3.2.2 Data Collection

Our data consists of four semi-structured or thematic interviews. Methodologically, a semi-structured interview is in between open and structured interviews (Harrell and Bradley 2009:

25). They allow some freedom for both the interviewer and the interviewees when it comes to what is discussed during the interview but have a set of questions and topics that need to be covered in order to receive useful data (Harrell and Bradley 2009: 27). We chose to collect our data by using a thematic interview since it allows us to use defining questions if needed during the interviews, but also because one of our research questions (“How does a bilingual person define their own dominant language?”) requires open questions in order to collect reliable data. The data was collected in a neutral environment during the summer of 2018. Each of the participants were interviewed individually in order to prevent influence from other family members. The interviews were audio recorded with the participants’ consent. Our interview questions focused on the following themes (see Appendices 2-4):

- Children’s countries of residence
- Children’s schooling and schooling languages
- Children’s preferred languages to use with friends, at home, with relatives, media, reading, writing and other language associations (dreaming, emotions, etc.)
- Parents’ language backgrounds
- Parents’ choices and decisions in terms of bringing up their children bilingually
- Personal view on one’s dominant language

3.2.3 Method of Analysis

The analysis of our data will be done as a case study, which is a research strategy that is used to document and understand situations within single settings (Eisenhardt 1989: 534). Therefore, this method is ideal for the purpose of our thesis. The analysis of the data will be done according to content analysis methodology (Hsieh and Shannon 2005: 1279), which aims to describe a phenomenon on the basis of qualitative data, in this case the four interviews we conducted. For three of our interviewees, the children, the semi-structured interview questions were the same (Appendix 2). We will be comparing the interviews and looking for mutual themes in the participants’ answers in order to define the possible factors that have influenced the forming of the children’s language skills. For the parent, the interview questions (Appendix 3) were formed so that they would expand upon the children’s responses and answer our research questions as thoroughly as possible.

According to Soy (1997), by conducting a case study, it is possible not to create generalizations but to extend experience or add strength to previous research. Soy also explains that by researching a small sampling, it is possible to understand more complex issues. At most, content analysis can be used to create new concepts or models to describe a phenomenon (Hsieh and Shannon 2005: 1281). Even though some researchers argue that a small number of cases cannot offer reliable data or findings, this method has been used successfully and is considered a good research method (Soy 1997). Since the sampling of our research is relatively narrow, our aim is not to create any generalizations based on our findings. Our aim is to explore the aspects which can have an effect on the forming of a bilingual child's language scope in the case of this particular family.

4 ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In the following chapter, we will present the results of our interviews and answer our research questions on the basis of our data. This section is divided into four subsections. In the first section, we discuss the children's dominant languages in different situations, such as speaking, writing, reading and dreaming. We also include examples of subconscious language use, which happens while dreaming, thinking or feeling strong emotions. In the next section, we look at the children's schooling languages and their effect on each child's dominant language. Next, we introduce the children's language use with different people and different situations. Finally, we include the children's personal views on their dominant language and how they would determine the concept.

4.1 Dominant language

We began our interviews by asking each of our participants which language they preferred for us to use. This, we assumed, could be our first piece of information in determining each of the children's dominant language. All three children choose English, but Nathan points out that he did so for our convenience so that we would not have to translate his answers from Finnish for the purpose of this thesis. He would have been equally comfortable with conducting the

interview in either English or Finnish. We interviewed Parent 1 in Finnish due to it being their first language and translated the answers into English afterwards.

In order to find out which language has a greater role in our interviewees' lives, we asked them whether they prefer reading, writing, and speaking in Finnish or in English. All the children prefer reading in English but Nathan remarks that a great amount of the literature he reads has also been written by English-speaking authors. He adds that he tends to be generally more trusting of translations of works into English and, hence, does not read that many Finnish translations, especially if the book is originally written in English.

Determining the children's preferred language for speaking was not as straightforward as reading: Nathan prefers Finnish, but Frank and Colin prefer English. Frank and Colin tell us that they prefer speaking English over Finnish without hesitation, but Nathan, at the moment, prefers speaking in Finnish because he feels that he can speak faster in Finnish and is more able to have a conversation. He also feels that English holds a different value to him when compared to Finnish; he believes that, as a lingua franca, the skill of being able to use English to convey and communicate important ideas, such as politics, convincingly and eloquently adds credibility as well as lends authority and legitimacy to what one is saying. Furthermore, Nathan adds that he likes to speak English more but, at the moment, he feels that speaking Finnish is easier for him than speaking English. The reason behind this is that he is using Finnish frequently due to currently living in Finland and having mostly Finnish-speaking contacts. He believes that if he were to speak English more for a week or so and not having his social life mainly in Finnish, it would be the other way around. Nathan sums up that it depends on which language he is more used to in general, which we also predicted could be the case.

Much like with the preferred language when speaking, Frank and Colin tell us that their preferred language for reading is English. Nathan says that he is more confident and comfortable writing in English since, in general, he has written more in English throughout his schooling. However, when there have been periods of him having to write more in Finnish, he has gotten used to it as well. When Nathan was doing high school in Finnish, he was rather confident writing in Finnish and had no problem with it but nowadays, after not having to write in Finnish as much, he feels very doubtful about his writing skills. This, much like which language he would rather use when speaking, is a question of which language he is more used

to recently and can possibly be switched around if he were, for some reason, required to write more in Finnish for a while.

To get an even clearer picture of our participants' preferred languages, we wanted to know which language they find more difficult, English or Finnish. On the basis of our presumptions we had before our interviews, we assumed that the more difficult language would be Finnish for all of the children. Frank points out that Finnish is a more difficult language to learn, and Finnish is definitely a more difficult language for him. Colin tells us that he knew a lot of Finnish when he was in a Finnish kindergarten, but he started losing the language when the family moved to the UEA. Due to having lived most of his life in a country where almost no one spoke Finnish with him, he also finds Finnish more difficult. However, Nathan feels that neither Finnish nor English is more difficult for him in general, but, again, it depends on what he is more accustomed to recently: if he has been using Finnish lately, it is easier for him to use it, and vice versa. This seems rational: if one is capable of using two languages, one of them might feel easier simply due to it being in more active use on an everyday basis for that person. Therefore, one's dominant language can change depending on which language they use more often, and this is naturally affected by one's country of residence.

Nathan does not find using multiple languages on a daily basis difficult since it is very normal for him to use both English and Finnish. Colin feels the same as Nathan does: Colin switches between English and Finnish often and finds it very easy. Frank finds switching languages somewhat difficult for him because it requires more thought than using only one of them. In his opinion, when he is speaking English, everything comes out more naturally due to his Finnish being on a lower skill level and, therefore, not that automatic. Sometimes Frank changes languages when he is speaking with Parent 1, but otherwise he does not usually code-switch.

Building on this, we also wanted to know which language our participants feel they use the most nowadays. The participants collectively pointed out that the opportunities to use and hear Finnish are fewer than with English, regardless of their country of residence. Therefore, they feel that it is easier for them to maintain their English skills in Finland than their Finnish skills in the UAE. Nathan feels that it is very difficult to say because even though he is currently living in Finland and Finnish is everywhere around him in his everyday life, all the media he consumes is in English and he goes to school in mostly English. He mentions that, for example, the electronic devices he uses are in English and he does almost everything else in English, but

he mostly speaks Finnish with people. Frank tells that he uses more English nowadays even though he currently lives in Finland. Colin, who has recently moved back to Finland, also feels that he uses more English than Finnish despite his country of residence. This set of answers indicates that one's dominant language is not solely dictated by one's country of residence but there are other factors contributing to it as well. These other factors and their effects will be discussed further in chapters 4.2 and 4.3 of this thesis.

We asked our participants if there were some things they could not express in either Finnish or English, and Nathan brings up specialty vocabulary. When he was in the Finnish army, there were many topics he found difficult to talk about in English with other people because the vocabulary was very specialized. Nathan also mentions that the Finnish schooling system has its own jargon which he finds challenging to translate into English. This is something that came up several times during the interview: for example, when Nathan was talking about his schooling in Finland, he used terms such as "lukio" and "peruskoulu" instead of high school and comprehensive school. On the contrary to Nathan's answers, Frank told us that he cannot come up with anything that he would be able to express in Finnish that he could not express in English. In addition to this, Frank tells that there are several topics he is not able to cover in Finnish: "I have no ability to be clever or witty at all in Finnish. I cannot tell any jokes, it's just not happening." Colin mentions that he knows words in English that he does not know in Finnish, but he cannot come up with any words he would know in Finnish and not in English. If a bilingual person has become familiar with a topic in a certain language, it is possible that one finds it difficult to discuss it in other languages because the vocabulary can be rather challenging when attempting to translate it. Therefore, there is a possibility of being misunderstood, and by discussing the topic in the original language one has learnt it in, this can be avoided.

4.1.1 Subconscious language use

In addition to finding out the language they prefer using for reading, speaking, and writing, we asked them in which language they dream or think and which language they use when feeling strong emotions. Our presupposition was that this set of questions would give us an idea as to what their dominant language could be because of the subconscious nature of the actions listed

here. We set out to find whether subconscious language use is affected by the children's current linguistic environment and if these two phenomena can be connected.

Nathan tells us that the language he uses when thinking is English most of the time. As an example of something he does nearly always in English is counting. This, we assumed, could be explained by him learning to count in English first and in Finnish later even though he spent his early childhood in Finland. However, he says that it is only because he thinks that the English numbers are faster to use since he considers them to be shorter than the Finnish ones, and thus it is more efficient to do the counting in English. However, he adds that if for some reason he has been speaking and consuming only Finnish language, then the language he would use could be Finnish. Nathan is not sure which language he dreams in since it is not something he pays attention to in his dreams. He assumes that it might be English because sometimes he recalls something he has said in his dream when he wakes up, and these instances have all been in English. Often the people in his dreams are Finnish, but he does not know if they speak Finnish or English. Frank sometimes dreams in Finnish, but English has a greater role for him in his dreams. Sometimes he thinks in Finnish but usually only when he has heard Finnish around him or used it himself during the day, and this is something that happened also when he lived in the UAE. Unlike Nathan and Frank, Colin does not think that the language he or the people around him use affects the language in which he thinks or dreams. Especially when thinking, Colin makes his own language which is not a mixture of Finnish and English but a completely made-up language.

On the basis of our interviews it appears that none of the children are emotionally connected to either Finnish or English. Nathan does not think that feeling strong emotions is something that affects his language use much since he does not consider either of the two languages as particularly passionate, such as for example Spanish or French are generally considered to be. He also does not think that emotions would make him want to switch from one language to another. Usually, he would stick to the language the people around him are speaking because he believes it would not make sense to switch to a language they do not predominantly speak. However, if he were to, for example, stub his toe, he might swear in English even though there were people present with whom he was not speaking English. Frank says that it depends on which language he is currently using when feeling strong emotions; if he got angry at someone while he was speaking Finnish, then he would use Finnish, but normally if he got angry, it would be in English. When compared to Nathan and Frank, Colin has his own way of feeling

strong emotions: when he is in Finland, he uses English, and when he is elsewhere, he uses Finnish so that nobody can understand him. Colin also adds that the language he uses depends on who he is speaking with, for example, he would not use Finnish if he was angry at his father who does not speak Finnish. It seems that the language one uses in these kinds of situations is dictated by the person with whom they are interacting at that moment rather than by their emotional state.

On the basis of this section, it appears that one's country of residence does not play as big of a role in the forming of one's dominant language as we originally thought. For Nathan, the language environment he is currently surrounded with seems to have more of an effect on his current dominant language when compared to Frank and Colin. One of the possible reasons for this could be that both Finnish and English are on a more equal skill level for him than his brothers. That could be why he is more prone to being affected by what language people around him use since he does not seem to have that big of a preference on which one he himself would rather use. For Colin and Frank, at the moment of our interviews, their preferred language seems to preeminently be English since there were no topics they would find easier to discuss in Finnish and therefore it seems natural that their default language for each question so far was English.

4.2 Schooling

In this section, we will discuss the effect of schooling language on the forming of one's dominant language. Discussion about the impact of the country of residence, which is often, but not exclusively, tied to the schooling language, is included in this section. During our interviews, the impact a bilingual child's schooling language had on the forming of their dominant language emerged as a very crucial theme. The three children we interviewed have different schooling histories due to the frequent changes in their country of residence and, therefore, also have varying stages of exposure to different languages they have used at school.

Nathan has had a more alternating past when it comes to schooling languages when compared to his brothers. He was in a Finnish-speaking daycare, did the first and half of the second year of kindergarten in English and then returned to Finland for the rest of the second year as well

as the first grade of elementary school. After that, the family moved back to the UAE and Nathan did grades 2 to 6 there before returning to Finland for the grades from 7 to 9 (middle school). During middle school, he wanted to study mostly in English but chose to take Finnish as an L2 for two years before he was moved to L1 Finnish (äidinkieli) for the ninth grade due to the improvement in his language skills. The reasons behind his decision and its aftermath will be discussed further in section 4.3.2. After graduating middle school, Nathan went to a Finnish-speaking high school (lukio). Nowadays, Nathan studies English language at a Finnish university. He said that if it were measured in years, it appears as if he has done most of his schooling in English, but he feels that not all of it counts as being equal; “Doing high school in Finnish was at least as significant as doing elementary school and middle school in English.”

Nathan’s brothers have had considerably less schooling in Finnish, which can be explained by both their countries of residence and their personal preferences regarding their schooling languages. Frank has done all of his schooling in English; he has had some Finnish classes in Finland and has also had classes like PE in Finnish. However, even though he attended high school in Finland, he chose to do it in English because of his preference of English over Finnish. Colin went to kindergarten in Finnish, but the rest of his schooling so far has been in English due to him living mostly in the UAE.

Two of the children, Nathan and Colin, have had minority language classes while living in the UAE. They participated in *Suomi-koulu* (Finnish language school), where they learned Finnish in Finnish with other bilingual children. For the last year Colin lived there, Parent 1 was a teacher at the school, so it was very easy for him to participate in the teaching. Colin feels that he is doing better with Finnish now because of *Suomi-koulu*. When we asked Parent 1 about the minority language schooling in the UAE, they told us that even if a bilingual child were able to speak both English and Finnish, and they used both languages actively throughout the day, they still would need to be taught grammar and written language. Parent 1 has also done some language teaching at home with the help of Finnish school books in order to help their children maintain the language and make progress with it. They believe that by focusing on building a strong foundation for Finnish early on is why both Colin and Frank can still survive in Finnish but have just forgotten a lot of it.

We found that the participants have studied multiple languages in their lives, but for all of them, English and Finnish were the languages they have acquired the highest proficiency in. Both

Nathan and Frank have studied Swedish while living in Finland, but especially Frank feels that he has lost nearly all of it by now. In addition, Nathan has studied French for one year and all three of the children have studied Arabic during the time they have lived in the UAE. Even though all have studied Arabic, none of them feel that they are very competent in it; Nathan and Colin both say that they know very little Arabic, only some random words and idioms, and Frank's knowledge is limited to "mostly just insults".

The parents had discussed whether all of their children should have been placed in a Finnish-speaking school when the family returned to Finland in 2008. Even though the first year would have been difficult language-wise, the children would have caught up. Parent 1 also adds that if they had done so, the children's Finnish would have become stronger and this could have, in turn, had an effect on their English skills. According to Parent 1, Nathan's decision of going to high school in Finnish had a great impact on his dominant language; "Nathan's way [high school in Finnish] was the best way and that is what I'd wished for Frank, but we left for the UAE. [...] Finnish is a challenge. It's difficult to keep up with Finnish due to mostly English schooling."

The experiences our participants have had suggest that even though the family would actively use both Finnish and English in communication at home, the schooling language indeed has a great impact on one's dominant language. Schooling is a major element in one's life during the critical period when new languages are acquired the most effectively. Thus, the role it has is greater than we assumed even in the case of bilingual children.

4.3 Situation-related language use

In this section, we will look at how the children's language use is controlled by different situations; do the children use certain languages with certain people and what is the reason behind this? We include subsections for languages used with family and relatives, friends, and entertainment and media.

4.3.1 Family and relatives

One of the themes in our interviews was finding out whether the children use different languages with different people and if this is affected by their country of residence. When asked which language the children use with their family, Frank and Colin tell us that it is definitely more often English than Finnish. Frank always speaks English with Parent 2 and usually with his brothers as well, but Parent 1 sometimes forces him to speak Finnish. When we asked Parent 1 about this, they tell us that their aim is to maintain Finnish for all of the children even though Frank wants them to use only English with him. Colin says that he speaks Finnish with Parent 1 more often than Frank but still estimates that, in general, the language he uses most with Parent 1 is still English. However, he still associates Parent 1 with the Finnish language and Parent 2 with English. All of the children mention that with certain relatives such as grandparents and cousins, who do not speak Finnish, they use only English, and vice versa.

Nathan was, yet again, the most diverse out of the children when it comes to the languages he uses on a daily basis. He says that he always uses English with Frank and usually with Colin as well, unless there is someone present who speaks Finnish. He and Parent 1 code-switch often, both in face-to-face interaction and via text messages. Their conversations might start in English, but they would naturally code-switch if they move on to a subject they are both more familiar with in Finnish. This happens in situations such as going to the grocery store in Finland or talking about other things that are somehow associated with Finland, for example high school or his current studies at the university and are therefore difficult to translate. Nathan believes it is easier and makes the conversation more fluent and efficient if they switch the language entirely as opposed to inserting some words from one language into a sentence in another language. He also mentions the phonetic reasons behind why people code-switch instead of attempting to mix different sets of phonemes together. Nathan thinks that the country of residence does not really make that much of a difference when it comes to the languages he uses with his family. He does note, however, that he might use a bit less Finnish in the UAE: sometimes Parent 1 might start a conversation in Finnish, but he would answer in English because he simply does not feel like speaking Finnish at the moment.

We asked for a parental view on this particular situation and the greatest challenge when bringing up children bilingually seems to be maintaining the minority language; when living abroad, it is difficult to bring Finnish into everyday life. In the case of this family, the main

language used at home is English because Parent 2 does not speak Finnish and would therefore be excluded from the interaction. Due to the English language's status as a lingua franca and its primary role in this household, it is easy for it to become the default language used in this family and, therefore, using Finnish becomes more difficult due to it being the minority language at home as well as everywhere else. According to Parent 1, the Finnish language needs to be emphasized before and during interactions in order to ensure its sustained use. Furthermore, if both of the parents spoke Finnish it would be much easier to maintain the language even if the children used English anywhere but home. The parents' original intention was to bring the children up using the "one parent, one language" strategy but, as Parent 1 stated in our interview, "Life got in the way of good intentions".

The schooling language and the languages used at home seem to have more of an effect than the country of residence. Granted, the country of residence often dictates the schooling language and can also do so for the language the family uses the most but our study indicates that what plays a bigger role is how the languages are used within the family: if there is any sort of imbalance to be found, the minority language can easily be left out from everyday communication when the parent of the minority language also speaks the majority language.

4.3.2 Friends

The language the children use with their friends is most of the time naturally determined by which language the friend uses as their mother tongue. Frank answers that he uses only English without hesitation at first but, on second thought, adds that he has Finnish friends who do not speak English, but he is fine with using Finnish with them. Colin has both Finnish and English-speaking friends but has more of the latter ones due to having done most of his schooling in English. He had some Finnish friends at school in the UAE, but he rarely saw them due to overlapping schedules. If Colin and Frank had more contact with Finnish-speaking people outside of their family, their skills in Finnish could have developed further, even when living outside of Finland, and them partly losing the language could have been prevented.

Nathan was the only one of the children who estimated that he uses more Finnish than English with his friends, although this has not always been the case. When the family moved back to

Finland in 2008, Nathan went to the 7th grade in English. He believes that his Finnish back then was on a similar level as Colin's is currently. Even though they spoke English at school, Finnish was the strongest language out of the two for most of his classmates and they would make fun of Nathan's Finnish due to not sounding entirely native. Because of this, Nathan refrained from trying to use Finnish that often during the rest of 7th and 8th grades and he believes that this hindered the development of his Finnish skills at the time. When Nathan started to make friends outside of his school, he only spoke English with them for the first six months to a year or so because he was embarrassed about his Finnish. They would, in turn, speak Finnish to him and everyone thought that was completely normal, but as he looks back now, he thinks that this arrangement was a little strange. He says that because of these people, who were more supportive of him, he finally started speaking Finnish again in front of other people other than his family members. He recalls people saying his pronunciation of the voiceless alveolar /s/ sound was somehow sharper than most Finnish speakers'. As he began using Finnish more, he eventually went to high school in Finnish and did all of the usual courses in Finnish, although he mentions that when he thinks about what his writing was like back then, he had made many spelling mistakes which now seem impossible to him. The improvement of Nathan's Finnish language skills is evident for him as well.

4.3.3 Entertainment and media

We asked our participants which language they use more when entertainment is considered and, according to our predictions, all of the children answered that they consume mostly English media. Frank says that all of the movies and series he watches are in English, but he does also listen to some Finnish rap. If he were to watch something in Finnish, he does not need to put English subtitles on, but he might sometimes require Finnish ones. Colin also says that everything he consumes is in English and he sometimes puts English subtitles on if he were to watch something in Finnish. Nathan tells us that, like his brothers, the series and movies he tends to watch are mostly Anglo-American productions and, therefore, are in English. Like Frank, Nathan also listens to some Finnish music and does so often if there are other Finnish-speaking people with him.

When asked if our participants could come up with other situations where they would always use a certain language, Colin mentions video games. When he is playing them, he always

communicates with the other players in English. The language Frank uses when playing video games depends on whether he is playing with a friend who speaks English or someone who speaks Finnish. Nathan says that when he is playing video games, he uses only English, but he does not play communicative games, so the language he uses does not play as big of a role as in Frank and Colin's cases.

Similarly to the earlier topics, what seems to be the most influential factor in the case of entertainment and media is what languages the people in the surrounding situation use. The children prefer their entertainment to be in English but, yet again, are not opposed to switching to Finnish if needed. This is more of a question of the nature of the entertainment rather than the language in which it is made.

4.4 Personal Experience Regarding One's Dominant Language

Towards the end of our interviews, we included a question about the language the children associated their childhood with so that we could see whether their dominant language has perhaps changed during the years and if this correlates with the changes in their country of residence or their schooling language. In this case, we determined childhood to be the time before the age of 6 so that the children's schooling language would not have an effect on their language use. In the children's answers, we noticed that their country of residence has had an effect on this even without the influence of one's schooling language. Colin associates Finnish with his childhood because he grew up in Finland and Nathan also feels that his Finnish was a lot stronger than his English back then because he lived in Finland before he went to school. He also thinks that he spoke English with a Finnish accent because Finnish was his primary language at the time. Frank, however, still associates English with his childhood, even though he lived in Finland for about two of the six years mentioned above, because he still spoke mostly English. This can be explained by the family speaking more English than Finnish when everyone is present. This does not, however, coincide with Colin and Nathan's experiences of their dominant languages. Even though, language-wise, Nathan had the same setting that Frank did, he associates Finnish with his childhood because we assume that the parents could have tried to stick with the "one parent, one language" strategy more diligently with their first child and then, due to its challenges, did not include it sufficiently with their second child to achieve

a similar result. Why Colin feels the same way that Nathan does could indicate that the parents decided to try to stick with the “one parent, one language” strategy a little bit more strictly once again. The children’s personal preferences can also have an effect on this.

We asked the children to try and determine their current dominant languages so that we could get an idea about their personal views on the subject. We also asked Parent 1 to try and determine the children’s dominant languages so that we got a different point of view and could see whether these two aligned with our observations. We asked them to define the concept of a dominant language in order to find out how the children themselves define the term and, therefore, on what they base their own analysis of their dominant language. Dominant language for Nathan means the language in which one feels most comfortable speaking and is the most confident using to convey one’s meaning across to other people. Frank defines it as the ability to speak, write, and read without having to stop to think about it - excluding the rare occasions which can happen to everyone, bilingual or not - and the language just comes out easily and fluently. Colin’s definition is that a dominant language is the language one would usually use. All of these definitions coincide with our definition of a dominant language, which we have included in the background section of this thesis. Colin and Frank both consider their dominant language to be English, which we assumed to be the case due to their previous answers to our questions. Parent 1 also answers English for both Frank and Colin without hesitation but finds Nathan’s dominant language more difficult to determine. Nathan himself sees his current language situation as being equally Finnish-English bilingual and Parent 1 agrees with this.

Finally, we wanted to know what the children considered their mother tongue to be. We asked this because we were curious to see if their answers aligned with the ones they gave for the question about their dominant language and if they thought these two concepts equaled the same thing for them. Frank answered English, similarly to his earlier answers, and Nathan Finnish and English because he feels like he cannot decide between the two. Colin, however, answered: “Well, I would switch it from mother tongue and I would add a daddy tongue. So, like, mother tongue would be Finnish and father tongue would be English.” The separation in the languages he uses with each parent is the most evident in his answer.

In conclusion, our study, at least in its own scale, has shown that a bilingual child’s country of residence can have an effect on the forming of their dominant language. However, there are

many other factors that have their own roles in the process, and the effect of these can turn out to be greater than the effect of the country of residence, for example one's schooling language.

5 DISCUSSION

Before conducting the interviews, we had formed our own hypothesis about the possible outcome of our interviews. Regarding our first research question "How does the country of residence influence the forming of a bilingual person's dominant language?", our assumptions were that the country of residence, and the majority language spoken there, would determine a child's dominant language to a certain degree. We thought this could be the case especially when the child has spent a large portion of their life in a specific linguistic environment. However, we believed that this would not be the only determining factor; we assumed that the children's schooling language would play a crucial role in this process due to a child spending almost half of their day at school. Therefore, we included this topic in our second research question, "What kind of an effect does the language with which one has done most of their schooling have on the forming of their dominant language?" Eventually, the schooling language turned out to have the greatest effect on a bilingual child's dominant language.

Finally, we included our third and final research question, "How does a bilingual person define their own dominant language?" in order to find out on what grounds the children themselves base their answers to our interview questions. Knowledge of how a bilingual person views their own linguistic features offered a perspective on what aspects they themselves considered important regarding their dominant language. One may find it useful to notice the different levels of bilingualism within their own language competence in order to, for example, support one's skills in their non-dominant language when necessary: one might be able to consciously develop both languages to a more equal level and therefore consider themselves equally bilingual despite their linguistic history.

We assumed that the languages spoken within the family could switch the children's dominant languages around, regardless of their country of residence or schooling language. The way the parents have chosen to bring up their children, language-wise, can be the most crucial factor.

This, as we realized after conducting the interviews, should have been included in our research questions as well. In the case of this family, the parents' original plan of bringing the children up using the "one parent, one language" strategy was mostly discarded due to practical reasons. However, if this strategy were carried out similarly for all three of the children, they might all feel that they are equally bilingual: Nathan, who has had schooling in both Finnish and English for similar amounts of time, considers himself to be equally bilingual, whereas his two younger brothers, whose schooling backgrounds are mainly in English, consider English to be their dominant language. Furthermore, the children's personal attitudes towards Finnish and English have also affected their dominant languages, which is most evident in Frank's case.

The participants were open in the interview situation and appeared to give us honest answers even though the nature of our interview was rather personal. By interviewing one of the parents in addition to the children, we were able to form a more thorough view on the language situation of each child. However, it should be mentioned that the reliability of the youngest child's answers was questionable in some cases as he may have misunderstood some of the questions due to the abstract nature of some terms used during the interview. In order to avoid confusion, the questions could have been elaborated on more clearly if needed: the situation itself is challenging since the interview questions or the interviewers themselves should be neutral and objective so that they would not influence the interviewees' answers. Hence, it is difficult to ensure whether one's understanding of the interview question, and therefore their answer, provides the desired outcome.

6 CONCLUSION

The aim of our study was to explore the possible factors that can affect the forming of a bilingual child's dominant language. Firstly, we included the aspect of a country of residence and secondly, the influence of one's schooling language in our research questions. Finally, we wanted to find out how the participants of our study themselves determine the concept of a dominant language. The present study, and its limited amount of data, could not offer general evidence about the forming of a bilingual child's dominant language but it did present a set of interesting insights in the case of this family.

The results of our study indicate that the forming of a bilingual child's dominant language is not the result of one single factor but rather a combination of several different elements. We set out to find whether one's country of residence has an effect on a bilingual child's dominant language but on the basis of our interviews and in the case of this family, the schooling language appeared to be the most influential factor in the children's dominant language forming process. The children's dominant languages were mostly determined by the language they had done most of their studies in. On the basis of our study, determining the concept of a dominant language appeared to be of secondary importance since all of the participants' definitions aligned with our theoretical framework. Thus, our third research question could have been excluded and been replaced with a question regarding parents' bilingual child-raising strategies and their influence on their children's dominant languages.

Due to the gap in dominant language research, this thesis and its results provide an example to bilingual families and anyone who is interested in this particular phenomenon. Moreover, the results offer direction regarding issues related to bilingualism and bilingual upbringing to families and individuals alike. Even though the sampling of our study was rather limited because our data consisted only of siblings of one family, our data provided an unexpected range of varying answers. Further research on this topic could be done by expanding the amount of data; the participants of the study could include a diverse set of families with different linguistic backgrounds, which have used different strategies of bringing up bilingual children. This could further elaborate the effect the child's upbringing can have on their dominant language. Longitudinal research about this topic could offer an opportunity to see the changes in a child's dominant language when different factors of their lives are changed. For instance, the parents would stick with a certain strategy for raising the child throughout the research and other factors, such as the country of residence or the schooling language, would change. This method could perhaps make it easier to separate the effects of each factor and illustrate the changes happening in real time.

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8 APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Participant Consent Form for Research Purposes

Thank you for taking part in our study! The topic of our Bachelor's Thesis is finding out whether a bilingual child's country of residence has an effect on the forming of their dominant language.

This interview will take 20 minutes at most. The interview will be recorded: these recordings will be used only for the purpose of our study and will be disposed of afterwards. Your answers will be analyzed and used as the data of our Bachelor's Thesis. You will be anonymous, and pseudonyms will be used when referring to your answers.

If there are any unanswered questions, which we notice after the interview has taken place, we might be contacting you later.

You are more than welcome to ask any questions you might have at any point of the interview process!

By signing this form, I agree that my answers will be used in this Thesis.

I agree to be quoted directly in this Thesis.

Printed Name

Participant's Signature

Date

If there are any questions after the interview, you can contact us:

Pinja Mikkonen
[email address]

Lilli Tiainen
[email address]

Appendix 2

Interview Questions for Children

- Which language do you prefer for conducting this interview?
- What kind of schools did you go to? And in what language have you done most of your schooling?
- What languages do you speak? How have you acquired each of these languages (at school, at home...)?
- Which language do you use...
 - At home?
 - With friends?
 - With relatives?
 - At school?
 - Movies, series, music?
 - What is the language you use most nowadays?
 - Are some people connected to certain languages (mom, dad, grandparents?)
- How do you feel about using multiple languages daily?
- Do you find Finnish or English more difficult?
- Dominant language:
 - In which language do you prefer reading?
 - In which language do you prefer writing?
 - In which language do you prefer speaking?
 - In which language do you think/dream?
 - What is the language you use when feeling strong emotions?
 - Are there some things that you couldn't express in Finnish/English?
 - Are there other things that you always do in a certain language?
 - Have you noticed changes in this during your life?
- With which language do you associate childhood (before the age of 6)?
- What do you consider your dominant language to be?
 - How would you define it?

Appendix 3

Interview Questions for Parent 1 [Finnish]

- Kummalla kielellä haluat, että sinua haastatellaan?
- Millainen sinun kielitaustasi on?
- Mitä kieliä käytätte kotona?
 - Mitä kieltä käytätte keskenänne ja lastenne kanssa?
 - Puhuvatko lapsenne sukulaistensa kanssa näiden äidinkielellä?
 - Valitsitteko tiettyä metodia kaksikielisten lasten kasvattamiseen? Jos valitsitte, niin minkä?
- Miten valitsitte lastenne koulut ja koulukielet?
- Oletteko huomanneet tällä olleen vaikutusta lastenne vahvempaan kieleen?
 - Ovatko lapsenne olleet vähemmistökielensä kursseilla?
- Millaisia haasteita olette kohdanneet lastenne kaksikielisessä kasvatuksessa?
 - Onko asuinmaalla ollut mielestänne vaikutusta tähän?
 - Olisitteko tehneet jotain toisin (kielten osalta)?
- Mikä on mielestänne kunkin lapsen vahvempi kieli?

Appendix 4

Interview questions for parent 1 [English]

- In which language would you like to conduct this interview?
- What kind of language background do you have?
- Which languages do you use at home?
 - Which language do you use with parent 2 and with your children?
 - Do your children speak with their relatives using their relatives' mother tongue?
 - Did you choose a certain method to bring up bilingual children? In case you did, which one?
- How did you choose your children's schools and schooling languages? Have you noticed it would have affected your children's dominant languages?
 - Have your children taken classes in their non-dominant language?
- What kind of challenges have you faced when bringing up your children bilingually?
 - Do you think that your country of residence would have had an impact?
 - Would you have done something differently, language-wise?
- Which language do you think is each of your child's dominant language?