

Abstract

Family language policy (FLP) is a relatively new, dynamically developing area of interdisciplinary research. Its assumptions draw on the theoretical findings of psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics, as it concerns phenomena that are the domain of this field of science, especially processes related to language acquisition and the attainment of bilingualism or multilingualism by children. In addition, FLP analyses are part of a trend in research on a specific type of language policy, namely language planning at the family level. In the literature on the subject, FLP is commonly defined as intentional actions by parents or caregivers aimed at shaping desirable language behaviors in children. The primary context for research on FLP is Polish multilingual families, including those with migration experience. The analysis of the LPP structure utilises Bernard Spolsky's (2004) language policy model, which encompasses language practices, ideologies, and language management. Language practices are understood as a pattern of family communication resulting from the subjective beliefs of adult caregivers about specific languages, for example, their anticipated usefulness in achieving life goals. Language management, on the other hand, refers to all efforts made by parents to promote the planned bilingualism or multilingualism of their children.

The doctoral dissertation was devoted to the phenomenon of family language policy among Poles living abroad. It aimed to analyse the language practices and ideologies, as well as language management of the representatives of the Polish diaspora. The first stage of work on the dissertation was to review scientific reports on multilingualism and research in the field of language policy, especially the planning of language acquisition and use at the family level, also in the context of the Polish language. The results of the analysis of the literature on the subject are included in the first three chapters of the doctoral dissertation. Chapter One presents the concept of FLP, explains the terminology, and discusses the history and directions of research. Its interdisciplinary nature is emphasized. An important part of this chapter is the discussion of selected issues related to bilingualism and language socialization, as well as the presentation of changes in the understanding of bilingualism. It explains how a better understanding of the processes taking place in the mind of a bilingual person influences the planning of language acquisition and use based on the principle of complementarity, i.e., in accordance with the current life situation of the person concerned. The next part of the chapter is devoted to discussing the issue of language policy and its importance in maintaining minority languages. Selected legal acts regulating the language policy of the Republic of Poland and the European Union are also presented.

Chapter Two is devoted to explaining the importance of the family in language planning. It discusses in detail the application of Bernard Spolsky's model (2004) to the description of family language policy. It also presents factors influencing the formation and implementation of FLP, such as the emotions of family members and the agency of children, which consists of various attempts to implement their own model of communication, not always in line with their parents' intentions.

Chapter Three addresses the issue of Polish communities outside the country. It discusses their status and explains the terminology used to describe them. It outlines the rich history of research on the Polish diaspora and its language, which has been both linguistically and sociologically oriented. The latest analyses conducted from the perspective of the FLP are also presented. An important element of these analyses is the attitudes of parents towards languages of communication at home, including in the process of re-emigration. Institutional forms of teaching Polish and in Polish, which are an important element in supporting minority languages, are also presented.

A review of the literature on the subject, especially concerning the Polish context, revealed the need for further in-depth analysis of the processes of shaping and implementing the FLP of Poles living outside the country, which resulted in the undertaking of our own research. The conceptualization and methodology of the project are discussed in the Fourth Chapter of the doctoral dissertation. A qualitative approach was considered the most appropriate for conducting the research, and a semi-structured individual interview was adopted as the data collection method. The research was conducted remotely in the MS Teams application from October 2022 to February 2023. It was preceded by pilot studies. The study group consisted of twenty-one Polish parents living abroad, whose countries of residence were Ireland (4 people), Great Britain (3 people), France (2 people), the USA (2 people), Italy (2 people), Spain (1 person), Romania (1 person), Hungary (1 person), Iraq (1 person), Sweden (1 person), Norway (1 person), Cyprus (1 person), and Israel (1 person). Eight people formed endogamous families in which both parents were Polish, while thirteen formed exogamous families in which the other parent was a foreigner. Five exogamous families lived in a country other than the country of origin of the foreign parent. The purposive and snowball sampling methods were used.

Before conducting the interviews, research questions were formulated. In terms of language practices, answers were sought to the following questions: what is the model of communication at home in the families covered by the study, how do members of these families communicate with each other in public places, and how do they communicate with extended family and other Poles. In terms of language ideology, the following were examined: what are the parents' beliefs about multilingualism and multilingual upbringing, what are their beliefs about Polish as their native and inherited language, and what are the reasons for their decision to raise their children bilingually, in

particular to preserve the Polish language. In terms of language management, the analysis focused on the actions taken to preserve the Polish language in the families of the interviewees.

Chapter Five is devoted to the analysis of the results of our own research. Spolsky's model (2004) was used to discuss individual elements of the FLP of the families covered by the study. The data collected during the research was presented using codes identified during the analysis of the interview content, and additionally illustrated with diagrams generated in the NVivo program. This chapter quotes numerous excerpts from parents' reports.

The last Chapter of the thesis discusses the results of the research project. t. Answers to the research questions posed in Chapter Four are formulated. Communication patterns of the families covered by the study are indicated. The language ideologies of parents that determine the shape of the FLP are shown, as well as the actions they take to support their children's bilingualism and how they deal with their children's resistance to following the rules of communication at home. This is followed by a discussion of the theoretical findings presented in the previous parts of the dissertation. In addition, the possibilities for the practical application of the results of the author's own research are indicated, and their methodological limitations are discussed.