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Love in Translation: Family Language Policy among Indonesian-Finnish Intercultural Families in Finland

Master's Thesis in Education

KASVATUSTIETEIDEN TIEDEKUNTA

Education and Globalization, Master's Programme in Education

2020

University of Oulu

Faculty of Education

Love in Translation: Family Language Policy among Indonesian-Finnish Intercultural Families in Finland (Aliva Sholihat)

Master's Thesis in Education, 103 pages, 2 appendices

May 2020

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This study explores how family language policies are negotiated among Indonesian-Finnish intercultural families in Finland, as seen from the Indonesian mothers' perspectives. The significance of this topic emerges from both the current discourse on multilingualism in Finland and the lack of research on the heritage language maintenance of Indonesian diaspora communities in the Nordic context.

This study employs Family Language Policy (FLP) as a theoretical framework that encompasses both the micro perspective of language acquisition theory and the macro paradigm of language policy theory.

A narrative methodology was implemented throughout the study. Six Indonesian mothers who engage in intercultural relationships were interviewed to share their experiences in bi/multilingual childrearing in Finland. Narrative analysis was applied to present the mothers' individual stories, while thematic analysis was adopted to discuss the elements that characterise the construction and enactment of FLP in these intercultural families.

The study reveals that FLP is negotiated within the interactions of language ideologies/beliefs, language practices, language planning, intra-family factors and macro-societal factors. FLP is dynamic and subject to re-negotiation across the family's life. The mothers' stories acknowledge that the Indonesian mothers and the Finnish fathers have an equal say in negotiating the FLP in these families. Despite the active roles of parents, children's agency in choosing their preferred languages to speak at home appears to be the defining factor in the enactment of FLP.

With Indonesia's specific sociohistorical context put in perspective, the mothers' stories suggest that family context provides limited space for heritage language maintenance as society has a stronger influence in socialising children into the dominant language. In Finland, Neuvola (maternity clinic) plays a crucial role in affirming the state's protection of ethnolinguistic rights by advising parents to speak their heritage languages at home. In reality, immigrant heritage languages are problematised as a threat to social cohesion; yet, at the same time, recognised as part of Finland's language reserve. These competing discourses create dissonance for these mothers. Furthermore, the mothers' stories raise a question on whether the education system has been able to deliver its promises in providing equal support to children with diverse linguistic backgrounds. Therefore, with the absence of a conscious and deliberate FLP at home, these intercultural families are even more at risk of heritage language loss.

Keywords: Family Language Policy (FLP), heritage language maintenance, Indonesian diaspora, intercultural families, multilingualism.

Universitas Oulu  
Fakultas Pendidikan

*Love in Translation: Kebijakan Bahasa dalam Keluarga Pernikahan Campur Indonesia-Finlandia di Finlandia* (Aliva Sholihat)

Tesis Master Ilmu Pendidikan, 103 halaman, 2 lampiran

Mei 2020

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Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana kebijakan bahasa dinegosiasikan di dalam keluarga pernikahan campur Indonesia-Finlandia di Finlandia. Relevansi topik ini muncul dari diskursus mengenai kemultibahasaan di Finlandia dan kurangnya studi tentang pelestarian bahasa ibu di komunitas diaspora Indonesia dalam konteks negara-negara Nordik. Studi ini menggunakan kerangka teori *Family Language Policy (FLP)* yang mengakomodasi perspektif mikro dari teori akuisisi bahasa dan perspektif makro dari teori kebijakan bahasa.

Metode penelitian naratif digunakan di dalam studi ini. Enam orang ibu asal Indonesia yang menikah dengan pria Finlandia diwawancara untuk berbagi pengalaman mereka dalam membesarkan anak multibahasa di Finlandia. Pengalaman masing-masing ibu disajikan melalui analisis naratif, sedangkan analisis tematik digunakan untuk mendiskusikan berbagai elemen yang mempengaruhi konstruksi kebijakan bahasa di dalam keluarga.

Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa kebijakan bahasa keluarga dinegosiasikan di ruang interaksi antara ideologi bahasa, praktik bahasa, perencanaan bahasa, faktor-faktor internal keluarga dan faktor-faktor sosial-makro. Kebijakan bahasa di dalam keluarga bersifat dinamis dan mengalami negosiasi ulang seiring waktu. Para ibu asal Indonesia ini mengakui peran penting mereka dalam menegosiasikan kebijakan bahasa di dalam keluarga. Namun, terlepas dari keterlibatan aktif orang tua, anak berdaya dalam memutuskan bahasa yang ingin mereka gunakan, dan hal ini menjadi faktor penentu dalam penerapan kebijakan bahasa di dalam keluarga.

Pengalaman para ibu ini menunjukkan bahwa konteks keluarga menyediakan ruang yang terbatas bagi usaha pelestarian bahasa ibu. Masyarakat memiliki pengaruh yang lebih kuat dalam mensosialisasikan anak ke dalam bahasa mayoritas. Di Finlandia, *Neuvola* (klinik ibu dan anak) berperan penting dalam mengukuhkan perlindungan hak-hak etnolinguistik warga dengan menyarankan orang tua untuk berbicara bahasa ibu masing-masing. Walaupun demikian, kenyataan keseharian menunjukkan bahasa warisan kaum pendatang dianggap sebagai ancaman bagi kohesi sosial, sekaligus sebagai bagian dari kekayaan bahasa masyarakat Finlandia. Paradoks wacana tersebut menciptakan kebingungan tersendiri. Lebih jauh lagi, muncul pertanyaan apakah sistem pendidikan di Finlandia sudah mampu menuntaskan janji kesetaraan dengan menyediakan dukungan yang merata bagi siswa dengan latar belakang bahasa yang beragam. Oleh karena itu, dengan berkurangnya kesadaran akan pentingnya kebijakan bahasa di dalam rumah, keluarga campuran Indonesia-Finlandia ini akan cenderung mengalami resiko lebih tinggi kehilangan bahasa ibu.

Kata kunci: bahasa ibu, diaspora Indonesia, *Family Language Policy (FLP)*, multibahasa, pernikahan campur.

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# 1 Beginning the research journey

“All families invent their parents and children, give each of them a story, character, fate, and even a language.” – *Out of Place: A Memoir*

(Said, 2012, p. 20)

## 1.1 Locating myself in this research

This thesis really started as a personal journey of finding ourselves in foreign lands. Almost a decade passed that as a family, we have been swayed back and forth between our home country and someplace abroad. The consecutive series of packing and unpacking led me to reflect on a particular question surrounding our lives. “How can we imagine home in someone else’s land where the geography, the climate, the language and the culture are so different than ours?”

The human experience is lived and expressed through stories (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 6). As a mother, I may have the liberty to invent the bedtime stories I tell my children. But then, they are their own humans with their own minds and voices. Children grow taller and eventually write their own narratives. What I arbitrarily claim as “our land, our language, our culture” might be completely different from what they perceive as theirs. As much as I want to preserve our Indonesian cultural roots, our spiritual home, they will get to construct their own identities.

Language is one essential issue when the notions of home and identity are discussed. We live our lives in a given language; our experiences are narrated, immersed and reminisced in that language (Said, 2012, p. 17). I was raised in a polyglot Indonesia. My memories are layered in a mixture of several languages. Though I mostly speak Bahasa Indonesia, the language that invokes that maternal atmosphere is Javanese—the mother tongue of all the matriarchs generations before me. But then, I spent most of my childhood times in a region where people speak Sundanese. The joy of play with my peers was experienced in the vernacular of Parahyangan—the mountainous land of West Java, where the ancient Gods reside. Growing up, Arabic was also part of the story. Almost 90% of Indonesians are Muslim (Statistics Indonesia, 2010); we were taught how to read the Qur’an. We recited and memorised the verses, copied them in our notebooks. Not necessarily understood the meaning of the words, but the lyrical sounds of Arabic were all too familiar for us. Later in my teens, when the fall of 32 years of military dictatorship brought us democracy, English became more widespread. Bilingual schools started to

flourish in major urban Indonesia. This kind of multilingual reality is prevalent in Indonesia. People in the archipelago live their communal lives among hundreds of ethnic languages. On top of that, they navigate between conversing in the nation's official language, Bahasa Indonesia, and engaging in the globalising realm of English.

Living abroad, I have always been wondering about the state of heritage language maintenance among the Indonesian diaspora communities. The stigma around Indonesians overseas is that they are rarely eager to pass down Bahasa Indonesia to their children. Shifting to the dominant language is preferred since English and other European languages are seen as more modern and prestigious.

However, as I engaged myself in a lot of conversations with the Indonesian mothers in diaspora, I realised, stigma has always been superficial and too simplistic. Families are struggling to maintain Bahasa Indonesia, not necessarily for the lack of intention, but mostly because of the authentic challenges they face in daily lives. Families are negotiating between their linguistic beliefs, goals and practices within the specific macro-societal contexts they are living in (King, Fogle, & Logan-Terry, 2008, pp. 10-11; Schwartz, 2010, p. 186). Based on my own experience, such is not an easy affair.

The realities are even far more intricate for mixed-marriage intercultural families. When two worlds collide, conflicts are bound to happen. When the origins are half the globe apart, and the cultures are so distinct, complex negotiation dynamics are expected (Seto & Cavallaro, 2007, pp. 260-261). In my diasporic journey, I have befriended quite many Indonesian women who are married to foreign nationals. I became very much interested in their experiences of raising intercultural families. In their shoes, the questions on language, identity, and the longing for home are magnified in many ways. I find the intersections between their experiences and mine as fellow Indonesian mothers living in diaspora intriguing to explore.

Unfortunately, when it concerns Indonesian diaspora heritage language maintenance, limited studies are available. In the Nordic context where I am currently located, I am struggling to find any research literature that touches on this specific issue. Thus, exploring the attitude of the Indonesian diaspora community in Finland towards Bahasa Indonesia may add valuable new insights into the field of immigrant heritage language maintenance.

Through this study, I aim to gain a meaningful understanding of the multilingual childrearing experiences from Indonesian mothers—especially those who engage in intercultural relationships. As the narrative cognition of human minds constructs meaning through stories, they are the best tool available in understanding people’s experiences (Polkinghorne, 1995). For that reason, I approach this study through a narrative inquiry which uses stories as the data and storying for its methodology. Furthermore, since relational ethics stays at the heart of narrative research (Ellis, 2016, p. 435), locating my positionality in this research seems like the first thing I need to do. I feel the urge to explain where I am coming from to open an honest dialogue with my research participants, as well as the future readers of this thesis (Creswell, 2007, pp. 178-180). In this narrative study, my experiences, my beliefs, my understanding about language, home, and identity are intertwined with those of my participants as we are co-constructing the narratives (Bold, 2012e, p. 8). Together, we are creating meaning through these stories of multilingual childrearing in Finland. What started as a personal project, turns into a realisation that the personal is always intricately woven into the complex social, political, cultural and historical relationships.

## **1.2 Intercultural marriage**

With the increase in human mobility, intercultural marriage has become more and more common nowadays. Researchers define intercultural marriage as the union of two individuals who have different cultural backgrounds linked to racial, ethnic, social class, religious, or nationality differences (Hutter, 1990, p. 143). The term intercultural marriage is often used interchangeably with other terms such as “exogamous marriage”, “intermarried”, “international marriage” and “mixed-marriage” (Buettner, 2016, p. 10).

Intercultural marriage poses particular challenges for the couple as the differences in values, worldviews, languages, habits and lifestyles may lead to marital conflicts. Seto and Cavarallo (2007, pp. 260-261) suggest that an individual involved in an intercultural marriage may feel alienated in the marriage because of cultural dissonance with the partner. Miscommunication often happens because of differences in the native languages and cultural codes that may not be easy to interpret (Piller, 2001, p. 199; Seto & Cavallaro, 2007, pp. 260-261). Power relations could also contribute to marital conflict in intercultural marriage (Seto & Cavallaro, 2007, pp. 260-261). Certain race, gender, language and culture are perceived by society to carry the notion

of power that they may trigger coercive power dynamic in the relationship. The change of geography may also cause a feeling of isolation and marginalisation, especially for a woman coming from ‘less powerful’ cultural background moving to the husband’s country in the Western world.

Furthermore, not only does that power dynamic affect the spouse personally, but it also affects childrearing. The more powerful culture tends to dominate the parental decision making, such as the choice of parenting style, discipline, home language, and education (Seto & Cavallaro, 2007, pp. 260-261). In the context of Indonesian-Finnish mixed-marriage couple in Finland, due to the developed-developing countries divide, the Indonesian mothers may be perceived by society as the ones from the ‘weaker’ culture. My main interest is in exploring these Indonesian mothers experiences in maintaining their heritage language amidst the dominance of the majority language. For that reason, this thesis focuses on the mothers’ perspectives on how family language policies are negotiated in these Indonesian-Finnish intercultural families.

### **1.3 Research questions and aims**

The main question that guides this research is as follows:

*How are family language policies negotiated in Indonesian-Finnish intercultural families in Finland? (as seen from the mothers’ perspectives)*

From this question, another subquestion arises. Although this subquestion is embedded in the main research question, I need to explicitly clarify it to provide me with a clearer structure in answering my research question:

*What elements influence the construction of family language policies in these families?*

Despite its focus on the family realm, this thesis is located within the broader story of educational research. As educators, we are invested in pursuing quality education for all, such as listed in the Sustainable Development Goals framework. Nevertheless, our increasingly diverse society poses a challenge into how equality in the provision of education is achieved. Minority students and students with immigrant background are often the ones to suffer when the education system fails to meet its promises.

With the growing diversity in Finland, more studies that tap into the heritage language maintenance of immigrant background students are needed. This research on Family Language Policy

may provide insights into how intercultural families negotiate their multilingual realities. It can be helpful to inform policymakers on how the education system can support families in their heritage language maintenance. Furthermore, language awareness in the teaching professionals and language-sensitive pedagogy can be developed to meet the demand of today's multilingual landscape (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017, p. 13). As argued by Curdt-Christiansen (2009, p. 356), Family Language Policy studies may act as a mediational tool linking the educational framework, social structure, political agenda and the intimate family domain. Thus, from a broader perspective, this research can help raise critical awareness towards minority language maintenance for parents, educators, policymakers and the general public in Finland.

From a more specific point of view, this study provides a space for a dialogue for the Indonesian mothers in diaspora. The questions about language are always interwoven with the notion of identity and the longing for home (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, p. 365). Through this study alone, we may not find the key to the best strategies to maintain Bahasa Indonesia when living abroad. Nevertheless, this study may invite Indonesian diaspora communities to start engaging in constructive conversations around their heritage language maintenance.

To summarise, the structure of this thesis includes eight chapters. Following the introduction, the second chapter provides a contextual framework for this research by presenting brief commentaries on the history of Bahasa Indonesia and the language situation in Finland. The third chapter covers the theoretical framework where family language policy is explained from the micro perspective of language acquisition theory and the macro perspective of language policy theory. Sociolinguistic profiles of the Indonesian diaspora in different contexts are also explored to provide comparative insights for this research. The fourth chapter explains the methodological journey of this research in which I argue for narrative methodology as the most suitable approach for this study. The fifth chapter explores the individual stories of the Indonesian mothers, where their bi/multilingual childrearing journeys are narrated through narrative analysis. How Family Language Policies are negotiated in these intercultural families are interwoven in these mothers' stories. The sixth chapter presents a thematic analysis in which the elements that influence the construction and enactment of FLP are discussed and linked to the theories. The seventh chapter reflects on this research journey, where I ponder on the trustworthiness issue and the ethical dimension of the study. Finally, the last chapter is the concluding remarks that highlight the main takeaways from this study.

## **2 The tale of two languages**

This chapter presents a general overview of the linguistic context where this research is situated. A short commentary on the history of Bahasa Indonesia portrays the linguistic complexities of those who speak it. In addition to that, a brief summary about Finnish and the language situation in Finland provides a glimpse into the challenges faced by the participants of this study.

### **2.1 Bahasa Indonesia: The invention of a language**

The Indonesian archipelago is home for approximately 260 million people with more than 300 ethnicities and 700 languages (Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture, 2018). Despite its language super-diversity, Indonesia adopts only one national language, Bahasa Indonesia. The official language has been central in shaping the national identity shared by hundreds of ethnolinguistic groups in the country. In 1928, culminating the independence movements from the Dutch colonialism, the Youth Pledge declared Bahasa Indonesia as the archipelago's uniting language. A shared consciousness with a specific political goal was collectively imagined through language (Anderson, 1991, p. 132).

The whole enterprise of Bahasa Indonesia appeals for an intriguing argument that it is an “invented language” (Anwar, 2016, p. 101). It does not emerge organically from the communal lives of those who speak it (Heryanto, 1995, p. 5). The language started out as nobody's mother tongue. It took off as a colonial project when the Dutch East Indies government modernised one of the archipelago's ethnic languages, the Malay language from the people of Riau peninsula. The vernacular Malay itself had been used as the *lingua franca* of traders sailing across the archipelago for centuries. The colonial government, seeking an effective means of governing the heterogeneous colony, began to adopt the language for its administration (Heryanto, 1995, p. 6). A standardised version of Malay language—later known as Bahasa Indonesia—was constructed through the introduction of the Latin alphabet, a system of grammar and syntax, as well as various loan words (Lowenberg, 1992, p. 62). By the time Indonesia declared its independence from colonial rule in 1945, less than 10% of the population could speak the language (Maryanto, 2008, p. 72).

Systematic language planning and engineering surrounding Bahasa Indonesia continued in post-colonial Indonesia. The New Order regime began the massive dissemination of Bahasa

Indonesia through the education system and state-sponsored language development programmes. By the early 1990s, a national survey showed that 83% of the Indonesian population older than five years old could converse in Bahasa Indonesia (Maryanto, 2008, p. 72). However, despite being widely spoken by the general population, ethnic languages remain as the mother tongue for the majority of Indonesian. Today, it is approximated that only 20% of the population use Bahasa Indonesia as the first language in their homes (Kosonen, 2017, p. 481).

## **2.2 Finnish: A language like no other**

In many European countries, even if we do not speak the language, we may recognise some words in the street signs as they share many word roots with each other. However, that may not be the case in Finland. While most European languages belong to the Indo-European language family, the Finnish language is unrelated to the group. Finnish belongs to the Finno-Ugric language family, which makes it akin only to the Estonian, somewhat distantly related to Hungarian and Saami language (Latomaa & Nuolijärvi, 2002, p. 100). The distinctive features of Finnish language give the Finns a sense of uniqueness. The language is a source of national pride and acts as the core of the Finnish national identity (Blommaert, Leppänen, & Spotti, 2012, p. 12).

Today, Finland is an officially bilingual country with Swedish and Finnish having equal status since 1922 (Latomaa & Nuolijärvi, 2002, p. 95). In the 1980s, the linguistic situation changed in many ways as an influx of immigrants started coming to Finland. Although the immigrant communities are still small compared to other Nordic countries, several linguistic minorities have been established. According to Statistics Finland (2018), 87.6% of Finns speak Finnish as their first language, 5.2% are Swedish speakers, and 7.1% have other languages as their mother tongue. The top minority language communities include the Russian, Estonian, Arabic, Somali, English and Kurdish speakers.

In the 1990s, the Finnish government started a number of legislative and education reforms to improve the status of minority languages (Latomaa & Nuolijärvi, 2002, p. 95). In 2001, the proposals for the New Language Act and the indigenous Saami Language Act were written (Latomaa & Nuolijärvi, 2002, p. 95). Nevertheless, the discussions in Finland today mostly centre around the future of Finnish and Swedish among the widespread use of English in the globalising world. When immigrants are concerned, minority languages are still at the periphery of the public debates (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2017, p. 22). Studies on the immigrant

language maintenance in Finland are limited and mostly focus on other European languages such as Russian and Estonian.

Globally, Finland has been hailed as an educational paradise where children are secured with equal opportunities regardless of their socioeconomic and ethnolinguistic backgrounds. When it concerns language diversity, the principles of Finland's educational policies have set a strong foundation for ensuring first and second language instruction for all students, including immigrants (Blommaert et al., 2012, p. 68). The legislation guarantees one's right to preserving the mother tongue. It is mandated by the Finnish compulsory education core curricula that all students must be able to maintain and develop their mother tongue in addition to learning Finnish or Swedish (Finnish National Board of Education, 2016, p. 88).

However, the actual grassroots experiences of immigrant children may speak to a rather different kind of reality (Blommaert et al., 2012, p. 68). The education system is grappling with the increasing numbers of students with diverse linguistic backgrounds. There is a considerable variation in classroom practices which may not necessarily reflect the ideals of the educational policy. Immigrant students have varying experiences with multilingualism in Finnish schools that one may wonder if they really enjoy a satisfactory level of equality (Blommaert et al., 2012, p. 68).

Furthermore, Nikula et al. (2012, p. 58) through a discourse analysis of language policy documents argue that there are two parallel discourses around multilingualism in Finland. On the one hand, immigrant multilingualism is seen as a problem that needs to be solved as it creates a threat to the social cohesion of Finnish society. On the other hand, there are voices that recognise immigrant languages as a valuable resource to Finland's language reserve. This tension seems to reflect the general political debates around immigration in Finland, which is still far from a resolved issue.

To conclude this chapter, the commentaries that present a basic understanding of the history of Bahasa Indonesia and the language situation in Finland are relevant to build a context-awareness that can guide this research. The next chapter explores the different theories that can be adopted to construct a theoretical framework for this Family Language Policy study.

### 3 Exploring the theories

The main theoretical framework of this research stems from the study of Family Language Policy (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; King et al., 2008; Schwartz & Verschik, 2013). FLP is a field of study that intersects with multiple theories such as *language policy* (Spolsky, 2004), *child language acquisition* (King, 2006; Ritchie & Bhatia, 1999), *language socialisation* (Kulick & Schieffelin, 2004; Lanza, 1997), *language shift* (Fishman, 1991) and *language ecology* (Haugen, 1972). Furthermore, I also present an overview of sociolinguistic profiles of the Indonesian diaspora families in several different countries (Lie, Wijaya, & Kuntjara, 2018; Muslim & Brown, 2016; Utomo, 2014), to provide comparative insights for the Indonesian-Finnish intercultural family context where this research is situated.

#### 3.1 Family language policy (FLP)

Curdt-Christiansen (2009, p. 352) defines FLP as a “deliberate attempt at practising a particular language use pattern and particular literacy practices within home domains and among family members.” FLP is usually studied in the bi/multilingual context where the parents may speak different languages, or where the home language is different from the society’s majority language.

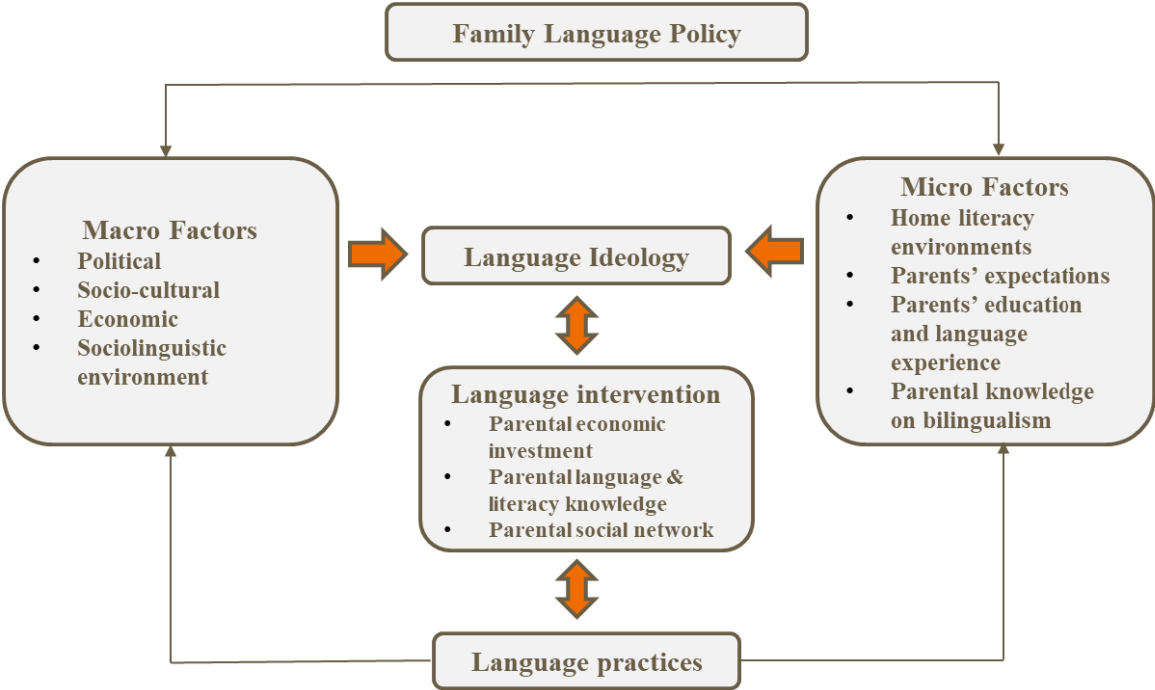
FLP has two distinct theoretical starting points (King et al., 2008, p. 2). One is derived from the discipline of language policy which is rooted in the fields of sociology of education, sociolinguistics, and applied linguistics. Another one draws from the area of child language acquisition which is a subfield of psychology. FLP combines the “macro” point of view of language policy with the “micro” point of view of interactional patterns in child language acquisition theory, within the intimate sphere of home and family. Thus, the discipline provides us with a well-rounded framework to understand how languages are “managed, learned, and negotiated” in the family context. FLP also helps us understand how child-parents language interactions unfold, as well as how child language development occurs (King et al., 2008, p. 1; Schwartz & Verschik, 2013, p. 1).

FLP is linked to Spolsky’s (2004, pp. 5-14) three essential elements of Language Policy: Language belief or ideology, language practice, and language planning or management (see also Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, p. 355; King et al., 2008, p. 1; Schwartz & Verschik, 2013, p. 4). Spolsky (2004, p. 5) defines language ideologies as the beliefs regarding language and language

use. Language practice is about the repeated pattern when people select a specific language to use amongst the language choices that they have. Language planning or management is related to efforts and interventions aimed to influence language practice. These three components interact with various intra-family and societal factors, constructing the dynamics of FLP (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, p. 352).

Curdt-Christiansen (2009, p. 355) suggests the model that adopts Spolky’s generic language policy theory into the specific domain of FLP. It portrays the complex relationship between ideology, interventions/management and language practices within the family realm. She argues that language ideology is contextual and interrelated with the broader political, economic, socio-cultural and sociolinguistics environment as well as the specific parental educational experiences and expectations. The following graph in Figure 1 presents the interactions between macro and micro factors that influence the construction and enactment of FLP.

**Figure 1.** Various factors interacting in the construction and enactment of FLP (adapted from Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, p. 355)



### 3.1.1 Child language acquisition

FLP domain is strongly interrelated with the study of child language acquisition. Child language acquisition research usually focuses on the detailed study of child-caretaker interactions to understand the mechanisms and conditions where children learn one or more languages in the early years (King et al., 2008, p. 2; Ritchie & Bhatia, 1999, pp. 3-5). However, King et al. (2008, p. 3) argue that significant gaps remain within the child language acquisition field. For instance, concerning bilingual development, it is still unclear on how to ensure balanced bilingualism; how much and what types of exposure of the languages are required. Furthermore, the field of study has not yet been able to provide satisfactory explanations on why children raised under similar linguistic conditions (for instance with English speaking father and Indonesian speaking mother, each of whom speaks their native language to the child) often have different linguistic outcomes in terms of language preference and proficiency.

More importantly, bilingualism itself is a contested term. Literature provides a rich range of typologies of bilinguals such as “early versus late, fluent and nonfluent, functional and nonfunctional, balanced and unbalanced, primary versus secondary” and so on (Ritchie & Bhatia, 1999, p. 571). In this research, unless otherwise stated, I refer to the working definition of bilingualism suggested by Bloomfield (as cited in Ritchie & Bhatia, 1999, p. 571), “native-like control of two languages.” The term is used in the sense that the speaker has a relatively balanced mastery of the two languages. Nevertheless, the notion of “balanced” should not be taken in the absolute sense as pragmatic dominance of one of the languages is inevitable (Ritchie & Bhatia, 1999, p. 573).

Researchers also argue that using the term “mother tongue” in an increasingly diverse society is problematic. There is this monolingual bias embedded in the mother tongue myth implying that if one can only have one mother, then one can only have one mother tongue. Such a paradigm approaches bilingualism with the assumption that two parallel monolingual systems exist separately. The term does not reflect the inclusiveness that we need in today’s multicultural and multilingual society (McPake et al., 2007, p. 20).

According to Skutnabb-Kangas (1981, p. 18), the notion of mother tongue may refer to different criteria. In terms of its origin, mother tongue can mean the language(s) that one learnt first. It can also mean the language(s) that one identifies with, or the language(s) that other people identify someone as a native speaker. Moreover, mother tongue can be related to competence

as the language(s) that one knows best. While in terms of function, mother tongue can be understood as the language(s) that one uses most often.

However, when we refer to one's mother tongue, we cannot assume that it is his or her dominant language, or first language (L1), or that it is necessarily the language spoken by the parents at home. One's first language may not be the language one knows best or uses most. The linguistic realities of plurilingual people are multilayered and complex.

In the context of this research, I refer to mother tongue as one's first language(s) or L1. In Bahasa Indonesia, the direct translation of the mother tongue is "bahasa ibu", and it is commonly understood as one's first language(s) taught by one's mother. Hence, I decided to keep using the term mother tongue in many parts of this research as this is the term that my participants are most familiar with.

Instead of mother tongue, researchers argue for the term *heritage language* in the context of multilingual and multicultural society (Laakso, Sarhimaa, Åkermark, & Toivanen, 2016, pp. 11-13). Heritage language may refer to indigenous language, ethnic language, minority language, immigrant language, community language or home language. The central aspect of the heritage language is that unlike the mother tongue, it does not imply perfect language skills or native fluency (Laakso et al., 2016, pp. 11-13). Many heritage language speakers, especially in the second generation immigrant communities, are more fluent in the majority language, which is often their language of education.

### 3.1.2 Language ideology

Language ideology is about the shared beliefs on appropriate language practices, a consensus on assigning values and prestige to each of the language aspects and the language varieties in the repertoire (Spolsky, 2004, p. 14). These beliefs can influence practices, or retrospectively can be derived from practices. Language ideology is often situated deep in the subconscious, linked to our beliefs about the social utility of a particular language, rooted in society's linguistic values and cultures (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, p. 355).

Curdt-Christiansen (2009, p. 365) asserts that language as an identity marker is the most significant feature in the parental beliefs about language. One of the ways people construct and frame their identities is through the language they use. For immigrant families, the parents may have a strong language ideology towards heritage language maintenance because they want to

preserve their identities, values and cultures through their immigrant roots (Schwartz, 2008, p. 402).

Furthermore, King (2000, p. 168) argues that language ideology has a pivotal role in “mediating link between language use and social organisation.” Understanding parental language ideologies provide us with rich insight into family relationships, their perception on the status of their cultural group in the mainstream society, and their attitude towards maintenance of their home language. Hence, any attempt to understand FLP entails a closer look upon language ideology formation and its sources.

King and Fogle (2006, p. 695) argue that in the context of families with migration backgrounds, parents’ personal experiences of migration and learning the host country’s language have a significant influence in shaping parents’ language beliefs on promoting bi/multilingualism. Public discourses about bilingualism also influence parent’s views on raising children bilingually (Piller, 2001, p. 70). Parents who decided to raise their children bilingually were often familiar with research on bilingualism popularised by the media’s positive portrayals on the issue. Furthermore, parental language beliefs are influenced by professional advice (e.g. from teachers, doctors, psychologists, nurses) and advice from friends or relatives (King et al., 2008, p. 913). Society’s cultural notions about what is perceived as good and bad parenting also have an impact on parental language ideologies. Some communities might view raising children bilingually as a bad parenting practice, while some others consider it as a good one (King & Fogle, 2006, p. 697). Parents who view the advantage of bilingualism in preserving their cultural heritage, as well as promoting economic opportunities might consider themselves as good parents who present their children with the gift of bilingualism (King & Fogle, 2006, p. 707; Piller, 2001, p. 72).

However, parental language ideology may or may not be shared with other members of the family. De Houwer (1999, p. 11) argues on the “impact belief”: the parental belief that they can exert some control over their children linguistic functioning. However, children may eventually have their own opinions towards the role of their home language in society (Schwartz, 2010, pp. 177-178). Also, family language ideology is not necessarily congruent with the national language policy in terms of what language serves the state’s economic and political interest, what language should dominate the public domain, and what language should be maintained (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, p. 355). Several studies have argued that even in families where parents have positive beliefs towards maintaining heritage language or practice the OPOL (one-

parent/one-language) policy, often children become passive bilinguals who prefer the dominant language in society (King & Fogle, 2006, p. 696; Tuominen, 1999, pp. 67-69; Yamamoto, 2001, pp. 127-128).

Thus, as many FLP researchers have argued, language ideologies play a significant role in forming the family language policy and influencing children's language acquisition. However, parental language beliefs alone are not sufficient to ensure heritage language maintenance and children's bilingualism (Kirsch, 2012, p. 3). We need to pay more attention to how the different components – ideologies, planning and practices – interact and influence one another (King et al., 2008, pp. 10-11; Schwartz, 2010, p. 186).

### 3.1.3 Language practice and language socialisation paradigm

Spolsky defines language practice as conscious and unconscious language choices that an individual makes (Spolsky, 2004, p. 9). In the family context, we may expect that parental ideologies significantly determine family language practices. However, the connection between parental language ideologies and family language practices is complex as the family is situated in broader society with various factors influencing the language dynamic (Schwartz, 2010, p. 177). The discrepancy between parental language ideologies and practices tends to be more visible when children start to socialise outside of the home environment and begin to receive input in society's dominant language (Schwartz, 2010, p. 179). For the context of this research, language practices include the choice of language parents use to speak to one another, language parents use to speak with the children, as well as language choice of siblings when speaking to one another.

Language practice within FLP can be approached through the lens of language socialisation paradigm due to the lack of cultural dimension in language acquisition theory. According to this paradigm, children are socialised into certain social values and expectations through various linguistic codes to form what Bourdieu calls habitus, or ways of being in the world (Kulick & Schieffelin, 2004, p. 349). Hence, with the FLP framework, a more macro perspective on parental language ideology, along with a broader community context which influences the language practice and the language management in the family are included. Comprehensive analysis with a cross-disciplinary approach is necessary to fully understand how the application and negotiation of family language policies influence child language outcomes (King et al., 2008, p. 3).

Within the domain of FLP, researchers are interested in understanding the process of intergenerational mother tongue (L1) transmission as well as the language shift that may occur (Fishman, 1991, p. 12). Therefore, in the age of globalisation with rising international mobility, current studies on FLP are trying to explore how and why families maintain and develop various languages; many are focusing on heritage and minority language maintenance (Kheirkhah, 2016, p. 13). Researchers are interested in understanding why children turn out to be plurilingual or monolingual and connect the issue to how parents promote or discourage specific heritage language use. While we may be interested in exploring parents' attempts to "preserve heritage language by modifying their children's language development" (Spolsky, as cited in Kheirkhah, 2016, p. 13), language socialisation is not a static top-down process. Children have agency towards their language preferences (Tuominen, 1999, p. 68).

In an immigrant family context, children are often the ones who socialise their parents to the majority language (Luykx, 2005, p. 1408; Tuominen, 1999, p. 68). Children are viewed as active members of the family and no longer simply seen as the objects of socialisation of languages and cultures. Their choice of appropriate home language may conflict with the parents' expectation. Furthermore, the role of peer interactions such as in school and wider communities are critical in shaping children's language practices. The exposure to the dominant language in society may even move children towards passive bilingualism or monolingualism (Yamamoto, 2001, p. 127). As argued by many studies, there may be a significant gap between the parents' expectation on insisting heritage language use and the actual reality within the family (Schwartz, 2010, p. 185). Therefore, paying attention to children's language practices are crucial for studying FLP.

#### 3.1.4 Language planning and management

Spolsky defines family language management as "efforts to control the language of family members, especially children" (Spolsky, as cited in Schwartz, 2010, p. 180). Language management is about how parents invest themselves in the intended linguistic practice in the family to manage the children's language development (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, p. 57). The effort is motivated by parents' expectation towards their children particular language and literacy development.

The first step towards language management is initiated with parental decisions in which language to use at home in their interaction with the children (Schwartz, 2010, p. 180). Spolsky

(as cited in Schwartz, 2010, p. 180) suggests that the absence of explicit language management in the family indicates the lack of conscious FLP. However, other scholars argue that the process is not always clear, and the plan for language management may arrive spontaneously without conscious discussions (Palviainen & Boyd, 2013, p. 224; Schwartz, 2010, p. 180). Professional help in terms of raising bi/multilingual children is rarely available in countries without a long tradition of bi/multilingual education or in countries where multilingualism is seen as a natural state. No clear regulation on national language policy may also impact the absence of language planning and management at the family level (Schwartz, 2010, p. 180). Therefore, there is a blurred distinction between what constitutes as practice and planning/management in the FLP context, primarily due to the often unconscious and implicit nature of family language management (Curdt-Christiansen & Lanza, 2018, p. 126). The distinction between practice and planning would be more visible in a macro language policy context where language planning/management is often made explicit.

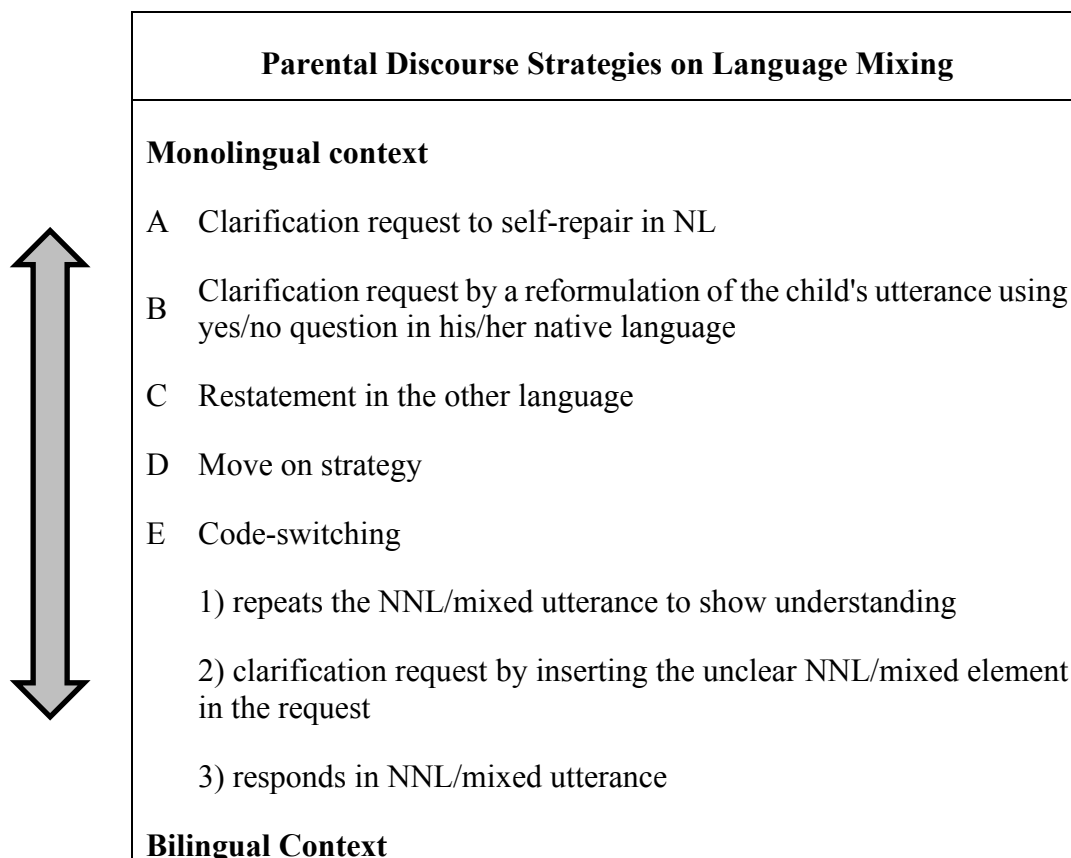
Schwartz (2010, pp. 180-181) suggests that there are two different strategies that parents take regarding family language management. The first one is by seeking external control through finding a sociolinguistic environment that supports their FLP. For instance, parents can enrol children in educational institutions that encourage multilingualism or promote particular language that they see fits their FLP. The second one is by controlling the home language environment through establishing a specific family linguistic culture or a linguistic regime with a particular rewards and punishments mechanism.

Language management can be either explicit, deliberate attempts with concrete strategies or implicit *laissez-faire* with no clear plan (Curdt-Christiansen & Lanza, 2018, p. 124). For instance, explicit language management in a family with minority language may mean the family devices a strategy referred to as “domain allocation strategy” where they confine the use of one language to one particular actor or setting (Ritchie & Bhatia, 1999, p. 583). Ritchie and Bhatia suggest that domain allocation strategy may include the following: a) one-parent/one-language (OPOL), b) one-place/one-language, c) a language/time approach, and d) a topic-related approach. An explicit strategy could go as far as the decision that some mothers took to stay at home because they did not want to expose their children to majority language at an early age (Okita, 2002, p. 139). Implicit language management is “covert, unarticulated, fluid and negotiated moment by moment” which may include “emotion discourses” such as expressing intimate affinity towards a specific language or showing dislike towards particular language use (King & Fogle, 2016, p. 9).

*Parental discourse strategies on language mixing*

In the context of bilingual family, Lanza (1992, p. 649) suggests “parental discourse” that portrays the continuum of strategies in how parents respond to children’s language mixing. The following Figure 2 summarises the five different parental strategies that may appear in a bilingual family.

**Figure 2** Parental discourse strategies on language mixing (adapted from Lanza, 1992, p. 649)



NL = native language    NNL = non-native language

The first discourse (A) is where a parent tends to strictly negotiate for a monolingual context, sending a message that he or she does not understand what the child is saying unless it is spoken in their native language. If the child speaks in the non-native home language, the parent will directly ask the child to self-repair the utterance in their native language. In the second discourse (B), when the child speaks in their non-native language, the parent attempts to restate the child’s utterance in the native language using a yes/no question, asking the child to confirm or disconfirm it. The second discourse shows less power in negotiating a monolingual context than

the first one. In the third discourse (C), parent restates the child's non-native language utterance to the native language in a non-question form. The fourth discourse (D) is where the parent will casually move on by responding in the native language without any attempt to repair the child's non-native language utterance. In this type of response, the parent negotiates for a bilingual context where the child's use of non-native language is not pointed out as a problem. The fifth discourse (E) is a code-switching strategy which involves three response patterns: 1) showing understanding to the child's non-native language utterance by repeating it, 2) restate the child's utterance in a yes/no question in the native language (using the discourse B), 3) respond with a mixed utterance of both native and non-native language. It is clear that in discourse E, the parent negotiates for a bilingual context.

### *Is OPOL always the best strategy?*

Among various language strategies for bilingual families, the most well-known one is probably the one-parent/one-language (OPOL) strategy. OPOL may have its own proponents who argue that if parents keep the two language systems apart, native-like mastery of both languages tends to accrue (Ritchie & Bhatia, 1999, p. 588). However, Ritchie and Bhatia argue that the OPOL approach may have its own serious drawback. They criticise the misleading claim that only the separation of input from the two languages leads to balanced bilingualism. They further suggest that such an unnatural setting for language use may lead to a failure in acquiring the sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence in the two target languages (Ritchie & Bhatia, 1999, p. 588). The parents' emphasise language separation by criticising the child's language mixing can be traumatic and take a severe toll on the verbal performance of the child. Some parents may discourage the child's use of mixed speeches while they themselves unconsciously use mixed-languages. Such conflicting experience may deter the genuine, socio-psychologically grounded communicative environment that the child needs (Ritchie & Bhatia, 1999, p. 591). Moreover, Ritchie and Bhatia argue that code-mixing or code-switching in young children is a strategic decision made by the child and not a sign of the child's failure to differentiate languages (Ritchie & Bhatia, 1999, p. 627). They also suggest that children growing up in a mixed-input environment are less likely to suffer from stuttering than those developing in families that emphasise language separation (Ritchie & Bhatia, 1999, p. 630).

Another interesting research regarding language strategies used in bilingual families was conducted in Spain by Ruiz-Martin (2017). Ruiz-Martin's study argues for Mixed System 1 (MS1) as a valid alternative to the stricter methods that can be adopted by bilingual families.

MS1 strategy is similar to what Barron-Hauwert (as cited in Ruiz Martin, 2017, p. 137) classifies as OPOL-ml, in which the minority language is supported by the majority language speaking parent. This finding also supports De Houwer’s study (as cited in Ruiz Martin, 2017, p. 135) that argues for MS1 strategy as one of the most successful language strategies. According to De Houwer, MS1 strategy comes second in effectiveness just after the stricter minority language at home (ml@h) strategy. However, MS1 strategy may not be applied by every bilingual family since it requires the majority language speaking parent to have considerably good command in the minority language as well. These other strategies may not all be practical for mixed-marriage families. Researchers argue that some children would react to the parent speaking the minority language for sounding unnatural, considering it is not the parent’s native language (Palviainen & Boyd, 2013, p. 235). The following table in Table 1 presents the classification of strategies presented in Ruiz-Martin’s study (2017, p. 127).

**Table 1.** Language strategies in a bilingual family (adapted from Ruiz Martin, 2017, p. 127)

| <b>Language Strategies in Bilingual Family</b> |      |  |
|--|------|--|
| One-parent/one-language                        | OPOL | Each parent speaks to the child in their own native language.  |
| Minority language at home                      | ml@h | Both parents use the minority language at home; the child learns the majority language from outside the home.                    |
| Mixed-language policy                          | MLP  | Both parents usually use both languages with the child in the same conversation/even at times in the same sentences.             |
| One Parent Two Languages                       | OP2L | Both parents use both languages with the child.  |
| Mixed System 1                                 | MS1  | The minority language parent speaks only the minority language; the majority language parent speaks both languages to the child. |
| Mixed System 2                                 | MS2  | The majority language parents speak only in the majority language; the minority language parent speaks both languages.           |

Research in heritage language maintenance in immigrant communities shows that parental support and involvement are the essential factors for bilingual children heritage language

development (Orallena, as cited in Curdt-Christiansen & Lanza, 2018, p. 124). However, language input management does not only imply strategies of the quantity of language use (how often and how much a specific language is used) but also the quality of the language use. Smith-Christmas (2018, p. 132) argues that children will be more inclined to using the heritage language if parents use it with the child in playful and child-centred activities which imbue positive emotions. Recent research on FLP starts to tap language management strategies that take into account the affective aspect of language use. In research involving the maintenance of Gaelic language in English society family context, Smith-Christmas (2018, p. 139) presents an effective strategy used by the grandmother that centres on how to turn everyday events into learning heritage language experience. The grandmother hones in on the child's activities with subtle guidance and lets the child determine the flow of activities during the interaction. She also tries to create active stimulation by asking questions. At specific points of the interaction, the grandmother often uses exaggerated intonations to build playfulness and emotional closeness with the grandchild.

Research has not been conclusive on what kind of language practices and planning are most effective for the family's heritage language maintenance, mainly because each family has different dynamics and characteristics. One solution of FLP cannot be generalised to another family context. Moreover, the nature of FLP could be fluctuating and subject to re-negotiating across time in a family's life (Palviainen & Boyd, 2013, p. 225). The family would adjust their FLP according to their specific context of time and space. Certain milestones could mark a change in FLP, such as when the parents first met, when and where the children were born, moving to another country, starting daycare or school, children's language development stages and many more. Yet, we can conclude that the two main elements to focus in promoting heritage language maintenance are *"the quantity and quality of exposure to the minority language as well as creating the need for the child to speak it"* (Ruiz Martin, 2017, p. 155).

### 3.1.5 Intra-family factors

Schwartz (2010, pp. 173-178) elaborates on what may constitute intra-family factors. Family structure, such as in the presence of older siblings plays an important role in minority or heritage language maintenance (Fishman, 1991, pp. 44-45). In some cases, the older sibling would bring the dominant language of the society home and speak it with the younger one (Spolsky, as cited in Schwartz, 2010, p. 173). Whereas, in other cases, older siblings seem to follow the rules set

up by their parents, by strictly speaking the home language with the younger one (Kopeliovich, as cited in Schwartz, 2010, p. 173).

Parental education also affects FLP, although studies have not yet been conclusive on the direction of the influence (Schwartz, 2010, p. 174). Some researchers argue that ethnolinguistic minorities require strong educational experience in their own language and tradition to maintain their heritage language (Lambert & Taylor, as cited in Schwartz, 2010, p. 174). However, other studies suggest the opposite; that the higher educational level the ethnolinguistic minorities have, the more likely they will shift away from their L1 (Doucet, as cited in Schwartz, 2010, p. 174).

Other intra-family factors include the acculturation level of the parents. The younger the age of the immigrant at arrival and the longer the time spent in the host country; the better the command of L2 and the greater the language shift from L1 will be (Doucet, as cited in Schwartz, 2010, p. 174). Family cohesiveness and emotional relations also have a strong influence on FLP. Parents' language decisions on FLP involve a complex emotional process unique to every family's situation.

### 3.1.6 Macro-societal factors

Family Language Policy is context-specific as it is interwoven with the economic, political, historical and socio-cultural environment where the family is situated (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, p. 355). The state language policy concerning what language provides access to economic opportunities, what language aligns with the political interests, and what language should be maintained will interact with the Family Language Policy. Political and economic factors are particularly central (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, p. 356). For instance, the provision of heritage language education as human rights reflects how the state approaches individuals' equal rights to education, civil activities and political decisions. Moreover, economic forces determine what language is seen as the most valuable by society. Languages are not treated as equal since a particular language may provide more access to advanced socioeconomic mobility.

### 3.1.7 Language ecology

From a holistic point of view, FLP is also connected with the language ecology metaphor. Language learning is a social process which takes place in a complex system of language

ecology where interactions between languages and their environments happen (Johnson, 2013, p. 51). First introduced by Haugen (as cited in Spolsky, 2004, p. 7), language ecology calls for researchers to comprehensively analyse the relationships between speakers, their languages and the social contexts in which they are situated. The concept also emphasises the diversity of languages, where multiple languages coexist, and their sustainability is central. Hence, in immigration contexts, where heritage languages interact with the dominant language, multilingualism and linguistic diversity are seen as valuable resources. For that reason, the study of FLP is aimed at recognising the value of multiple languages within one 'system' and preserving the minority heritage language.

### **3.2 Sociolinguistic profiles of the Indonesian diasporas**

There is limited research available on the Indonesian diasporas around the globe. Despite being the 4th largest population in the world, Indonesian diaspora communities are much smaller in size compared to other populous countries' diasporas such as Chinese or Indian diasporas. Indonesian diaspora communities are much less studied, including their sociolinguistic profiles and the state of their language maintenance.

A study by Lie et al. (2018, p. 198) examines the second generation of Indonesian immigrants language use in California, the United States. The study explores to what extent home language use and active involvement in the Indonesian diaspora community influence the children's mastery of the heritage language. In the Australian context, a study by Utomo (2014, p. 165) explores the cultural-linguistic maintenance efforts and experiences of Indonesian mothers living in Canberra. Another study with Australian context was conducted by Muslim and Brown (2016). The study examines the perceived benefits of speaking the Indonesian language among Indonesian families in Melbourne and how the practices influence the youth's identification with both Indonesia and Australia. Within the European context, one study in the Netherlands explores the language shift experienced by Indonesians who have lived in the country for more than a decade. However, the research does not focus on family language policy and the heritage language transmission to the younger generations. In the Asian context, a study by Goebel (2015) explores the talk and conviviality among Indonesian transnationals who live in Japan without any focus on language transmission in the family.

### 3.2.1 Indonesian diaspora language maintenance in the United States

The study conducted by Lie et al. states that many second-generation Indonesian immigrants in the US are hardly fluent in Bahasa Indonesia as most Indonesian parents choose to use English with their children mainly for education and socioeconomic reasons (Lie et al., 2018, p. 199). Nevertheless, for those who are quite fluent in the Indonesian language, the study reveals several contributing factors to the mastery of the heritage language. Those factors include the parents' insistence in using Bahasa Indonesia as the home language, the presence of non-English speaker at their homes (i.e. grandmother, nanny), frequent trips to Indonesia, and the youth's active involvement in the Indonesian diaspora community (Lie et al., 2018, p. 201).

It is interesting to explore the language ideologies that motivate the parents to insist on the use of Bahasa Indonesia as the home language. One family stated that they believed that being bilingual was always an advantage and could provide the speaker with practical benefits (Lie et al., 2018, p. 201). One youth participant also confirmed the benefits of multilingualism as he argued that knowing the Indonesian language was important considering Indonesia has the 4th largest population in the world (Lie et al., 2018, p. 202). In terms of language planning and practices, one of the strategies the parents used was by insisting on using Bahasa Indonesia at home and not responding to the child's utterance if it was in the majority language. Lie et al. (2018, p. 204) argue that such an approach indicates parents' investment in promoting heritage language maintenance and is the key to Indonesian language proficiency in some of the youth participants. Furthermore, the study shows that vacationing in Indonesia has done very little in improving the youth's Indonesian language. Yet, other types of activities during the trip such as doing an internship, summer programmes or business visits could better motivate the youth to learn and expand their Indonesian language proficiency (Lie et al., 2018, p. 202).

Even though many of the youth participants had minimal Indonesian language proficiency, they shared a great sense of affinity towards Indonesian culture (Lie et al., 2018, p. 204). They perceived that speaking the language was only one of the many ways to express their ties with Indonesia. They realised that despite being more comfortable in speaking English, Indonesia and its culture would always be part of their lives. Therefore, they enthusiastically claimed for their hyphenated identity as Indonesian-Americans. This finding confirms Canagarajah and Silberstein's (2012, p. 83) argument that language shift is not always an indicator of cultural self-rejection, even though a heritage language mastery level positively contributes to one's cultural and ethnic attachment.

The study by Lie et al. (2018, p. 204) concludes that it is challenging for the second generation of Indonesians in the US to be able to speak their heritage language proficiently. Two major factors that contribute to the fact are the relatively small size of Indonesian diasporas in the country and the lack of importance the wider society places on the Indonesian heritage language maintenance. Unlike other larger immigrant groups, the Indonesian diasporas are too spread out to organise Saturday/Sunday heritage language schools for their youngsters efficiently. Moreover, many of the Indonesian-American families consider that organising such heritage language learning is not worth the investment.

Another interesting finding from the study is how those who demonstrate their investment in heritage language and culture tend to seek out opportunities to regularly visit Indonesia for summer programmes or business internships (Lie et al., 2018, p. 205). They believe that the mastery of Indonesian language will translate to material resources (money, goods, real estate) and symbolic resources (family connection, friendship and education). This finding relates to Bourdieu's (1991, pp. 13-16) theory on how linguistic capital could be transformed into other kinds of capitals, including economic and symbolic capitals. From the study, Lie et al. (2018, p. 206) recommend parents to learn more about the merits of bilingualism and the importance of home language use to promote heritage language maintenance. Furthermore, youngsters need community-based heritage language programmes that support their learning. A collaboration between community and school in providing support for heritage language maintenance is also required.

### 3.2.2 Indonesian diaspora language maintenance in Australia

In her ethnographic research, Utomo (2014, p. 165) studies an Indonesian language and dancing club organised by Indonesian mothers living in Canberra that facilitates the formation of shared transnational identities and collective aspirations for transnational childrearing among the Indonesian migrant mothers. Joining the club may inspire some mothers to invest more efforts and resources in their heritage language maintenance. However, she argues that without consistent use of Bahasa Indonesia throughout early childhood, the institutional setting may not be effective enough in achieving a high-level proficiency of Indonesian language among second-generation children as most of them turn out to be passive bilinguals.

Utomo suggests that most of the families she interviewed “did not consciously practice bilingual parenting in a strict sense” (Utomo, 2014, p. 175). One mother said that before her

daughter turned two, she consistently spoke Bahasa Indonesia to her, and she began speaking the language. However, when the mother returned to work, and her daughter attended childcare, she could not converse with other children who only understood English. That was when the mother started speaking in English to her daughter. The decision was not made consciously or planned before. It came along the way as they adjusted themselves to their current situations. Utomo suggests that most Indonesian mothers in her setting mix English and Bahasa Indonesia when speaking with their children (Utomo, 2014, p. 176). Yet, the mothers acknowledged that early onset of language loss among second-generation young children in their setting is typical; it is challenging to tackle the issue unless one of the parents was consistent in speaking Bahasa Indonesia from early on.

The mothers in the study expressed their shared aspiration in building their children's transnational identities. They consider their children need to preserve their ties with the Indonesian culture and at the same time grow up within Australian culture. The mothers negotiate the socialisation of their children by moderating between Indonesian and Australian parental values and practices or mixing both (Utomo, 2014, p. 177). Although the club organised by the mothers may not be effective in maintaining mastery of heritage language among second-generation children of migrant mothers, the social practices around the club are important in providing a space for transnational identities negotiation among migrant mothers and their children. The club also offers a crucial connection hub to Indonesia and brings about a piece of homeland in Canberra. Utomo argues that these efforts by Indonesian migrant mothers resemble the efforts made by other groups of migrant mothers; representing the idea that "mothering is conducted not only on behalf of individual children but also on behalf of the larger social group in which they are situated" (Utomo, 2014, p. 179).

Another study within the Australian context is done by Muslim and Brown (2016). The research suggests that the Indonesian language functions as an ethnic and religious identity marker for the participants (Muslim & Brown, 2016, p. 145). The parents believe that Bahasa Indonesia provides a means to socialise children into their family and cultural values. Furthermore, the parents also acknowledge the socioeconomic merits of being able to speak Bahasa Indonesia as it may be beneficial for educational purposes and future career opportunities.

The study by Muslim and Brown is situated in Melbourne and presents slightly different results compared to Utomo's study. While most mothers in Utomo's study tend to mix English and Indonesian language at home, many families that Muslim and Brown interviewed said that they

always speak Bahasa Indonesia at home. The parents consider that home is a crucial context in maintaining the heritage language, and the efforts should start as early as possible. Some parents have a strict rule that they only accept Bahasa Indonesia responses from their children. They will demand their children to switch to Bahasa Indonesia if they speak to them in English. The parents argue that considering the strong influence of English as the majority language; their strategy is appropriate to maintain the heritage language (Muslim & Brown, 2016, pp. 148-150).

The Australian context is quite unique, considering its geographical location as one of Indonesia's neighbouring countries. The Australian government recognises the importance of Bahasa Indonesia for diplomatic and economic relationships, as stated by one of its policy papers (Muslim & Brown, 2016, p. 151). In the state of Victoria where Melbourne is the capital city, students in the final year of secondary college could select Bahasa Indonesia as their elective for LOTE (Language Other than English) subject. The government's language policy which is permeated through the education sector acknowledges the socioeconomic value of Bahasa Indonesia. Therefore, this national language policy supports the language ideology that the families hold regarding the benefit of mastering Bahasa Indonesia for educational purposes and future economic opportunities. The families are aware that Indonesia has a large population that can be a potential market for Australian businesses (Muslim & Brown, 2016, p. 152).

However, despite the conscious efforts made by the parents in maintaining Bahasa Indonesia, Muslim and Brown argue that *"the home context provides limited space and society has a stronger role in socialising children into the majority language"* (Muslim & Brown, 2016, p. 150). Although the parents insist on speaking Bahasa Indonesia at home, young people speak English among their peers even during the weekly Indonesian community meeting in Melbourne. In general, the second-generation children speak English more fluently than Bahasa Indonesia. Even for those who could speak it, they may not be able to read and write the language (Muslim & Brown, 2016, p. 153). Furthermore, some second-generation children even use their low proficiency of Bahasa Indonesia as a way to show stronger identification with their Australian peers, distance themselves from their parents' country of origin and gain a sense of belonging and acceptance in the society (Muslim & Brown, 2016, p. 153).

Muslim and Brown also suggest that the emphasis of Bahasa Indonesia use among intermarriage families is stronger if the mother is Indonesian (Muslim & Brown, 2016, p. 149). They argue that female participants seem to be more committed to heritage language

maintenance than male participants. In general, Muslim and Brown suggest that the use of Indonesian language among intermarriage families is less intensive than among Indonesian couples (Muslim & Brown, 2016, p. 149). In intermarriage families, the parents often mix Indonesian language and English as one of the parents may not speak Bahasa Indonesia.

Moreover, Muslim and Brown argue that the emphasis of Bahasa Indonesia will be stronger if the Australian spouse has a considerable understanding of the language (Muslim & Brown, 2016, p. 149). Interestingly, the study also reveals that in one intermarriage family, the Indonesian mother utilises different strategies for their children depending on the child's place of birth. The mother mixes Bahasa Indonesia and local Indonesian ethnic language with her Indonesian born child while using a mix of Bahasa Indonesia and English with her Australian born child.

The studies from the Australian context present an important illustration of the challenges that Indonesian diaspora face in preserving their heritage language. That despite a strong language ideology on the importance of preserving their heritage language, parents still have to work hard to make their children realise the merits of maintaining Bahasa Indonesia. Parents' language ideologies are not always coherent with the authentic family language practices, indicating the crucial role that the children play in negotiating the overall Family Language Policy.

## 4 The methodological quest

This chapter explores the methodological journey in this research. The first part of this chapter presents different methodologies used by previous studies in FLP as a window into the most suitable approach. The second part examines how the constructivist paradigm in this research led to qualitative methodology and how the narrative approach was eventually chosen. The third part of the chapter explains the use of narrative interviews as a tool to collect the data. Finally, the last part of this chapter presents how the analysis of the data is conducted through both the holistic narrative analysis and the thematic analysis of narrative.

As a way of reminder, the main question that guides this research is as follows:

*How are family language policies negotiated in Indonesian-Finnish intercultural families in Finland? (as seen from the mothers' perspectives)*

From this question, another subquestion arises:

*What elements influence the construction of family language policies in these families?*

### 4.1 Different methodologies in FLP research

FLP study is a complex domain that requires an interdisciplinary framework. Recent studies tend to apply multiple methods of data collection that may combine quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Such an approach is necessary to explore the largely invisible processes and influences within the family's intergenerational language transmission.

For instance, Moin et al. (2013) explored the FLP of Finnish-Russian families in Finland by using a mixed-method approach. The data was collected through a self-administered questionnaire. The quantitative aspect of the questionnaire elicits statistical data on how FLP is related to variables such as parents' education level and socioeconomic status. Meanwhile, the open-ended questions are used for a qualitative investigation on the diversity of language ideologies and practices in these families.

Another FLP study that devised the multiple methods was conducted by Okita (2002). She explored the different challenges mothers faced in raising bilingual children in Japanese-British intermarriage families. She conducted her research with a two-stage approach of exploratory survey and life history in-depth interviews. The life-history interview is part of the narrative

research approach, which Okita argues as the most suitable to situate the participants to their specific social-historical context (Okita, 2002, p. 43).

Another favoured methodology in the field of FLP is the ethnographic approach. Ethnography in FLP combines rich data from participant narrative interviews and observations of language practices in the home. For her prominent study of Chinese immigrant families in Quebec, Curdt-Christiansen (2009) used ethnographic tools of semi-structured interviews and observations. In the Nordic context, Kheirkhah (2016) has conducted ethnographic research for her doctoral thesis on Family Language Policy among Swedish-Iranian families in Sweden. Ethnographic research on Indian migrant family language practices in Finland was conducted by Haque (2011). Ethnographic research gives more comprehensive insights into the dynamics of family language policy; the researcher could gain access to the rich observational data of actual language practices and negotiations in the family.

## **4.2 Narrative research**

Learning from different methodological approaches in previous FLP studies, I was particularly inclined to explore more about narrative research. What led me to narrative research was the social constructivism paradigm as my ontological and epistemological underpinnings of this research. The constructivist paradigm assumes that there is no single reality or truth since the world consists of different realities and multiple truths (Creswell, 2007, pp. 20-21). People develop subjective meanings of their experiences which may be negotiated socially or historically. They continuously create or construct their knowledge through interactions of their previous learning experiences with the ideas, events, and activities which they come into contact afterwards (Ultanir, 2012, p. 195).

Based on those ontological and epistemological assumptions, qualitative research is the umbrella term for this study. A qualitative study does not aim for determining an objective truth; the goal is to gain an understanding of a social phenomenon from the perspectives of the people being studied (Creswell, 2007, p. 40). Creswell elaborates further that qualitative research is often aimed to explore complex social issues such as gender, culture, and marginalised groups. It is often conducted to “empower individuals to share their stories, hear their voices, and minimise the power relationships that often exist between a researcher and the participants in a study” (Creswell, 2007, p. 40). These characteristics of qualitative research fit with the aim of

this research which is to understand the perspectives of Indonesian mixed-marriage mothers, on their experience of bi/multilingual child-rearing in Finland.

One of the methodologies within the scope of qualitative research is narrative research. Lieblich et al. (1998d, p. 3) define narrative research as any research that uses narrative materials as the data or uses a narrative lens as a tool to analyse the data. The narrative itself could be understood as a “prosaic discourse” where sentences are linked into a coherent and integrated statement (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 6). A narrative is “a connected succession of happenings” (Lieblich et al., 1998d, p. 3) in which the interconnectedness reveals a particular meaning (Squire, 2014, p. 5) and provides a “sense of whole” (Mattingly & Lawlor, 2000, p. 4).

Furthermore, in social and educational research contexts that examine people’s lives, narrative research may be the most appropriate method to understand how people construct meaning (Bold, 2012d, p. 7). People use narrative in the stories they tell to make sense of their experience, argue on ideas, or describe certain issues. These stories are not always told in a clear plot with a beginning, middle and ending; but it is still important to account for the series of events and connect them to form a coherent narrative (Paradis, 2019, p. 58). It is also important to note that a personal narrative is not a literal record of what happened, but more of one’s way to make sense of the event concerning her/his own experience and interpretation (Bold, 2012e, p. 6). As Webster and Mertova point out, “Narrative is not an objective reconstruction of life – it is a rendition of how life is perceived” (Bold, 2012e, p. 4).

Narrative is a window into understanding the human mind. According to Polkinghorne (1995, pp. 8-11), human cognition organises thoughts into two different but reciprocal ways: paradigmatic cognition and narrative cognition. In the paradigmatic way, the human mind classifies things into categories or concepts to make sense of the world around it. The concept or category is defined by a set of shared attributes among its members. Paradigmatic cognition resembles the logical, testable, mathematical mode of thinking that moves from empirical evidence to the more abstract level (Paradis, 2019, p. 59). Whereas the second mode of cognition, the narrative way, works from greater ideas into ordinary experiences. The narrative way of thinking starts by noticing the differences and diversity of people’s behaviour as it focuses on the particularity of each action. The narrative captures the temporality, the richness and nuance of each event that make it specifically remarkable. Both modes of cognition are important and complement each other; however, they approach things differently. While the paradigmatic way tends to seek the “truth”, the narrative way is more concerned with its relatability (Paradis, 2019, p. 60).

Connely (as cited in Bold, 2012e, p. 5) identifies five elements to acknowledge in narrative research: Temporality, people, action, certainty, and context. Narrative research accepts that events unfold over time, embracing the temporal nature of events as change is inevitable. Narrating the process of change is important as people are always at a point of personal change and self-development. In a narrative, we analyse a particular action with reference to past actions and potential future actions to understand its meaning in a historical context. Furthermore, the narrative approach does not seek to establish certainty since it accepts tentativeness due to various possible interpretations. Last but not least, a narrative approach always takes into account the social and cultural context as understanding the narrative would not be possible without considering the broader context where the person is situated.

#### 4.2.1 Why I chose the narrative methodology

For this thesis, I limit my research focus on understanding the mother's perspectives on how FLP is negotiated in the family. I would like to know how they perceive the construction of FLP and the negotiation processes that they experience. The notion of understanding one's perspective as my research goal, as well as the focus on "negotiation" in the research question has assured me that the narrative methodology is the most appropriate for my study (see Creswell, 2007). Furthermore, I would like to elicit genuine and relatable stories on what it is like to be an Indonesian mother raising a bi/multilingual mixed-race child in Finland. I would like to understand their struggle, the emotional work that they have to endure within this particular context. I consider that these research goals particularly connect with the narrative approach.

Looking at previous studies in FLP, qualitative research with an ethnographic approach seems to provide a more comprehensive tool to explore the family language dynamics. Ethnography could combine the narrative data from participant interviews and observational data. However, approaching the study in ethnographic research would be more suitable for a deeper follow-up study of this thesis. The observational data of daily language interactions in the family would add another dimension beyond the focus of this study. At this point in my research, I am more interested in seeing the family language policy construction and negotiation through the eyes of the mothers rather than exploring the actual practices. My focus is to give space for these mothers' voices. Hence, I finally came into a conclusion that the narrative approach is the most suitable methodology for my thesis.

### **4.3 Narrative interview**

In a narrative study, researchers collect the data through various ways such as interviews, pictures, documents and observations (Creswell, 2007, p. 71). Doing an interview is one of the most common data collection methods used in narrative research (Riessman, 2008, p. 23). Riessman (as cited in Bold, 2012e, p. 10) contends that people may naturally tell a story of their experiences and the conflicts they face if the researcher allows the participants to take responsibility for what they want to tell. The stories that emerge in interviews are usually organised around consequential events. Those stories may come in summaries or detailed elaboration of events or actions. Stories may also be evaluative, where the participant will provide the contexts and reflect on the process of how events unfolded.

Furthermore, the particular context where the interview is being done matters, as it will influence how the participant tells a story, what parts to include or exclude (Bold, 2012e, p. 9). The interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee is also important as it encourages story development coordination. The same story will convey a different meaning in a different interview occasion. More remarkably, the interview process could be transformative for both the researcher and the participant (Bold, 2012e, p. 9). Telling a story as well as listening to it may increase one's capacity to make life-changing important decisions.

Several researchers argue that narrative interviews should be in the form of open-ended interviews as to provide the space for the participants to determine the important elements of their stories (Atkinson, 1998, p. 31; Banister, 2011, p. 133). However, others suggest that themed interviews or semi-structured interviews are also appropriate for narrative research data collection (Bold, 2012b, p. 4; Creswell, 2007, p. 130). I consider the interview method for this research as a semi-structured interview with a significant degree of flexibility. I prepared a guided list of themes and possible prompt questions for the interview. I expected the interview to encompass all the themes derived from my theoretical framework so that the data could answer my research question. Yet, during the interview process, I let my participants' individual stories lead the flow of the interview. Hence, each experience prompted a different set of questions unique to their personal narrative.

#### **Pilot interviews**

As part of Qualitative Methodology course, I conducted a mini-research on a similar topic. I designed the project as a preliminary phase for my thesis. I interviewed two participants as pilot

interviews that covered several themes guided by my theoretical framework. The themes included participants' background stories before coming to Finland, intercultural marriage, language ideology, language planning, language practices, and language situation in Finland. Unexpectedly, these themes triggered a life-story narrative from the participants where they would tell stories from different moments of their lives. The notion of "mother-tongue" brought up some profound stories about home country, childhood upbringing, and identity. The stories they told reflect their perceptions of the world, recollections of the past, and hopes for the future. One interview lasted for more than one hour, while the other one took around two hours to complete. Even though I had designed them to be semi-structured interviews with guided themes, in practice, the nature of the interviews was very flexible. The participants had a lot of freedom in deciding how to tell their stories. The two pilot interviews are included in the final data as they presented me with such rich stories and experiences.

### **Selecting participants**

Statistics Finland states that there are less than 700 permanent residents who speak Bahasa Indonesia as their native language (Statistics Finland, 2018). That data indicates that there are only small numbers of Indonesian-Finnish intercultural families living in Finland. I found my participants from the Indonesian diaspora community network in Finland. As we are a relatively small community, people tend to know each other quite well. I contacted those who were personally close to me, so it would be more comfortable for them to open up and tell their stories. My participants came from three different cities in Finland. Four of the participants I interviewed face to face by visiting their homes. The other two participants I interviewed online through Skype because it was not feasible for me to meet them directly. One of them just recently moved overseas, and by the time I scheduled my interview, she was already located in the US. For the other participant, she lived in a small town in rural Finland which was difficult for me to access.

In narrative methodology, there is no clear consensus on how many participants are required to include in the interview process (Bold, 2012b, p. 7). Qualitative research does not focus on the sample size but rather on the meaning and depth of data. Based on the pilot interviews, I realised that I could elicit deep, complex, and meaningful life stories through the interviews. I focused more on how to properly analyse each interview rather than aiming to have a large number of participants. Therefore, in addition to the two pilot interviews, I decided to interview four more

participants for my thesis. After analysing the interview transcripts from a total of six participants, I decided that I had sufficient data and did not need to interview more participants. The Indonesian mothers I interviewed (pseudonyms) are listed in Table 2.

**Table 2.** List of participants

| <b>Pseudonyms</b> | <b>Age</b> | <b>Number of Children</b> | <b>Native Language(s)</b>           |
|-------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Asmara            | Early 40s  | 2                         | Bahasa Indonesia                    |
| Batari            | Late 40s   | 2                         | Javanese & Bahasa Indonesia         |
| Aruna             | Early 40s  | 2                         | Bahasa Indonesia                    |
| Rinjani           | Early 30s  | 1                         | Bahasa Indonesia                    |
| Kemala            | Early 40s  | 2                         | Bahasa Indonesia                    |
| Sarita            | Mid 30s    | 1                         | Mandarin, Minang & Bahasa Indonesia |

### **Interview process**

As I contacted my participants, I explained briefly about the topic of my thesis. By the time I visited them for the interviews, they already had some general ideas about the topic of our conversations. Before I started the interviews, I asked them to read and sign the consent form as part of the ethics of doing research and privacy protections. I stated in the consent form that the interview would be recorded and only be used for this research purpose. Gaining informed consent from the participants is an important step in doing research, particularly in narrative research where participants are opening some private aspects of their lives for others (Bold, 2012b, p. 2).

The interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia as our common native language. I started the interviews by asking them to introduce themselves and tell a brief story about their past in Indonesia, especially their childhood upbringing. The stories about childhood memories are important windows into their language experiences. In the context of multiethnic and multilingual Indonesia, people may have different first languages. They could be raised simultaneously in ethnic languages and Bahasa Indonesia as their first languages.

Then, I moved on to explore their experience of moving to Finland and living in an intercultural marriage. I wanted to know what kind of struggle they had when moving to a new country following their spouses, leaving behind families and friends in their home country. The language barrier was one of the important aspects to discuss in this phase.

I proceeded with focusing on the FLP dynamics. First, I explored the language ideologies in the family, the mother's and father's language beliefs according to the mother's perspective. Next,

I asked my participants to elaborate on their language practices at home. I wanted to know what language they use to speak with their spouses, the language choice between parents and their children, as well as the language choice of siblings. After that, I asked my participants to elaborate on how they plan or manage the language practice at home. I wanted to elicit information on what kind of language goals they had, the language decisions they made, how they came to those decisions, and what kind of language strategies they devised.

I tried to ask the interview questions in a more open and non-directional way. For instance, I would say, “Could you please tell me about what is it like to be in an intercultural marriage?” and “Could you please tell me about your daily language practices at home?” Although I already enlisted guided themes to follow, the questions I asked did not always come in sequential order for each of the interviews. I tried to make my participants feel like they could drive the flow of the interview. I would respond to my participant’s particular experience with a relevant question to make the interview more natural and conversational. Hence, each interview session unfolded rather differently. The outline of the themes and possible prompt questions I used during the interviews is available in Appendix 2.

During the interview, as I recorded them on my mobile phone, I made small notes in my notebook. I would briefly review the interview process based on the notes. I could then see if there were themes that had not been discussed in the interview. I could also go back to certain aspects that I would like to dig further. The interview period varied, ranging from one hour to two and a half hours of conversation each.

#### **4.4 Narrative analysis and thematic analysis**

As I carefully listened to the recordings, I transcribed the interviews in hand-writing. They are all written in Bahasa Indonesia. After I transcribed all the interviews, I read each of the transcripts several times to familiarise myself with my participants’ stories. I also went back to the recordings a few times to complete some missing details. At the end of the process, I collected 27 pages of hand-written transcript amounting to a total of nine hours of interview.

##### **4.4.1 Narrative analysis**

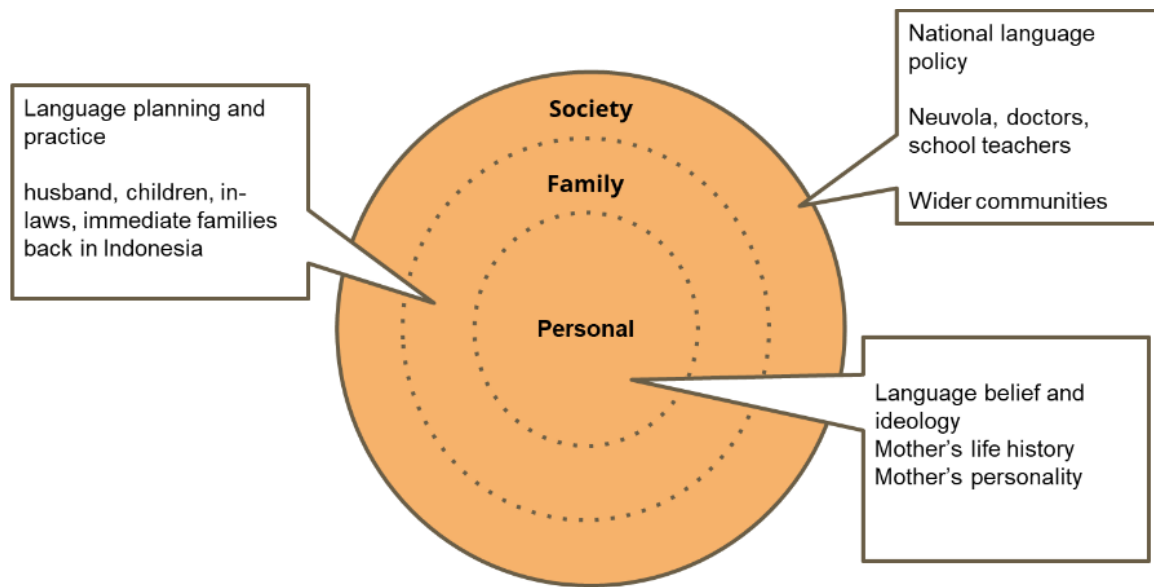
To answer my main research question, I decided to use the narrative analysis approach. Polkinghorne defines narrative analysis as narrative inquiry in which “the research product is a

story—a case, a biography, a life history, an autobiography, an autoethnography—that is composed by the researcher to represent the events, characters, and issues that he or she has studied” (as cited in Bochner & Riggs, 2014, p. 204). My research question focuses on the notion of negotiations. Presenting the analysis in a narrative itself would give a more holistic insight into the dynamic process of negotiations within each family. Retelling their stories in the form of narrative would give me a better tool in understanding how these mothers face the challenges in their multilingual child-rearing, how they come to a consensus in the family, also how they navigate their emotions throughout the journey.

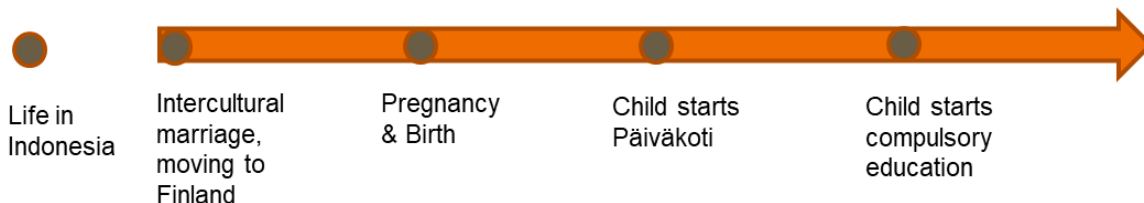
I reconstructed their stories into narratives individually for four of my participants. I decided not to present all of the six stories because the remaining two stories shared some similar main struggles and turning points with the others. They might appear repetitive and did not offer any elements of novelty. In reading the transcripts holistically, I followed the steps recommended by Lieblich et al. (1998c, p. 2) to conduct a narrative analysis. First, I read the individual interview transcript several times until I could see a pattern that emerged from it. Then, I wrote down my initial and general impression of the individual story. After that, I decided on special foci of content that I would like to highlight from the story. Then, I could develop my initial draft of the narrative with a unique theme for each participant already placed in mind.

Furthermore, I also referred to the three-dimensional approach suggested by Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p. 50) where the analysis is focused on three elements: interaction (personal and social), continuity (past, present, future), and situation (the storyteller’s places). Based on this approach, I drew the following diagrams of context (Figure 3) as well as plot (Figure 4) to guide me coherently reconstructing the narrative. The narrative would involve interactions within the personal level, family level, societal level, as well as interactions across those three boundaries. The plot represents a timeline, guided by several milestones that often mark the emergence of a new challenge or conflict in the family language policy. All of the stories are situated mainly in Finland, with Indonesia sometimes appearing in the background.

**Figure 3. Context**



**Figure 4. Plot**



Ignatow and Mihalcea (2017, pp. 3-5) describe that there are three most influential approaches in doing a narrative analysis: Structural, functional, and sociological approaches. Structural approaches focus on the “story grammar” and the series of events in which it typically uses the Labovian model for its analysis. Functionalist analysis of narrative focuses on what specific stories do in the contexts of people’s everyday lives and how they function to solve a problem, reduce tension and resolve a dilemma. Sociological approaches focus on the “cultural, historical, and political contexts in which particular stories are, or can be, told by particular narrators to particular audiences” (Ignatow & Mihalcea, 2017, p. 4).

Although I tried to structure the narratives into a coherent timeline, I did not focus a lot on the story plots. The notion of negotiation in my research question has led me to focus my analysis on the functional aspect as it aims to find out how the dilemma and tensions are resolved. However, FLP is theoretically related to the domain of sociolinguistic study. The negotiation processes are situated within specific contexts of culture, history, and politics. Hence, the

functional and sociological dimensions may always be present in any attempt to explore how language policy is negotiated within a family.

In the four individual stories that I present, I keep the quotes from my participants in Bahasa Indonesia while I also provide the English translations. This thesis finding might be useful for Indonesian women who are also facing language challenges in intercultural marriages. Presenting the mothers' voices in their native tongue might help readers who speak the same language relate better to their stories.

#### 4.4.2 Thematic analysis

For the research sub-question, I used a thematic approach or analysis of narrative to analyse the data. Bold argues that "a thematic approach to analysis is most effective if you have a clear focus for your research from the start and your interview questions lead the interviewees into providing the information you seek" (Bold, 2012a, p. 12).

To a certain extent, the thematic approach borrows the logic of paradigmatic way of thinking where things are categorised based on their shared characteristics. The researcher attempts to find commonalities among actions or events (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 5). As I would like to know the common elements that influence the construction of FLP in all of the families, a thematic approach would be suitable to answer my question.

I used a theory-driven approach for categorising the data into specific predetermined themes (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998a, p. 2). As I found some data that did not fit into any of those themes, I went back to my theoretical framework and looked to add some other theory that could explain my findings. By modifying my theoretical framework, I could fit all the data into these specified themes: language belief and ideology, language planning/management, language practice, intrafamily factors, and macro-societal factors. I focused on finding the similarities and differences between the family language policies of my participants. I found this type of thematic approach helpful as it gave me a more explicit structure on analysing my data. Through this thematic approach, I could elicit the broader picture of what elements influence the construction of FLP in these Indonesian-Finnish intercultural families.

I conducted the thematic analysis after I finished writing the mothers' stories. In doing the categorisation, I first highlighted the texts in a different colour for each theme I noticed. Then,

I dissected the transcript by cutting them into parts based on those highlighted themes. After that, I would put these pieces of paper into boxes labelled for each of the themes so that I could revisit the data per category easily. Working in an old-fashioned way using paper, pen, scissors and boxes allowed me to be more perceptive towards my data. The process gave me a unique sense that I could visually see and categorise the narratives. The process of making sense of the narratives became more “real”, believable, and relatable for me.

While the narrative analysis focuses on the unique and different experiences of each participant, the thematic analysis aims to draw a common thread that could link all the individual stories. Working on the thematic analysis also provides a space where I can connect the findings with the theoretical framework that enables me to engage in an analytical discussion. Thus, taking both seemingly different approaches allows me to gain a more well-rounded perspective on the topic I am researching.

The next chapter presents the main findings of this study that address the research question on how family language policies are negotiated in Indonesian-Finnish intercultural families in Finland.

## 5 Walking into the midst of stories: Narrative analysis

This chapter includes four individual narratives: Aruna's, Batari's, Asmara's and Rinjani's. The stories explore the experiences, struggles and challenges that these Indonesian mothers face in bi/multilingual child-rearing. Through these stories, I try to capture the FLP dynamics and how they are negotiated across time by the actors involved. Each story is specific to its own unique family context.

### 5.1 Aruna: "Ughhh...inferiority complex...we need to conquer that!"

Aruna is a mother of two in her early 40s. She came from Indonesia to Germany to pursue her education. That was how she met her husband, Olli, a fellow student from Finland. When they became pregnant with their first child, they decided to move to Olli's home country and raise their family there.

Aruna knew that intercultural marriage would carry its own challenges, especially when it came to language choice at home. However, she always had this idea in her mind that she wanted to raise her children in her native language, Bahasa Indonesia.

*[Aku sudah dari dulu kepikiran memang akan ngomong bahasa ibu sama anakku...Aku nggak ingat sih ide itu datangnya dari mana...]*

*I knew from the start that I would speak my mother tongue with my child...Though I'm not sure where that idea came from...*

She recalled that probably she had learned about the importance of mother tongue during her time in the university. She just felt that it was natural for her to speak the language she was most familiar. From the very beginning, she had been convinced that it was the best decision for her child.

Aruna and Olli started to discuss language choice when they were still living outside of Finland. Initially, Olli planned to speak English with the child. Olli thought that nobody spoke Finnish around them. Moreover, he and Aruna conversed in English. He was not yet convinced that he had to speak Finnish to his child. Nevertheless, as they moved to Finland, Olli changed his mind. It just made more sense for him to raise his child in Finnish.

The couple eventually agreed that each of them would speak their native language to the child. Aruna would speak Bahasa Indonesia, while Olli would speak Finnish. They made up their minds after joining a gathering organised by an NGO that catered to intercultural families, Familia.

*[Waktu itu kita gabung di semacam organisasi untuk keluarga kawin campur, Familia namanya. Dia memang fokus untuk membantu pasangan seperti kita. Ada banyak bicara soal budaya, termasuk bahasa...]*

*We joined this organisation that caters the needs of intercultural families called Familia. They focus on helping couples like us. There are plenty of discussions on cultures, including languages...*

The session with Familia confirmed her judgment that speaking in her mother tongue was the best choice for her child's overall development. The counsellor advised them to use the OPOL one-parent/one-language strategy. That was how Aruna's family journey of raising a bi/multilingual family started, with a decision to speak each parent's native language to the child.

Aruna emphasised the significant role of Familia in supporting her through intercultural married life in Finland. She mentioned that she and her husband regularly attended events organised by the organisation. Familia had been really helpful for her while dealing with various issues faced by mixed-marriage couples. She thought that having a community where people could support each other was important, especially when you lived so far away from your families back home.

### **In Finland, speaking your mother tongue to your children is advised**

According to Aruna's observations, people in Finland were generally very supportive of speaking the mother's native language in child-rearing. The practice was seen as the best option for the child's overall development and wellbeing. She recalled how the Neuvola (maternity clinic), teachers in Päiväkoti and school, other parents she met in perhekerho (family community gathering) shared the same idea about speaking the mother tongue.

*[Pengalamanku di Finlandia, kemanapun aku pergi, kalau mengenai bahasa dengan anak, orang sini akan bilang...Ngomonglah dengan bahasamu sendiri...Itu penting, soal relasi, bonding yang natural sama anak. Juga soal pelestarian bahasa dan kebudayaan itu*

*sendiri...Nggak usah khawatir soal bahasa Finlandia, nanti mereka belajar sendiri di sekolah...]*

*My experience in Finland, wherever I go, when it comes to home language, people will say...Speak your own language to your children...It's important, for your relationship, natural mother-child bonding. It's also about preserving your own language and culture...Don't worry about Finnish, they'll learn it from school...*

She compared it with her experience in the US, where she just recently moved to. She observed that in the US, more pressure was put upon immigrant parents to socialise their children into the English language. Whereas in Finland, people perceived that the education system was responsible for integrating immigrant background children into Finnish society. The school had a huge role in teaching children to speak Finnish fluently.

Moreover, seeing intercultural couples in Finland, Aruna considered that the Finnish spouses were mostly supportive in maintaining the heritage language at home. She shared her recent experience of interacting with Indonesian mixed-marriage mothers in the US. She was surprised when she heard from some of the mothers that their English speaking husbands expressed their dislikes if they spoke Bahasa Indonesia with the kids. They did not want to be left out from the conversations; that was the reason why everyone should speak English at home. Aruna expressed her strong opinion that such an attitude was hugely problematic.

*[Kalau sampai nggak ngijinin ngomong bahasa ibu begitu, menurutku itu udah bentuk perilaku abusive suami dalam rumah tangga. Mungkin banyak ibu-ibu yang kalau menghadapi perilaku begitu ya nurut-nurut aja, nggak berpikir lebih jauh kalau itu merugikan...Dan sebenarnya kan menyalahi hak asasi juga ya itu...]*

*If your husband does not allow you to speak your mother tongue, I think it's a form of domestic abuse. Some women might not express their objection though...Maybe they did not think more thoroughly on the cost of it...And in fact, such a treatment violates human rights...*

### **Only one mother tongue. What about our bilingual children?**

Despite her general positive view about mother-tongue support in Finland, Aruna voiced her critique about particular policy in the population registry in Finland. She said that people could only register one mother tongue (äidinkieli) in the official government data. The practice has several implications for intercultural families who raise their children bilingually. Parents have

to choose which of the two languages is to be listed in the form. She recalled that when she discussed the choice with her husband, they decided to put Finnish as they were concerned about the covert discrimination that might entail by listing any heritage language.

*[Anak-anakku kan bilingual ya...Sebagai orang tua, kita bingung juga. Mau didaftarkan apa bahasa ibunya. Tapi suami akhirnya milih nulis Finnish. Karena ya, gimanaapun kita ada kekhawatiran... Tahu kan ya maksudku? Rasisme tersembunyi gitu. Takutnya ada diskriminasi ya...Pas mereka daftar kuliah atau cari kerja gitu...Kita ada pertimbangan itu...]*

*My kids are bilinguals. We were not sure which language we should put in the form. But then my husband decided to write Finnish. We were worried about the potential racism that may happen. You know what I mean...It's covert discrimination. Like when they apply for jobs or university...We have some concerns..."*

By registering Finnish as her children's mother tongue, they were not entitled to ask for their rights for heritage language support at school. She was well aware of the particular consequence that would put intercultural families in such a disadvantaged position. Aruna expressed her thought how such a policy seemed to conflict with the message that Finland was supportive of multiculturalism and multilingualism.

*[...Tapi ya itu.... Artinya aku nggak berhak minta sama Pemkot untuk kasih support Bahasa Indonesia...Karena kan di datanya tercatat bahasa ibu mereka Finnish.]*

*...But you know... It means that I could not ask the city to provide the Indonesian language support for my kids...Because the data says that their mother tongue is Finnish.*

### **OPOL at home**

Today, Aruna communicates in English with her husband Olli despite being able to speak quite a fluent Finnish. Aruna said that she and Olli once tried to speak in Finnish to each other, but it just did not work. It seemed that the language that bonded them from the very first time they met was English, and it was not easy to shift to other languages.

When it comes to their language choice with the children, Aruna was convinced that she and Olli had always tried their best to adhere to the OPOL strategy. She tried to be consistent in only speaking Indonesian to her children, while Olli naturally spoke Finnish with them. Olli had always been very supportive of Aruna speaking Bahasa Indonesia with the kids. While

language mixing was quite common in intercultural-multilingual families, Aruna had a negative view of the practice. She considered language mixing as an indicator of one's inadequate mastery of a particular language.

*[...Misal di Indonesia pun, kita bicara campur-campur bahasa Inggris. Menurut mereka itu cara mengenalkan bahasa lain dengan mencampur-campur. Menurutku itu salah ya... Merugikan kita sendiri, jadinya kita nggak bisa bicara suatu bahasa dengan baik. Banyak orang menganggap anak mencampur-campur bahasa itu menunjukkan anak mampu bicara lebih dari satu bahasa. Menurutku sih nggak bagus ya...Itu justru tanda dia tidak menguasai suatu bahasa dengan cukup, hingga dia harus mencampur dengan bahasa lain...]*

*...Even us in Indonesia, we mix our language with English. People think that it's how we introduce another language, by mixing it with ours. I think it's wrong...It comes with a cost, that we're unable to speak a certain language properly. Many people consider that a child mixing languages indicates multilingualism. For me, it's not a good thing...It's actually a sign that the child doesn't master the language well if he needs to mix it with another language...*

However, Aruna's kids had different personalities and individual preferences, and they respond differently to their parents' language policies at home. Aruna's older son was more adept to learning languages. Whereas for her younger son, learning languages was a bit of a challenge. Her younger son was more prone to language mixing, so he often mixed Finnish utterances when speaking with her in Bahasa Indonesia. Aruna mentioned about the strategy that she generally used in dealing with her children's language mixing.

*[...Aku ulangi lagi itu kata-kata bahasa Finlandia mereka ke Bahasa Indonesia...Beberapa kali gitu, supaya mereka ngomong Bahasa Indonesia...Tapi ya kadang kalau lagi capek, aku biarin sih...]*

*I rephrase his Finnish utterances into Bahasa Indonesia, and then repeat it several times to encourage them to speak Bahasa Indonesia...But at times when I'm tired, I'll just let it go...*

Aruna did not feel that any of her kids showed a particular resistance towards her quite strict OPOL strategy. Although with her younger son, he sometimes negotiated with her, [Aku susah ingat Bahasa Indonesianya apa!] "It's hard for me to recall how to say it in Bahasa Indonesia!" Aruna realised that she practised a stricter OPOL policy with her firstborn. While with her

second born, she tried to adjust to his pace as she did not want him to feel that learning Bahasa Indonesia was such a burden.

Aruna also explained how her husband's interest in Bahasa Indonesia by actively learning it played an important role in promoting the language at home. Bahasa Indonesia was gaining a special currency in the family.

*[Aku rasa itu yang bikin anakku tidak resisten sama Bahasa Indonesia. Dia lihat bapaknya sendiri juga mempelajari dan berusaha praktek ngomong sama aku dalam Bahasa Indonesia...]*

*I think this is the reason why my children are not resistant to Bahasa Indonesia. They see their own dad actively learning it and even trying to practice speaking Bahasa Indonesia with me...*

### **Finnish naturally emerged as the children's dominant language**

Aruna recalled how it was with his firstborn. When he joined daycare, Finnish started to become his more dominant language. Aruna acknowledged that her son started to feel more comfortable speaking in Finnish although he would still use Bahasa Indonesia when conversing with Aruna. As the kids started compulsory school, it was only natural that they began to master Finnish better than Indonesian. She had already anticipated that from the beginning so she could manage her expectations.

Aruna admitted that despite her commitment to maintaining Bahasa Indonesia at home, the actual practices had been changing over time. She mentioned how her conscious efforts in promoting the language, such as having a storytelling session with her children started to come less frequently as the kids were getting older. Although she had been actively trying to provide them with more engaging multimedia resources, it was challenging to find high-quality contents in Bahasa Indonesia. Moreover, as her children were older, they had more agency in deciding what kinds of content to choose.

*[Waktu mereka kecil itu, mau tidur baca buku Bahasa Indonesia...Tapi sekarang, anak-anak sudah besar dan lebih lancarnya bahasa Finlandia, ketertarikan mereka terhadap yang berbau Bahasa Indonesia jelas berkurang. Dan harus diakui ya, konten-konten dalam Bahasa Indonesia itu kurang...Dan kurang menarik juga...Sekarang mending ya ada beberapa film Indonesia yang bagus..Kayak Garuda di Dadaku itu...]*

*When they were smaller, we read a bedtime story in Bahasa Indonesia...But now, as they are older and speak more Finnish, of course, they have less interest in any content in Bahasa Indonesia. And admittedly, we lack good contents in Bahasa Indonesia...They're less engaging...It's better nowadays that we could see some good Indonesian movies...For example, Garuda di Dadaku...*

Family language planning is a journey of constant negotiations. Aruna expressed how she adjusted her initial language planning and goals to her current realities. In the beginning, she was determined to teach her children the formal Indonesian known as 'Bahasa Indonesia Baku' instead of only the colloquial version. Especially because learning the written language also requires knowledge of formal Indonesian. She wanted her children to master Bahasa Indonesia to the level that they could engage in academic situations. Being able to do so would open many opportunities in the future. However, as time went by, she realised how challenging it was in her context to aim for such an ambitious goal.

According to Aruna, her children could read and understand simple Indonesian children books. Yet, it was not easy for them to write in Indonesian. Aruna said that her children tried to use Bahasa Indonesia when texting with her. Even though many words were misspelt, she really appreciated that they tried. She did not attempt to criticise their written Bahasa Indonesia. It was good enough that they showed some interest in using the language in writing.

Despite admitting that she might not have reached her initial family language goals, Aruna still keeps some future plans to develop her children's Bahasa Indonesia. For instance, she expects that her kids could join a student exchange programme in Indonesia when they are older.

*[Aku belum putus harapan. Aku lihat misal suamiku ini aja ya. Bisa cukup bagus ya Bahasa Indonesianya. Dulu waktu pertama kita kenal dia memang belajar tuh bahasaku.. Dia pernah datang ke Indonesia sengaja buat belajar bahasa. Pernah juga ikut exchange ke Australia dan di situ ambil course Bahasa Indonesia. Dia percakapan bisa cukup lumayanlah ya...Nulis bisa sedikit-sedikit. Baca koran Indonesia pun dia ngerti kok....Ya aku pingin anakku nanti bisa ikut exchange juga ke Indonesia kalau udah gedean lah... ]*

*I still keep my hope high. Just look at my husband. He speaks Bahasa Indonesia quite well actually. When we first met, he started to learn my language. He came to visit Indonesia to learn the language. He also went for an exchange program to Australia and took Bahasa Indonesia course there. He knows colloquial Indonesian language quite well. He could write*

*in it a little. He even could read Indonesian newspaper and understand it...That's why I want my kids to join a student exchange program in Indonesia when they're older.*

### **Maintaining a connection with her Indonesian roots**

The Indonesian community in Helsinki holds regular gatherings and events. They also have a weekly class to teach young children reading the Islamic holy book. The course is held in Bahasa Indonesia. Aruna said that whenever she had the time to take her kids to the events, she would do that. Even though the older mixed-marriage kids tend to speak Finnish when they get together, the Indonesian adults would converse in Bahasa Indonesia, and the kids could be immersed in the atmosphere.

Aruna also mentioned Bahasa Indonesia course for youngsters, held once a week in Helsinki. She took her kids once to the course. However, amidst her busy life, she did not find the time to attend it again.

*[...di Helsinki itu kan ada ya kelas Bahasa Indonesia... Menurutku itu inisiatif yang bagus ya walau tentu banyak kendala teknis dan logistik dalam pelaksanaannya.. Kan sebenarnya di Finlandia ini yang bahasa ibu-nya beda berhak minta support sama pemerintah kota. Kalau nggak salah minimal ada lima anak gitu...]*

*...They provide Bahasa Indonesia class in Helsinki...I think it's a good initiative. Although, there might be a lot of technical and logistical issues in practice. In Finland, you're entitled to ask for mother-tongue support if your child's native language is not Finnish. You need a minimum of five kids speaking the same language if I'm not mistaken...*

Aruna always tried to stay in contact with her family back home. She and her family visited Indonesia almost every year for the holidays. She shared her interesting observation about her children adjusting to a different language context while visiting Indonesia. They seemed to dedicate more efforts in forming proper and complete sentences in Bahasa Indonesia knowing that the people around them would not understand Finnish. Yet, she also noticed a bit of change in their personalities. They became more reserved and self-conscious when they were in Indonesia. Aruna complained about the inconsiderate attitude of some Indonesians who often laughed at the funny accents of mixed-marriage children.

*[...Kalau lagi di Indonesia, anakku yang kecil tuh dia lebih self-conscious ya soal Bahasa Indonesianya...Dia nggak mau nyebut suatu kata kalau dia tahu kata itu susah. Kan di*

*Indonesia orang suka ngetawain tuh ya...Dia bakal lihat-lihat situasi. Ini orang-orang bakal ngetawain dia apa nggak...]*

*...When we're in Indonesia, my younger son was more self-conscious about his Indonesian. He would not say a particular word if it's hard to pronounce. As you know, people sometimes laughed at your funny pronunciation. He would read the context, he would look at the situations around him first, whether these people would laugh at him or not...*

Overall, Aruna had a strong opinion on the importance of maintaining one's heritage language. She considered that speaking the mother tongue as the most natural way to form an emotional bond with one's family members. She also thought that it was a way to stay connected to one's roots and culture. She was particularly against the idea that one culture or language being superior to others. Living in the western world, she thought that the Indonesian diasporas had to fight the inferiority complex corrupting their collective mentalities.

*[Menurutku mentalitas kita harus diubah. Kita jangan merasa bahasa kita lebih rendah dari bahasa lain. Apalagi kalau kita tinggal di luar negeri. Banyak yang bilang, buat apa Bahasa Indonesia, nggak penting...Terus ada juga yang bilang, nanti anaknya malu pakai bahasa yang beda, atau jadi nggak lancar bahasa lokalnya...Menurutku itu ide-ide yang gimana ya..Aduuuuh...Inferioritas... Itu yang harus kita lawan!]*

*I think we need to change our mentalities. We don't have to feel that our language is inferior to other languages. Especially when we live abroad. Many people say, why do you need Bahasa Indonesia, it's not important...Some would say: your kids would be embarrassed for speaking an alien language, or speaking Bahasa Indonesia would interfere with your child's majority language skill...That kind of ideas...Ughhhh...Inferiority complex...We need to conquer that!*

## **5.2 Rinjani: "My pedagogical training as a language teacher might have been helpful at home."**

Before coming to Finland, Rinjani was an English teacher back in Indonesia. She had always been curious about other cultures and languages; probably the reason why she was drawn to an intercultural relationship in the first place.

Rinjani had thought about what language she would speak to her child when she was pregnant. She knew that speaking her native language was the best way to form an emotional bond with

the child. The nurse in Neuvola, which she visited for a prenatal consultation, also shared the same view with her. They advised Rinjani and Mikko each to speak their native language to the child.

Rinjani's other concern was how the child would communicate with the Finnish and Indonesian grandparents. According to her Indonesian custom, the concept of nuclear family extended to the grandparents as well. It was essential to maintain a strong relationship with them.

Born and raised in Finland, her child would naturally speak Finnish. As Rinjani and Mikko conversed in English, the child might also eventually pick up some English. Her Finnish in-laws spoke Karelian and did not speak English. Her Indonesian parents did not speak very good English as well. Hence, it made more sense for her to raise the child to be an Indonesian and Finnish bilingual.

Rinjani also consulted her fellow Indonesian mixed-marriage mothers in Finland and observed their language practices. She noticed how some Indonesian-Finnish families had successfully raised bilingual kids. Most of them practised the OPOL strategy as advised by experts around them.

*[Awal-awal sempat nanya juga sama teman-teman yang sudah lama di sini. Ternyata mereka juga fokusnya ke Bahasa Indonesia ya...Kayak Mbak Tina (nama samaran) tuh. Kenal kan ya? Kalau aku lihat anak-anaknya, mereka fasih Bahasa Indonesianya. Mereka selalu jawab Bahasa Indonesia kalau ibunya nanya sesuatu. Tapi begitu sama bapaknya, mereka langsung jawab Finnish. Otomatis gitu...]*

*I asked my Indonesian friends who've been here longer than me. Most of the mothers focus on speaking Bahasa Indonesia. Do you know Mbak Tina (pseudonym)? All of her children speak fluent Indonesian. They always respond in Bahasa Indonesia when their mom speaks to them. But when they talk with their father, they switch to Finnish automatically.*

However, Rinjani also mentioned about other Indonesian-Finnish children who refused to speak Bahasa Indonesia despite their mothers' belief that maintaining the language was necessary.

*[Tapi ada juga sebagian teman-teman yang memang kepingin ngajarin anaknya Bahasa Indonesia, tapi anaknya nggak mau. Temenku itu kan orang Tionghoa Medan. Jadi bahasa ibu dia dua, Mandarin dan Bahasa Indonesia. Anaknya begitu masuk Päiväkoti, masuk yang berbahasa Inggris. Terus pas SD, masuk ke sekolah lokal Finnish. Anaknya dominan bicara*

*Finnish. Bahasa Indonesia ngerti, tapi nggak mau jawab. Selalu jawab bahasa Finlandia. Kalau ibunya ngomong Mandarin, mereka jawab Mandarinnya cuma di depan kalimat, habis itu dilanjut bahasa Finlandia ngomongnya...Beda-beda ya memang situasi masing-masing keluarga...]*

*Yet, some other friends told me that their children refuse to speak Bahasa Indonesia although they wanted to teach them the language. One of my friends, she is of Chinese descent from Medan. She speaks Mandarin and Bahasa Indonesia as her first languages. Her daughter went to an English daycare. Now she's in a Finnish primary school. She speaks Finnish mostly. She understands her mother's Indonesian, but refuse to respond in Bahasa Indonesia, always in Finnish. If her mom speaks in Mandarin, the daughter would only say one or two Mandarin words, then continue the sentence in Finnish. I think every family's situation is different.*

Through many conversations and discussions, Rinjani and her husband Mikko decided to speak each their mother tongue to the child. They were convinced that it was the best decision for the family.

### **The bilingual child**

Rinjani did not consider maintaining her native language at home to be some kind of a burden, though she admitted that parenting was hard at times. She knew she was only at the beginning of a long road ahead, but she has enjoyed the whole process so far. Rinjani had always loved learning and teaching languages. Both of Rinjani's parents were also teachers; the passion for teaching seemed to run in the family. Rinjani thought that the joy of passing her heritage language to her child was a blessing and that she should be grateful.

*[Aku nggak ngerasa ini beban atau gimana ya. Sehari-hari dia satu-satunya teman aku ngobrol, bercerita dalam Bahasa Indonesia. Justru aku yang harus bersyukur ada dia. Jadinya ya aku nikmati setiap momen itu sesantai mungkin...Dibawa enjoy aja...Sesuaikan aja gaya kita bicara, gaya komunikasi kita, pokoknya nggak ngotot lah.]*

*I don't think that this is some kind of burden for me. My son is the only partner I have to converse, share stories in Bahasa Indonesia. I should be grateful for him. So I try to enjoy every moment. Be as relaxed as possible...I try to adjust my vocal tone, my communication style. Just be natural...*

Rinjani shared how she always tried to speak the standard Bahasa Indonesia known as “Bahasa Baku”. She acknowledged that her Bahasa Indonesia was somewhat influenced by the local dialect in North Sumatera where she grew up. Many of the words often used by the people in the region were Malay and Karo language vocabularies. She said that she would like her child to speak the ‘proper’ Bahasa Indonesia.

The nature of Mikko’s work put Rinjani’s family language practice in a unique situation. Mikko would be away for work the whole week, then came back and stay at home for another week. Hence, her son would speak fully in Bahasa Indonesia at home with Rinjani when Mikko was away. As Mikko returned home, Rinjani’s son would spend most of his time with his dad, speaking Finnish.

Rinjani said that Mikko was interested in learning Bahasa Indonesia. He understood if people spoke Bahasa Indonesia, although he could not actively respond in the language yet. Interestingly, Rinjani’s son refused to answer to his dad speaking Bahasa Indonesia with him. He would pretend that he did not understand his dad’s utterance. He would only respond when his dad switched back to Finnish.

*[Suamiku kan kepingin belajar Bahasa Indonesia. Kadang dia coba tuh bicara sedikit-sedikit Bahasa Indonesia sama anakku. Tapi lucunya ini bocah nggak suka. Dia menolak mengerti ucapan bapaknya. Mukanya kayak, ini Isi ngomong apaan sih? Dia baru respon kalau suamiku udah ngomong Finnish lagi...]*

*My husband is interested in learning Bahasa Indonesia. Sometimes he tries to practice his Indonesian with my son. But funnily, my son dislikes it. He refuses to understand his father’s Indonesian utterances. He will put that poker face, expressing his disapproval. He will only respond once his Father switches back to Finnish.*

Rinjani shared her strategy when she encountered her son mixing Indonesian and Finnish. She tried to be as consistent as possible always to teach her son the Indonesian word for his Finnish utterance. She seemed to know how to do that naturally without upsetting her son. She emphasised the importance of adjusting her approaches to her son’s mood changes.

*[Biasanya aku benerin...Kalau misal ada kosa kata baru yang dia belum tahu Bahasa Indonesianya apa, ya aku ajarin...pengucapannya gimana...Dia sih nggak ngambek sejauh ini kalau aku benerin gitu. Intinya kita harus sabar, pintar-pintar baca emosi anak ya..Senatural mungkin aja, jangan menggurui gitu ngasih tahunya...]*

*Usually, I try to fix his sentence...If my son doesn't know the Indonesian word, I will teach it to him...How it is pronounced...So far, he doesn't complain if I fix his sentences. It's important to be patient, know how to read your child's emotion...Teach him as naturally as possible; don't be too strenuous...*

Rinjani's son enjoyed the read-aloud session with her mother. She seemed to be a natural storyteller. Rinjani knew how to engage young kids into a story. She would play with her mimics, expressions and intonations to make the session interactive. Rinjani also mentioned that she often used that motherese voice when speaking with her young child. She pointed out that it was necessary to note that the strategy was not baby talk. She used proper adult word pronunciation; only the tone was slightly high-pitched in a caring way.

*[Anakku tuh imajinasinya tinggi. Hobi bercerita. Kalau sama aku dia sering jelasin dongeng Kancil dan Buaya tuh...Bahkan kadang dia ke Isi-nya cerita itu pakai Bahasa Indonesia. Soalnya kan memang cerita itu aku ceritakan selalu dalam Bahasa Indonesia, dengan segala gaya, intonasi, mimik ala Bahasa Indonesia...]*

*My son has a very imaginative mind. He loves telling stories. He often narrates his favourite story to me, The Mouse-deer and The Alligator...Even he would tell that story to his father in Bahasa Indonesia. Because I always read him the story in Bahasa Indonesia, with all the style, intonations, and mimics...the Indonesian way...*

According to Rinjani, since her son started Päiväkoti, he acquired more and more Finnish words. He understood both Finnish and Bahasa Indonesia, but he began to develop richer Finnish vocabularies than Bahasa Indonesia. Rinjani shared how her son was starting to form long sentences in his speech. When speaking Bahasa Indonesia with Rinjani, he would sometimes pause in the middle of the sentence to find the correct Indonesian word to express his mind. At times, when he could not find the word, he would say it in Finnish.

Rinjani mentioned that sometimes he could not understand her son's Finnish utterances. She said that kids in Päiväkoti conversed in the children's version Finnish with some vocabulary that she had never heard.

*[Bahasa di Päiväkoti itu kadang beda Finnish-nya..Bahasa anak-anak gitu. Dan itu aku suka nggak paham. Kayak dia minta sesuatu, aku nggak ngerti. Dia juga belum tau kata Bahasa Indonesianya misal. Nah, itu kadang dia jadi emosi..."]*

*They speak a different kind of Finnish in Päiväkoti...It's like the children's Finnish. And I often fail to understand it. If he asks for something in Finnish, because he doesn't know the Indonesian word for it, sometimes I just couldn't understand it. That upsets him sometimes...*

Rinjani thought that her son's language skill was rather advanced for his age. Her two-year-old son already knew a lot of words both in Bahasa Indonesia and Finnish. He was also very talkative and imaginative. He enjoyed books and telling stories. Rinjani pointed out that in Päiväkoti, they really fostered the love of reading to young children.

*[Di Päiväkoti itu juga kan ditanamkan banget ya kecintaan sama buku, dongeng-dongeng...Mereka sering ke perpustakaan juga. Cuma ya memang di perpustakaan itu bukunya bahasa Finland semua sih ya...]*

*In Päiväkoti, they really focus on fostering the love of reading: books and stories...They also visit the library regularly. However, most books in the library are in Finnish...*

For Rinjani, the journey of motherhood had been very incredible so far. She was amazed by every little milestone in her son's growth and development, including in the language department. Rinjani acknowledged that some people would think that multilingual exposure in young children could cause a speech delay. However, based on her experience, with the appropriate language strategy at home, raising a bilingual child was not anywhere linked to speech delay.

She also mentioned how, at such a very young age, her two-year-old son already knew how to situate himself in different language contexts. He spoke Bahasa Indonesia to Rinjani but always spoke Finnish in what he noticed as a Finnish environment. Although her son was bilingual, the teachers in Päiväkoti were at first surprised that he actually spoke another language too. In the daycare, he would strictly utter Finnish words.

*[Lucunya, di Päiväkoti itu gurunya nggak ngeh dia dua bahasa ya. Di sekolah selalu full keluarannya bahasa Finlandia. Nggak pernah itu keluar kosa kata bahasa Indonesia. Kekhawatiranku kan dia bakal campur-campur bahasanya... Tapi ternyata nggak terjadi itu, kalau dia bicara sama orang Finlandia selalu full bahasa sini...]*

*Funnily, the teachers in Päiväkoti did not notice that he was actually bilingual. He always speaks strictly Finnish in the daycare. He never utters any Indonesian vocabulary. I have*

*some concern that he might mix languages...But it did not happen. When he speaks with Finnish people, he would only say Finnish words...*

### **Managing expectations**

Initially, Rinjani had a lot of aspirations and plans in mind to nurture the development of her child's language skill. However, just like parenting and motherhood in general, it seemed that everything was renegotiated along the way. She had to manage her goals and expectations, adjust them to her current realities. She emphasised the importance of being kind to herself as a mother, not to resort on the illusion of perfection and focus on being grateful.

Rinjani expected that her son would know how to speak and write in standard Bahasa Indonesia. However, she did not want to rush his language skill development. Rinjani thought that focusing on oral language skill before rushing to introduce letters was the best approach. Reading and writing skills would eventually come at the right time for the child. Moreover, although she was an English teacher, Rinjani did not want to teach her son English too early. At the moment, she thought that focusing on Bahasa Indonesia and Finnish would be best. Interestingly, as Rinjani and Mikko conversed in English every day, she noticed that her son started to pick up some English words naturally.

The wonder of books had been the powerful mantra that Rinjani believed for a long time. She was very appreciative of the literacy culture in Finnish society in general. High-quality children's books were everywhere to be found. However, most children's books available in the library were in Finnish. Rinjani mentioned how she would loosely translate Finnish children's books to Bahasa Indonesia during read-aloud sessions with her son. Rinjani also emphasised how using songs to foster the child's language development was very effective. Rinjani had always loved singing. It was only natural for her that she always included songs and melodies in her daily interactions with her son.

*[Selain buku, aku tu juga suka sekali nyanyi. Aku ajarin dia itu lagu-lagu anak-anak.. Lagu-lagu Indonesia jaman kita kecil. Suamiku sampe heran, "Wah kamu kok ingat semua lagu-lagu jaman dulu begitu?" Gimana ya, hobiku memang nyanyi dari kecil, hehe...]*

*Other than books, I also love singing very much. I teach my son all those children's songs. Those songs during my childhood times back home in Indonesia. My husband would say, "Wow, you still remember all those old-time songs?" Well, I just happen to love singing since I was a kid, haha...*

Maintaining the relationship with the Indonesian community in Finland was something that Rinjani also tried to do. She regularly took her son to Qur'an kindergarten that was held every week in the Indonesian embassy in Helsinki. She also mentioned about Bahasa Indonesia class in the capital, but thinking that her son was too young to join the session.

Rinjani shared her key to fostering bilingual child language development. According to her personal experience, consistency was key. Parents had to explore what kind of strategies that fit their family's situation and then commit to practising them. Establishing a pattern was particularly crucial in nurturing the bilingual child development. Yet, she also mentioned the need for parents to gauge the child's emotions. It was essential to create a joyful environment at home, avoid pressuring the child with unrealistic targets.

*[Intinya sih konsistensi menurutku ya. Kalau kita sudah punya satu strategi, ya harus full dijalankan. Kalau pingin ngajarin Bahasa Indonesia, jangan karena pingin keren, terus kita campur-campur sama bahasa Inggris atau Finlandia. Tetap konsisten bahasa ibu masing-masing. Tapi kita juga harus pintar-pintar mengkondisikan ya. Ada suasana menyenangkan, nggak menekan dan berlebihan ngasih target, atau anak di-drill gitu...]*

*I think consistency is the key. If we already think of a set of strategies, we need to commit to it. If we want to teach our children Bahasa Indonesia, try not to mix it with English or Finnish, just because we want to look cool. We need to speak our mother tongue consistently. But, we also need to adjust to the particular circumstances. Try to develop a joyful environment. Don't be pushy and overly ambitious with targets. Don't drill your kids.*

Right after finishing her language integration programme, Rinjani enrolled herself in Teacher Training School in Finland. She wanted to pursue her passion for teaching. She mentioned that her pedagogical training had given a lot of inspirations in her parenting practice at home. It was beneficial to have some knowledge of how children's minds develop. Rinjani really wished that she could continue working as a school teacher here in Finland.

Rinjani also shared her experience during her practice as a teacher's assistant in one of the Finnish schools. She noticed that second-generation immigrant young people in Finland were at risk of losing ties to their heritage languages. Although Finland's language policy guaranteed the child's right to some sort of mother tongue education, she was surprised to see that quite many second-generation immigrant students did not speak their mother's native language anymore. She then realised that the heritage language maintenance was primarily a family's

affair. According to Rinjani's opinion, the education system had not yet played a significant role in supporting families with an immigrant background to maintain their heritage languages.

*[Banyak juga itu kasus waktu aku praktek asisten guru di sini, anak-anak imigran generasi kedua gitu yang nggak bisa bahasa ibunya. Waktu ada satu anak, kebetulan dia anak Vietnam. Dia lahir di sini, orang tuanya yang imigran dari sana. Dia nggak bisa bahasa Vietnam Waktu ditanya dia jawab, "Buat apa aku bisa bahasa Vietnam? Aku kan orang Finlandia, tinggalnya di Finlandia..." Memang ya, kalau soal bahasa ibu, ya tergantung keluarga, gimana orang tuanya...Sekolah nggak terlalu berperan ya...]*

*When I was doing my practice as a teacher's assistant in the school here, I noticed that there are quite plenty of second-generation immigrant students who no longer speak their mother's native language. I met this one kid of Vietnamese descent. He was born here, but his parents came from Vietnam. He no longer speaks Vietnamese. When I asked him he answered, "Why should I speak Vietnamese, I'm a Finnish national, and I live in Finland..." Then I realised, when it comes to your heritage language, it really depends on the family and the parents... The school doesn't really play any significant role there.*

### **5.3 Batari: "I chose to stay at home during my children's early years."**

Batari has been living in Finland for almost two decades now. She came to the country for a job internship and did not plan to stay there any longer than a few months. Unexpectedly, Batari met her future husband there, Marko. After Batari married Marko, she decided to reside permanently in Finland.

After finishing her study at the local vocational college, her first son was born. Finland has a generous parental leave policy that enables women to stay at home during the child's first year. However, Batari decided that she would not rush herself to return to work. Led by her previous trauma of miscarriage, Batari wanted to cherish every single moment motherhood had to offer. She wanted to dedicate her time to raising her child at home.

Batari also thought that spending time with her child intensively in his early years was crucial for his overall development, including his language development. She mentioned how she wanted to make sure that her son grew up knowing how to speak her native language, Bahasa Indonesia. It was one of the many reasons why she chose to be a stay at home mom for the first few years of her child's life.

*[Dulu aku memang sengaja buat jadi ibu rumah tangga dulu pas punya anak. Aku kan pernah trauma keguguran ya. Aku jadi mikir nanti kalau punya anak aku mau puas-puasin sama dia dulu. Kalau aku di rumah aku kan jadi bisa ngajarin dia macem-macem, termasuk soal bahasa. Aku pingin dia tu ngomong Bahasa Indonesia. Jadi aku mikirnya kalau awal-awal dia full sama aku dulu, dia bisa lancar nanti Bahasa Indonesianya.]*

*I deliberately chose to become a stay at home mom after my son was born. I had a painful miscarriage before. That's how I thought that if I'm ever blessed with a child, I want to spend most of my time with him. If I stay at home, I can then teach him so many things, including my native language. I want my child to speak Bahasa Indonesia. So I'm thinking, if my child spends his early years with me at home, he'll speak fluent Bahasa Indonesia.*

Batari recalled her early conversations with her husband regarding the home language. Marko, who was a seasoned teacher in Finland, suggested that it was essential to speak each of their own native languages to their son. Batari agreed on that point as she wanted to pass down her Indonesian culture and tradition to his son. Overall, Batari and Marko shared a positive view of multilingualism. They thought that speaking more than one language would benefit the child's brain development. They also agreed that Indonesia was a growing economy with many opportunities in the future, another reason to keep their connection with the country's language and culture.

*[Suamiku juga bilang, "Tahu nggak, nanti Indonesia itu jadi negara penting. Maju terus ekonominya. Nanti anak-anak punya banyak kesempatan di sana. Harus bisa anak-anak bicara Bahasa Indonesia."]*

*My husband also said, "Hey, Indonesia will be an important country in the future. Its economy is growing. Our children will have so many opportunities there. They should be able to speak Bahasa Indonesia."*

Interestingly, Batari's mother tongue is not Bahasa Indonesia. It is the Javanese language. Just like many other Indonesians in her generation, they would speak their ethnic languages at home. Although she is also a native Bahasa Indonesia speaker, she feels most emotional attachment with Javanese. However, Bahasa Indonesia is the country's lingua franca and the language of instruction in Indonesian schools. Batari thought that it was more practical to speak Bahasa Indonesia rather than Javanese to her child.

## **The bilingual children**

At home, Batari speaks Bahasa Indonesia with both of her children while Marko speaks in Finnish with them. Batari and Marko converse in English to each other. Batari said that her children would respond to her in Bahasa Indonesia, although sometimes they had to utter some Finnish words to complete their sentences.

Batari tried to recall her children's language development when they were younger. She remembered that at one point, she was a bit worried that his older son might have some language development problem. When he was four years old, he could not form a long sentence properly. Batari and Marko then tried to seek professional help. She was relieved to hear from the doctor that there was no serious problem. The doctor reassured her that it might take a while for the child to build his multilingual home. She just had to be more patient in nurturing his language development.

*[Usia empat tahun itu dia dulu ada kendala. Nggak bisa ngucapin long sentence. Terus kita konsul ke dokter. Kata dokter ya bisa jadi karena paparan tiga bahasa ini dia butuh waktu untuk membangun kemampuan bahasanya. Dilihat sama dokternya juga nggak ada gejala apa-apa sih. Nggak perlu khawatir. Sebenarnya ketika umur dua tahun itu dia sudah lancar ngomong Bahasa Indonesia full. Begitu masuk tiga tahun, dia masuk Päiväkoti setengah hari kan ya, karena aku hamil itu. Di situ dia mulai lebih banyak kosa kata Finnish. Mungkin itu ya di situ dia perlu waktu, macam-macam bahasa gitu...]*

*When he was four years old, we noticed some problem. He could not form a long sentence. We tried to consult the doctor. The doctor said that my son might need more time to develop his language skills because he was exposed to three languages. The doctor checked, there was no other underlying condition. So I should not worry too much. Actually, when my son was two years old, he was already speaking in Bahasa Indonesia. But when he was three, he joined half-day Päiväkoti. I was pregnant with my second son. That's when he started to acquire more and more Finnish words. Maybe that was the case... He needed more time to build his language repertoire...*

Batari emphasised that the early childhood years were crucial in socialising the child to Bahasa Indonesia. She noted that the more exposure to majority language that the child got, such as through joining Päiväkoti, the more dominant in Finnish he would be. Batari knew that growing

up in Finland, her children would eventually be more dominant in Finnish. Hence, she decided to send her children a bit later to Päiväkoti and kept them longer with her at home.

Regarding how to foster her children's language development, Batari shared one particular strategy. She emphasised the importance of providing learning resources in Bahasa Indonesia. She remembered that whenever she went back home to Indonesia for holidays, she would buy a lot of children's books as well as music and movies in the form of CDs. Batari recalled that in early 2000, media content on the internet was not as massive as today. She had to allocate a significant amount of financial resources to buy all of those learning materials.

*[Macam-macam bahan itu aku bawa dari Indonesia. Lagu-lagu itu semua aku bawa. Lagu anak-anak, lagu populer. Dulu itu CD-CD ya, belum ramai Youtube kan. Buku-buku juga segala macam deh. Dulu itu anakku favorit banget sama si Thomas yang kereta itu. Aku beliin yang versi Bahasa Indonesia. Macem-macam serinya itu. Pokoknya begitu mudik, itu aku pasti ke Gramedia. Itu aku dulu beneran invest bahan-bahan belajar anakku. Jaman dulu aja itu aku habis jutaan beli segala buku-buku, CD, rupa-rupa itu...]*

*I brought all kind of resources from Indonesia. All of those songs. Children's song, popular songs back home. It was all in CDs; Youtube was not yet a thing back then. I brought all kinds of books. My kids really love Thomas, the Tank Engine. I bought them the Indonesian version—all series of it. Every time I went back home, I would go to Gramedia (book store). I invested a lot for my kids' learning resources. I spent millions (rupiah), buying all those books and CDs...*

Reminiscing the times when the kids were very young, Batari recalled how she would always read them books before bedtime. She read them in Bahasa Indonesia. Even for Finnish books, she would translate them to Bahasa Indonesia.

*[Bahkan dulu buku anak-anak yang dapat dari rumah sakit, yang tentang kelinci dan kura-kura lomba lari...Itu aku terjemahkan ke Bahasa Indonesia pas membacakannya ke mereka. Setiap malam itu. Sampai hafal itu anak-anakku...Ada satu bagian tuh, pas kata-kata "Hup-hup!"...Itu pasti langsung ketawa.]*

*Even that book that we got from the hospital, about a rabbit and turtle in a foot race...I translated it to Bahasa Indonesia when I read to them. Every single night. They remember every single word from the book. There was one part, when the book says, "Hop, hop!" They would laugh out loud...*

On her children's language practice, Batari remembered that they conversed mostly in Bahasa Indonesia when they were very young. They started to talk more in Finnish when his older son started kindergarten. She said that her older son played a crucial role in his younger brother's language development. First, he socialised his brother to Bahasa Indonesia. Then, when he started to become more dominant in Finnish, he spoke Finnish with his younger brother. As time progressed and both of them had started school, they conversed in Finnish more and more.

*[Anak kedua itu tinggal ngikutin kakaknya. Ini kan mereka jaraknya lumayan dekat ya. Waktu kecil-kecil itu mereka saling komunikasinya dalam Bahasa Indonesia. Tapi begitu kakanya mulai lebih lancar bahasa Finlandia, itu adeknya juga ngikut begitu..]*

*My second born loved to copy his brother. They are only a few years apart. When they were younger, they conversed in Bahasa Indonesia. But when my oldest son started to be more fluent in Finnish, his brother followed him along (speaking Finnish)...*

Batari also brought up the idea that peer influence at school might have a significant effect on the child's language choice. Bullying was a challenge that mixed-race bilingual children sometimes had to face. Batari recalled one time when she dropped her oldest son to school. She talked in Bahasa Indonesia with her son, and one of his friends overheard their conversation. After that, the friend made fun of him in front of his other peers for speaking an alien language. Batari's son felt so humiliated. He came home telling Batari to never speak in Bahasa Indonesia with him again.

*[Anak pertamaku itu dulu pernah di sekolah, aku kan lagi antar dia terus ngomong Bahasa Indonesia sama dia. Ada temannya yang dengar. Terus udahnya temannya tu ngetawain di depan yang lain, "Itu tadi ibumu ngomong bahasa planet apa tuh?" Jadi semacam bully gitu. Habis itu anakku jadi ngambek, bilang sama aku, "Mama aku nggak mau ngomong Bahasa Indonesia lagi!"]*

*There was one time when I dropped my oldest son to school; I talked to him in Bahasa Indonesia. One of his friends overheard our conversation. After I left, that boy made fun of him in front of the others, "What kind of alien language did your mom speak?" Some sort of verbal bullying. My son was coming home upset, saying to me, "Mama, I don't want to speak Bahasa Indonesia any more!"*

Batari was so surprised that her son would be distraught just because of one ignorant comment from his friend. She then realised that parents should never take verbal bullying lightly. They

might have a profound impact on children. Batari explained to her son that what his friend did was wrong. She reassured him that it was nobody's place to tell him what language he should speak. He should be proud that he spoke two languages.

Batari and her family live in a city a bit further to the North. There was no Indonesian family living there when her sons were growing up. Unlike Indonesians in the capital who came to regular gatherings, Batari's sons did not have any community that could give them exposure to Bahasa Indonesia. Fortunately, Batari's sister and her family live in Sweden. They often visit each other on holidays. Batari's sister children are bilinguals who speak Swedish and Bahasa Indonesia. Since Batari's sons do not speak Swedish nor the cousins do speak Finnish, they would always speak in Bahasa Indonesia when they get together.

*[Adikku kan tinggal di Swedia. Ponakan-ponakanku ini seumurannya sama anak-anakku. Mereka itu juga ngomong Bahasa Indonesia. Kita kan sering saling mengunjungi ya.. Kalau kita semua ngumpul, ya jadinya ngomong Indonesia semua.]*

*My sister lives in Sweden. My two nieces are around the same age as my sons. They both speak Bahasa Indonesia too. We visit each other quite often. When we get together, we would speak Bahasa Indonesia.*

Both of Batari's children are teenagers now. According to Batari, they both can speak Bahasa Indonesia quite well. However, Batari admitted that they might not be able to write in Bahasa Indonesia properly. Fostering the writing skill in the heritage language was something that Batari found most challenging in her journey of raising bilingual children.

#### **5.4 Asmara: “The stress from the nursing school pressured me to shift my home language.”**

Asmara is a mother of two in her early 40s. Before coming to Finland, Asmara had a stellar career back home in Indonesia. She moved to Finland thinking that she must immediately learn the language and integrate to the society through employment. However, the reality she encountered was not what she expected. It was not that easy to learn Finnish nor to find a job in Finland.

Asmara became pregnant with her first son right after she moved to Finland. Just two years afterwards, her second son came along. She spent her first three years in Finland staying at

home due to her consecutive pregnancies. As soon as her youngest son was ready for daycare, she started to learn Finnish intensively by joining the integration programme for newcomers.

Raising an intercultural family, Asmara knew that language differences could be a challenge. One of the most important decisions she and her husband Lauri had to make was about what language to speak at home. She shared how Neuvola played such an essential role in her initial family language planning. “They always suggest us to speak in our own languages to the child. You know, using that OPOL strategy,” she said. Neuvola emphasised that speaking each parent’s mother tongue was important for the child’s overall development.

Asmara and Lauri also agreed that by raising the child bilingually, it would benefit the child’s brain development. Moreover, Asmara thought that maintaining Bahasa Indonesia was necessary to keep ties with her family back home. “Not all of my family members in Indonesia speak good English, so we have to speak in Bahasa Indonesia with them,” she explained.

When the kids were younger, Asmara was very committed to speaking Bahasa Indonesia with them. However, the language situation changed after she started attending nursing school. *[Aku kan pingin cepat cari kerja. Aku nggak suka kalau orang ngeliat aku kayak imigran pengangguran gitu. Aku kepingin berguna lah buat masyarakat. Nah, kata orang-orang masuk ke sekolah perawat aja pasti nanti dapat kerja. Soalnya kan memang banyak kebutuhan untuk perawat ya, itu lho practical nurse...]* “I wanted to find a job. I didn’t like it when people saw me as an idle immigrant. You know what I mean, I want to contribute to society. They said that going to nursing school will guarantee you a job. There’s a growing need for practical nurses,” she said.

The language of instruction at the nursing school was in Finnish. After finishing her language integration programme, Asmara was quite conversational in Finnish. Yet, the academic Finnish used at school was beyond her comprehension. *[Aku dulu stres banget gara-gara sekolah. Bukan soal pelajarannya ya, tapi karena bahasa yang dipakai. Semuanya pakai bahasa Finlandia. Aku setiap malam nangis ketika ngerjain PR. Berat banget rasanya dulu itu.]* “I was very stressed out about school. Not because of the lesson itself, but the language of instructions. Everything was in Finnish. I cried at night, working on my homework. It was just so hard for me,” Asmara recalled.

The stress from adjusting to the school’s language of instruction pressured Asmara to practice her Finnish as often as possible. “I’m a very ambitious person. I saw my other immigrant friends

were ahead of me. I felt competitive to improve my Finnish!” Asmara noted. As a result of that, she started to speak more of Finnish at home with the kids. A language shift that both of her kids happily welcome. With more Finnish exposure from the daycare environment, they also began to be more comfortable speaking in Finnish. However, interestingly, Asmara did not feel the urge to practice Finnish with her husband. She kept conversing in English with Lauri. “I don’t know why, but it feels weird to speak Finnish with my husband. We’ve been speaking English since we first met,” she explained.

Asmara admitted that she had not been fully committed to her initial family language plan. “Yes, of course, I speak in Bahasa Indonesia with the kids. But, a lot of the times I speak Finnish with them. I know I’m the one who broke the rule.” She knew that other mixed-marriage families who were successful in raising bilingual children were very consistent with their language plan. “It’s hard for me to stick with OPOL,” she said.

According to Asmara, both of her kids understand Bahasa Indonesia very well. However, they do not speak the language actively. If Asmara speaks Bahasa Indonesia with them, they will mostly respond in Finnish. They will only utter simple Indonesian words in between Finnish sentences. As they both are already in school now, it is clear that Finnish has become their dominant language.

She admitted that she did not necessarily encourage her kids to speak strictly in Bahasa Indonesia with her. She was also very relaxed about language mixing. “Actually, I have this guilty feeling inside. Maybe I don’t speak enough Bahasa Indonesia with them,” Asmara reckoned. She mentioned how her husband always encouraged her to speak Bahasa Indonesia with the kids. Even her seven-year-old son told her once, “Mom, could you speak Bahasa Indonesia more, I want to learn the language.”

Despite the challenges she has faced, Asmara still holds an optimistic view of her family language goals. “Of course I want them to be multilingual who speak Bahasa Indonesia, Finnish, and eventually English. Probably I haven’t done enough, but I don’t think I’ve given up on Bahasa Indonesia just yet,” she said.

One of her attempts to improve her children’s Bahasa Indonesia was by hiring an Indonesian tutor for her kids. “Last year, we had this Indonesian student taught my kids to draw, and we asked her to speak only in Bahasa Indonesia with them. I want them to hear Indonesian from others, not only from me,” Asmara said.

What Asmara thought her children needed the most was a supportive community to practice Bahasa Indonesia. Unfortunately, Asmara lives far away from the capital city where most of the Indonesian diaspora families reside.”I know that Indonesian people who live in Helsinki come to a regular gathering. I heard that they even have these classes for kids, like Bahasa Indonesia class. We have some Indonesian families live around here, but we only gather occasionally,” she said. Asmara acknowledged that the government could only do so much to support small minority communities like hers. “I think it goes back to our own initiative, whether we think it is necessary or not. I wish other Indonesians in my community share my sentiment. A once in a month regular gathering for the kids would be a good start.”

## **6 Making sense of the stories: Thematic analysis and discussion**

While the narrative analysis focuses on the uniqueness of the individual story, the thematic analysis tries to look into the shared commonalities of the stories. The thematic analysis of the narratives answers my sub-question on what elements influence the construction of FLP in these Indonesian-Finnish families. Based on the theoretical framework, I already identified five themes which influence the construction and enactment of Family Language Policy: Language ideology, language practice, language planning, intrafamily factors and macro-societal factors. Through the interview data, I then tried to elicit the more detailed elements that emerge under each of the themes. This section also includes discussions on how each of the findings is linked to the different theories that I presented in the theoretical framework.

### **6.1 The mothers' stories: On language ideology/belief**

Although language beliefs might differ across families, all the mothers in this study shared one thing in common: a positive view on bi/multilingualism. As studies have suggested, parental view on bilingualism largely affects the language policy at home (King & Fogle, 2006, p. 707; Piller, 2001, p. 72). Growing up in Indonesia, the mothers were raised in a multilingual environment. All of the mothers had some other ethnic languages spoken at home by their parents, such as Javanese, Sundanese, and Sulawesi language. Despite speaking different ethnic languages, these Indonesian mothers considered Bahasa Indonesia as the heritage language that they would like to pass down for a practical reason. Bahasa Indonesia is the country's lingua franca that everyone speaks. One mother shared that when she was pregnant with her son, she spoke her ethnic language to him. Yet, she shifted her home language to Bahasa Indonesia when her son was born.

The mothers acknowledged that being exposed to more than one language benefits the child's overall development. They dismissed the idea that bilingualism is directly related to speech delay. Even for those whose children encountered some problems in their language development, they did not necessarily label them as speech delay. As they seek professional advice, they learned that multilingual children might need some time to build their multilingual homes. Ritchie and Bhatia (1999, pp. 627-630) also suggest for a similar argument that bilingual children are often mistakenly labelled as children with speech disorders due to many misconceptions around bilingualism. Bilingual children's behaviours are often subjected to more rigorous scrutiny and severe evaluation than monolinguals.

Moreover, although their specific language goals varied, the mothers shared a common realisation that their children might not develop into the so-called balanced bilinguals. They managed their expectation by accepting that their children would be more dominant in Finnish than Bahasa Indonesia. The mothers seem to question the monolingual bias in bilingualism which demands “native fluency” in each of the languages. Researchers have also criticised this notion that evaluates bilingualism as “parallel monolingualism” (see Laakso et al., 2016; Lanza, 1997; Ritchie & Bhatia, 1999). For these mothers, the fact that their children grow up in Finland means they will speak Bahasa Indonesia differently compared to those who grow up in Indonesia.

For various reasons, speaking their native language to their children was seen as essential by the mothers. Speaking the mother tongue helps form a strong emotional bonding with their children. Mother tongue is also part of one’s identity (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009, p. 365; Schwartz, 2008, p. 402). Bahasa Indonesia is the cultural roots that connect them to their home country. For these mothers, Bahasa Indonesia is critical to maintaining relationships with their families back home. The concept of family within Indonesian tradition is not limited to nuclear family but could go as extensive as clans and tribes. The mothers said that not all of their Indonesian relatives speak English; many could only communicate in Bahasa Indonesia. Hence, to keep these family ties strong, their kids need to be able to speak Bahasa Indonesia.

One mother voiced her expectation that her son would marry an Indonesian woman in the future. Despite being in an intercultural relationship herself, she still clings into this notion that endogamous marriage is the way to keep the traditions alive. In her view, being able to speak Bahasa Indonesia will raise his son’s chance of finding an Indonesian spouse.

*[Lucu si ini memang...Tapi aku tuh pingin dia nanti nikah sama orang Indonesia. Makanya dia harus bisa lah Bahasa Indonesia. Nggak tahu kenapa sih. Mungkin karena aku punya bayangan aja gimana budaya kita. Ya ini masih jauh banget yaa... Namanya juga emak-emak ya, kepikiran segala macam...apalagi masa depan anak... – Sarita.]*

*I know this is silly... But I want my son to marry an Indonesian woman in the future. That’s why it’s important for him to speak Bahasa Indonesia. I don’t know why I feel this way, though...Maybe because I know how things are in our culture. I know this is too farfetched...But as a mother, my child’s future is at the top of my head... – Sarita.*

The human rights issue was also mentioned by one of the mothers. Speaking one's mother tongue is part of human rights that everyone is entitled to. She was very uncompromising in her view that a woman should be able to speak her native language with her children at home. When she heard stories about some intercultural married women whose husbands asked them to speak only English at home, she identified such a situation as domestic abuse. Studies have shown that educating parents on their linguistics rights and how to claim them is crucial for promoting the heritage language maintenance in families with immigrant background (Laakso et al., 2016, p. 207).

Another interesting point that these mothers expressed was their belief in the economic value of Bahasa Indonesia. All of the participants somehow touched upon the idea that speaking Bahasa Indonesia would open so many doors in the future. Being the 4th largest population in the world, Indonesia is an emerging market with an optimistic outlook. One mother who experienced tough challenges in finding employment in Finland said that for a skilful and an educated person, it would be easier to look for jobs in Indonesia. Another mother mentioned her family business back home that she would like her child to inherit. Speaking Bahasa Indonesia is seen as crucial to secure these future economic opportunities.

*[Kita kan ada bisnis keluarga, sama aset-aset juga di Indonesia...Itu nanti ya buat siapa lagi kalau bukan buat anakku? Suatu saat nanti kan dia harus urus semua itu. Makanya penting juga dia bisa Bahasa Indonesia. Soal surat-surat, birokrasi segala macam itu kan rumit di negara kita – Sarita.]*

*We own a family business, also some assets back home in Indonesia...Who will inherit them all if not my son? One day he will have to take care of those. Hence, it's important for him to speak Bahasa Indonesia. Legal documents, bureaucracy, those things are complicated to deal with in our country – Sarita.*

In this Finnish context, Neuvola seems to play a crucial role in disseminating the belief in raising children in the parents' native languages. In the case of intercultural marriages, Neuvola advises each parent to speak their own native language. Parents seem to view Neuvola as a credible source for parental advice, including in terms of language choice in the family. The situation confirms what King et al. (2008, p. 913) suggest that experts' opinions influence parental language ideologies and practices.

*[Awalnya itu suaminya pinginnya kita berdua ngomong bahasa Finlandia aja sama anakku. Tapi pas kita datang ke Neuvola, mereka bilang tuh...Kamu ngomong bahasamu sendiri ya sama anakmu. Bahasa ibu itu penting. Habis itu memang suaminya berubah pikiran tuh. Dia percaya benar itu sama Neuvola – Sarita.]*

*In the beginning, my husband was thinking about raising our child only in Finnish. But then when we went to Neuvola, they told us that I have to speak my language with my child. Mother tongue is really important. After that, my husband changed his mind. He really trusts them – Sarita.*

On the language belief that may hinder mother tongue maintenance, one mother shared her interesting view. In her opinion, the inferiority complex is the leading cause to the lack of maintenance of Bahasa Indonesia within the Indonesian diaspora communities. For many, Bahasa Indonesia is seen to have lesser value compared to other languages in the developed countries. She firmly believes that Indonesians need to conquer such an inferior mentality.

As portrayed by the stories, language ideology plays a pivotal role in the construction and enactment of Family Language Policy. What the actors believe about language to a large extent determines their language choices, practices and planning. This finding is in line with the argument on the importance of language beliefs suggested by many researchers in the field of FLP (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; King, 2000; King & Fogle, 2006; Schwartz, 2008; Spolsky, 2004).

However, as we could see from the mothers' stories, the parents' language ideologies may not always concur with the actual language practices at home. Parents may believe that heritage language maintenance is essential. Yet, in practice, they may be speaking more Finnish than Bahasa Indonesia at home with the children. This finding confirms other studies that suggest parental language beliefs alone are not sufficient to ensure heritage language maintenance (Kirsch, 2012, p. 3). We need to pay attention to the complex interactions between different components of language ideologies, planning and practices as well as the broader macro-societal context where the family is situated (King et al., 2008, pp. 10-11; Schwartz, 2010, p. 186).

## 6.2 The mothers' stories: On language practice

In all of these Indonesian-Finnish families, couples use English to communicate with each other. All of the mothers speak English to their husbands despite being able to speak Finnish quite fluently. Some mothers said that they tried to speak in Finnish with their husbands, but it just did not work. It seems that the language that bonds them since the very first time they met was English, and it was not easy to shift to any other language.

All of the fathers speak only Finnish to their children, while the mothers speak Bahasa Indonesia with varying degrees of strictness. Half of the participants are relatively strict in only speaking Bahasa Indonesia to their children. The other mothers sometimes mix Bahasa Indonesia and Finnish. One mother expressed her guilty feeling since she speaks more Finnish with her kids nowadays. This feeling of guilt that mothers experienced resonates with what Okita has argued (2002), heritage language maintenance is an emotional hard work that may not come as naturally as it requires constant effort from the parents.

Within the home environment, an entirely strict separation between Bahasa Indonesia and Finnish with no language mixing seems unlikely. Even for those children who actively speak Bahasa Indonesia, sometimes they utter Finnish words when they respond to their mothers speaking Bahasa Indonesia. Despite being able to speak Bahasa Indonesia well, they do not necessarily have the so-called 'native fluency.' Children in four out of six families in this research speak Bahasa Indonesia quite actively. In the other two families, the children understand Bahasa Indonesia, but they do not speak Bahasa Indonesia in full sentences. These children will only utter some Indonesian words in between their Finnish sentences.

In some of the families, the mothers reported that siblings spoke Bahasa Indonesia to each other only when they were very young before they started school. As they grow older, siblings speak mostly in Finnish to each other even for those children who actively speak Bahasa Indonesia with their mothers. When they talk to each other, language mixing is also present in these sibling interactions. One mother shared a snippet on how her six and four years old son mixed Bahasa Indonesia and Finnish.

*My older son, when he speaks with his younger brother, he sometimes mixes Indonesian and Finnish in a funny way. But they understand each other. For example, you know that in Finnish you have to put "ko" in the end for a question. He would say, "ini – ko?" ("ini" means "this". Hence, the sentence implies "is this it?"). Then, his brother would mimic him*

*by responding in a mixed utterance too, “ei mau” (“mau” means want. Hence the sentence implies, “I don’t want”) – Kemala.*

Nevertheless, outside of the home environment, even at a very young age, children could adapt their language choices to their particular contexts. In Päiväkoti, the children speak only Finnish without uttering any Indonesian word. Whereas, when the children communicate with their Indonesian relatives, they will put their best efforts to speak in Bahasa Indonesia. Even for those children who do not actively speak Bahasa Indonesia, they will try their best to utter only Indonesian words as they know that their Indonesian relatives do not understand Finnish at all.

The situation of language mixing in these families resonates with what Lanza (1997, p. 319) and Ritchie & Bhatia (1999, p. 589) argue that language mixing per se could not be taken as a sign of a lack of bilingual awareness in young children. Bilingual children can perform either separation or mixing of languages when the context is deemed appropriate. Children learn to differentiate their languages according to the need of social situation or preferences.

Family language practice provides a continuum where family language policy is negotiated across time and milestones. Mothers said that early childhood at home was a very crucial moment to socialise children into Bahasa Indonesia. When the children started Päiväkoti, they acquired more Finnish vocabularies and started to become more comfortable in speaking Finnish than Bahasa Indonesia. As the children progressed to more schooling time, the more dominant in Finnish they became. Yamamoto (2001, p. 127) argues that the role of school and wider communities are critical in shaping children’s language practices. The exposure to the dominant language from school may shift children towards passive bilingualism or even monolingualism.

The role of early childhood education and care system is especially important in Finland as children enrol to Päiväkoti at generally early ages. Early childhood education in Finland is hailed as the ‘great equalizer’ where children from marginalised communities are expected to benefit the most. They may gain the kind of cultural capital that is valued the most in society and needed for further educational attainment and social mobility. However, Skutnabb-Kangas (2004, p. 2) argues that the longer minority children in low-status position have their own languages as the medium of teaching, the better their future educational outcome will be. “Students who reached the highest levels of both bilingualism and school achievement were the ones where the children's mother tongue was the main medium of education for the most extended period of time” (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2004, p. 3). This argument has a strong logic

behind, considering that the mother tongue is an essential part of children's overall emotional and cognitive development (Noormohamadi, 2008, p. 25).

Therefore, a question arises on how Finnish early childhood and care might deprive the immigrant background children out of their mother tongues. Skutnabb-Kangas asserts a very bold statement on this issue, "to place a young child in institutional care with adults who do not understand her language must be regarded as an act of psychological violence, torture of a kind which is so cruel that it should not be allowed to happen in countries that want to call themselves civilized" (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981, p. 322). From Rinjani's story, we may notice that at one point, a teacher in her son's Päiväkoti was surprised that he was bilingual since he never uttered any Indonesian word in the daycare. This situation leads us to question whether the teaching and care professionals in Finland have developed sufficient intercultural awareness to deal with the growing diversity in school. Another question emerges, are children with multicultural backgrounds encouraged to utilise their rich linguistic repertoire in the educational setting? It is clear that there is an urgent call for further research on how language-sensitive pedagogy is implemented within the increasingly diverse Finnish early childhood education and care context.

Various family situations also affect the diversity of family language practices. In one of the families, the Finnish father works away from home every other week. Hence, the toddler child speaks in Bahasa Indonesia with his mom when his father is away for the whole week. As the father returns home, he spends more time with his father speaking Finnish. Interestingly, the mother attested that such unique family arrangement was beneficial to develop her child's bilingualism.

As we could see from the mothers' stories, there would always be constant internal negotiations with yourself as a parent – what you believe as the best thing to do versus what you eventually do. Furthermore, negotiations happen between actors at home – mother, father and children as they may not necessarily share the same language choice (see King & Fogle, 2006; Schwartz, 2010; Tuominen, 1999; Yamamoto, 2001). From the stories, we could see how children, as they grow older, have more agency in deciding what language they want to speak at home. For this reason, researchers argue for the focus of children's agency and language practices in the study of FLP (Luykx, 2005; Schwartz, 2010; Tuominen, 1999; Yamamoto, 2001). However, one of the limitations of this study is that it does not take into account the fathers and children's voices.

Further research that accommodates all family members' language ideologies and practices is needed.

### **6.3 The mothers' stories: On language planning/management**

In these Indonesian-Finnish intercultural families, they all use the OPOL, one parent-one language strategy where each parent speaks their own native language. However, they differ in terms of consistency in implementing the strategy. Aruna, Batari and Rinjani said that they were very strict in only speaking Bahasa Indonesia to the children; while Asmara, Kemala and Sarita said that they were more relaxed. One mother, Asmara, admitted that it was hard for her to stick to OPOL that she sometimes used both Finnish and Bahasa Indonesia when speaking to her children. It seems that within the intercultural families community, there is a lack of conversation on alternative strategies to OPOL. The advice given by experts around them tends to generalise OPOL as the best strategy for them. Thus, there is a need to inform families on how they can explore other strategies that may be more suitable for their specific situations.

One pattern of communication between spouses offers a good addition to the OPOL parent-child communication strategy. Piller (2002, p. 24) suggests a communication pattern called "dual-linguality" where each partner uses his or her mother tongue (L1) and receives the partner's L1 in response. This communication strategy is feasible if each partner understands each other's languages. In some of the families, the Finnish husbands understand Bahasa Indonesia while all the mothers interviewed speak Finnish quite fluently. Children will have more exposure to Bahasa Indonesia as the mother speaks it more at home. However, as previously mentioned, it was not easy for a couple to shift from the language practice that first bonded them into an intercultural marriage. The couples prefer to keep speaking English to each other.

The parents also have different strategies in responding to language mixing. Those mothers who adhere strictly to OPOL, such as Aruna and Batari, tend to apply what Lanza (1997) calls as the monolingual spectrum of parental discourse strategies. They view language mixing as unacceptable. Some mothers try to rephrase their children's Finnish utterances into Bahasa Indonesia. Other mothers pretend that they do not understand the children's Finnish, urging them to switch into Bahasa Indonesia. Meanwhile, Asmara and Sarita are more accepting of language mixing and use the "move on" strategy without correcting their children's mix utterances.

Lanza (1997, p. 317) argues that a greater amount of heritage language maintenance happens in families where “the minority language-speaking parent employs discourse strategies which propose more of a monolingual context than does the majority language-speaking parent.” In the context of these Indonesian-Finnish families, the situation seems to confirm Lanza’s argument. The children whose mothers are employing the more monolingual discourse strategy tend to speak Bahasa Indonesia more actively. Nevertheless, this finding should not be taken as a recommendation for prioritising the monolingual parental discourse strategy over the others. Taking into account the affective dimension, where parents consider the emotional aspect of their communication interactions with their children is advised (Smith-Christmas, 2018, p. 132).

It is important to point out that most of the Finnish fathers in these families show an active interest in learning Bahasa Indonesia. They even sometimes try to practice speaking Bahasa Indonesia. Although, some children do not approve of their fathers speaking Bahasa Indonesia with them. Either the child will complain that it is not his father’s language, or they just refuse to understand his utterances. Muslim and Brown (2016) in their study of Indonesian diaspora in Australia argue that by showing an active interest in learning the minority language, the majority language speaking parent could support the family’s heritage language maintenance.

The families provide Bahasa Indonesia learning resources in varying degree. Some mothers said they regularly bought many learning materials when they visited Indonesia for holidays. Other mothers did not seem to dedicate that much of the financial resources to purchase learning materials. However, in general, the mothers acknowledged the importance of providing multimodal learning resources, ranging from books to movies. Read aloud session in Bahasa Indonesia was mentioned by all mothers as a particularly meaningful way to promote the language. Furthermore, one mother said that she once hired an Indonesian student to tutor her children in Bahasa Indonesia.

The families seek community support programmes to help achieve their family language goals. Indonesian diaspora communities around the capital area of Helsinki hold various kinds of gathering. They have a Quran Kindergarten, which is held once a week. They also conduct Bahasa Indonesia class every once a week with supports from the municipality government. The course is part of the mother tongue support provided by the education system in Finland. Other programmes from Non-Governmental Organisations that cater to intercultural families are also helpful. One mother, Aruna, expressed how grateful she was for the support she found

through this organisation called Familia. These mothers' attempt to look for community support resonates with Utomo's argument that "mothering is conducted not only on behalf of individual children but also on behalf of the larger social group in which they are situated" (Utomo, 2014, p. 179).

The mothers maintain their relationship with their families back home through regular phone calls or video calls. They also visit Indonesia quite regularly for holidays. The time spent in Indonesia could be an opportunity children practice their Bahasa Indonesia. However, some mothers thought that spending holidays alone would not help improve Bahasa Indonesia significantly. They thought that programmes such as student exchange or internship for older children would be more effective.

Professional help seems to be quite accessible in Finland. Two mothers, Batari and Asmara, went to see speech therapists discussing their children's language development issues. However, they emphasised that no speech delay diagnosis was present. They maintain their view that bilingualism does not cause speech delay.

Batari and Sarita, took language management to another level by deliberately staying at home and postponing their return to the labour market. They thought that the early childhood years are the most crucial stage in a child's language development. Instead of sending their children to daycare at an early age, such as the norm in Finland, they kept their children home longer to limit exposure to the majority language. They mentioned that making sure their children have a solid foundation of Bahasa Indonesia as one of the reasons for their choice of being stay-at-home moms during those early years. Okita (2002), in her study of Japanese mothers in Britain, refers to this kind of situation as the invisible work that mothers need to do for heritage language maintenance. The work is invisible as lack of recognition is given to the mothers by the society around them.

#### **6.4 The mothers' stories: On intra-family factors**

Parents' educational backgrounds may influence their belief in heritage language maintenance. It is important to note that the educational levels of families interviewed in this study may not represent the actual characteristic of Indonesian-Finnish intercultural families in Finland. From six mothers interviewed, all of them went to higher education with some holding a master's degree. Two mothers have pedagogical training with one of them trained as a foreign language

teacher. Another mother studied psychology. One mother's husband is a seasoned teacher, and another has a linguist husband. It seems that these families have quite an extensive knowledge of bilingualism and the importance of mother tongue. Their educational levels and middle-class socioeconomic status may connect to their overall positive views on bi/multilingualism and heritage language maintenance. However, previous studies have not yet been conclusive in how parental education and socioeconomic status influence the heritage language maintenance (Schwartz, 2010, p. 174). Some argue that minorities need a strong educational background to maintain their heritage languages, while some others argue for the opposite: The higher the educational level, the more likely they shift away from their heritage languages.

The family structure also influences the enactment of Family Language Policy. The presence of an older sibling may influence language practices at home (Fishman, 1991, pp. 44-45). It seems that the older siblings tend to socialise the younger ones more into the majority language, as argued by Schwartz (2010, p. 173). One mother, Batari, said that their children spoke Bahasa Indonesia to each other only when both were very young and had not started Päiväkoti. Having an Indonesian relative who lives nearby also helps to promote the use of Bahasa Indonesia. Sarita's sister in law is an Indonesian lady who lives around the neighbourhood. As they often visit each other, it helps to give more exposure to Bahasa Indonesia to the child.

## **6.5 The mothers' stories: On macro-societal factors**

In the Finnish context, it is interesting to see the roles of state apparatuses such as Neuvola and school in disseminating particular language beliefs to society. From the mothers' stories, we could see how Neuvola, daycare and school support family heritage language maintenance. This attitude seems to stem from Finland's language policy that guarantees everyone's right to the mother tongue. The situation confirms Curdt-Christiansen's argument (2009, p. 355) on the mechanism of how the state's language policy may influence the family language policy at home. Furthermore, a research-based policy appears to inform the education and care system in Finland, which supports heritage language maintenance. The benefit of speaking the mother tongue to the child's cognitive and emotional development has been confirmed by studies in developmental psychology (Noormohamadi, 2008, p. 25). This finding indicates one way in which the macro-societal situation in Finland may support family heritage language maintenance.

The mothers expressed a generally positive view on how Finnish education system supports multilingualism mainly due to the provision of mother tongue support class. Such support for immigrant background students may not be available in other countries. Even the education system in multilingual Indonesia uses Bahasa Indonesia solely as its language of instruction without adequate support for ethnic language maintenance. Nevertheless, they admitted that school has a substantial role in shifting their children's home language practices towards speaking Finnish. When the children started school, maintaining Bahasa Indonesia became significantly more difficult.

Rinjani, who completed a teacher's assistant internship in a Finnish school, noticed a deeper issue beyond the facade of Finnish educational excellence. In her view, when it comes to multilingualism, the education system in Finland has not been able to live up to its high reputation as a patron of equality and equity. According to her observation, heritage language maintenance is still primarily the family's responsibility with a lack of actual support from the education system. Mother tongue support classes are not always a regular part of the school curriculum. Often times, the classes are organised outside the school hours and at another premise, demanding more efforts and resources from the parents. There is a hierarchy of immigrant languages with other European languages enjoying better positions, and hence, better resources. As previous studies have shown, there is a clear gap between the ideal multilingual education policies in Finland and the actual implementation experienced by immigrant background students (see Blommaert, Leppänen, Pahta, & Räisänen, 2012).

Furthermore, when it concerns Finland's state language policy, some other questions remain. One critique was expressed by Aruna, who pointed out her negative experience when dealing with the Finnish population registry: It only allows a person to enlist one language as a mother tongue. For intercultural families who raise bilingual children with two first languages, such circumstances create tension and confusion. Not to mention, the official registered data will affect one's right to the provision of mother tongue education. Palviainen and Bergroth (2018, p. 25) argue that such a situation illustrates how language planning aimed at securing linguistic rights can paradoxically force monolingual identities into multilingual individuals. Further research is needed to explore the implications of this policy to the linguistic identities of children from intercultural backgrounds in Finland.

Another concern shared by all of the mothers is the Finnish labour market attitude that does not reflect the country's multilingual policy. Speaking fluent Finnish is still the primary factor that determines employment, overlooking other skills or capabilities.

*[Kenyataanya memang begitu ya. Kalau nggak bisa bahasa sini ya nggak bisa dapat kerja. Nggak ngaruh misalnya skill kamu jago, bisa ini itu. Tetap yang utama itu bisa Finnish...- Sarita]*

*That's the hard truth. If you don't speak the language, you can't get a job. It doesn't matter how skilful you are, that you are capable of doing this or that. The point is you have to speak Finnish... – Sarita.*

The pressure of language requirement in finding employment could influence the family language practices such as portrayed by Asmara's story. Her aspiration to work as a healthcare professional put tension on her to master Finnish as soon as possible. The language of instruction at the training school was Finnish. Even though she was already conversational in Finnish, she found that the academic setting was very challenging. She recalled how the stress from the training school might affect her language practice at home. As her children already joined Päiväkoti, Finnish started to become their dominant language. She began to conform to her children's language choice at home since she also wanted to improve her Finnish. She admitted that she felt guilty for not adhering to her OPOL plan, especially when her husband kept reminding her to speak Bahasa Indonesia more.

Peer pressure also influences the family language planning and practices. The mothers seem to listen to some opinions from friends, relatives, or other members of the Indonesian diaspora community. Not speaking Bahasa Indonesia appears to be seen as forgetting one's cultural roots. The mothers also learned from the experiences of other intercultural families in Finland, especially when they join a support group such as organised by Familia. In the case of intercultural children, bullying at school due to looking physically different or speaking a different language may affect the language practice. Batari shared her son's story of being teased by a friend for speaking an "alien language" with his mother. He was so upset that he said he did not want to speak Bahasa Indonesia anymore.

In general, the mothers felt ambiguous about how overall macro societal factors in Finland influence their family language policies. On the one hand, through the protection of their linguistic rights, they saw Finland as a country that supports mother tongue maintenance. Yet,

on the other hand, they felt that their immigrant multilingualism was problematised in many ways. Macro-societal factors play a very important role in family heritage language maintenance. As argued by Muslim and Brown (2016, p. 150), the family context provides limited space and society has a stronger role in socialising children into the majority language. Yamamoto (2001, p. 127) also suggests that the role of school and wider communities are critical in shaping children's language practices. As opposed to that, Fishman (as cited in Lanza, 1997, p. 326) argues the daily interactions within the intimate family and local community contexts play a more decisive role in reversing the language shift towards the majority language.

Nevertheless, I would suggest that the mothers' stories in this study resonate better with Muslim and Brown's (2016) argument on the limited space of the family context in the heritage language maintenance of the Indonesian diaspora. The unlikely history of Bahasa Indonesia renders it as a "non-home made" language as it started out as nobody's mother tongue. The rhetoric of Bahasa Indonesia as a tool for social mobility was heavily inculcated through education. Therefore, for many urban educated Indonesians, the adoption of school language as the home language has been part of their habitus as they shift from ethnic languages to the national language (Dharmaputra, 2018, p. 141). With that historical context in perspective, for Indonesian diaspora families, society can put an influential pressure into the family language practices. With the absence of conscious and deliberate Family Language Policy, the families are at risk of experiencing heritage language loss.

## **6.6 The unique Indonesian perspectives**

While Curd-Christiensen (2009, p. 365) argues that identity marker is the most significant cause for heritage language maintenance, the mothers in this study placed other reasons on top of their minds. As a justification for their language choice, communication convenience, and mother-child relationship concerns came earlier than identification to a specific cultural or ethnic group. Indonesia is a multiethnic country with hundreds of ethnicities. Growing up, the mothers had different ethnic languages spoken at home by their elders, such as Javanese, Minang, Sulawesi, and Mandarin. They might associate their ethnic identities and belongings more strongly to those ethnic languages rather than to the national language, Bahasa Indonesia. Indonesian people constantly negotiate their layered identities within the country's multilingual realities. They proudly distinguish their vernacular languages from their national language while at the same time learning and using Bahasa Indonesia (Bertrand, 2003, p. 290). For the Indonesian

diaspora, the linguistic repertoire is even more complex. Thus, further research is needed to explore the hybridity of identities among the Indonesian diaspora communities.

Another interesting point to highlight from the findings is the mothers' emphasis on the economic benefit of passing down Bahasa Indonesia to their children. Looking back to its history, the dissemination of Bahasa Indonesia was primarily influenced by the ideology of language as a tool for socio-economic advancement (Heryanto, 1995, p. 6). Persuaded by the spirit of developmentalism, one single unifying national language was seen as a prerequisite for progress in post-colonial Indonesia. The promise of economic development was the reason why the ethnically diverse Indonesians adopted Bahasa Indonesia with less resistance. The belief in the economic value of their national language has been deeply embedded within the Indonesian subconsciousness over generations.

Although the narrow focus on the economics of language has been criticised by many, for the Indonesian diaspora communities, an acknowledgement that Bahasa Indonesia holds an economic significance is vital to promote the heritage language maintenance. From the mothers' stories, we could see that such a theme on the benefit of maintaining Bahasa Indonesia repeatedly emerged. The mothers believe that by speaking the language, their children could secure future opportunities in emerging Indonesia. This finding confirms similar argument from other Family Language Policy studies of the Indonesian diaspora communities situated in the American (see Lie et al., 2018, p. 205) and the Australian (see Muslim and Brown, 2016, p. 145) contexts.

Due to their specific sociolinguistic profile, these Indonesian mothers offer an interesting insight into multilingualism in Finland. Despite their generally positive view about the country's language policy, they are critical to some of the aspects of the policy that only hold on paper. For these Indonesian mothers, a genuine recognition of heritage language as part of one's identity without the actual acceptance of its economic value is problematic. They expect society to see their diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds as part of the country's reservoir for creativity and innovation. Nevertheless, these mothers view that the Finnish labour market does not seem to value immigrant language diversity as an asset if not more of a handicap. This finding resonates with what Suni and Latomaa (2012, p. 91) argue that in Finland, there is still little attention on immigrant languages as a valuable resource for society. Immigrant languages have been acknowledged primarily for the ethnic groups' rights to preserve their linguistic and

cultural heritages. Yet, less recognition is given to their contribution to the human capital and collective linguistic repertoire of Finnish society.

The mothers attested that in Finland, it is encouraged to claim your individuality and just be yourself. Such a message is clear in the education and care system that nurtures children. But in reality, especially when it comes to employment, your uniqueness as a person with a different cultural and linguistic background is frowned upon. Homogeneity is still largely preferred. You should conform to what is rendered as Finnishness. Be it the Finnish *sisu*, work ethics, punctuality, trust, honesty and many other virtues. Speaking fluent Finnish is a symbolic marker of this Finnishness. By speaking inadequate Finnish, it indicates that you are “not Finnish enough.”

The mothers were conflicted by this Finnish exceptionalism. On the one hand, they acknowledge and even admire these notable qualities of Finnish society. Yet, on the other hand, several questions remain. Aren't strong work ethics and virtues present in other cultures too? Why is it the monopoly of Finnish culture? More importantly, what does “Finnish enough” actually mean? As immigrants, can they ever be enough? One of the mothers often wonders, if speaking fluent Finnish as a prerequisite for employment, discounting any other skills, is a form of covert racism.

These mothers wondering whether they will ever be “Finnish enough” echoes with what Piller (2001, p. 223) suggests that in intercultural marriages, migrating women are often denied the status of “natives” in their new adopted countries. Piller questions to what extent language fluency, be it native fluency or near-native fluency, is an issue of perception rather than performance. From her research about women in linguistic intermarriage, the distinction between native, native-like and not-native tends to be very subjective in the eyes of the beholder (Piller, 2001, p. 223).

The gender issue is another important point to highlight. I deliberately chose mothers as my participants to add a gender dimension to my research. I was wondering if the mothers have equal voices in the construction and enactment of family language policies in these intercultural families. Seto and Cavarallo (2007, pp. 260-261) suggest that a change of geography for women coming from ‘less powerful’ parts of the world may trigger a feeling of marginalisation. The more powerful culture tends to dominate parental decisions, including the choice of home language. Interestingly, from the mothers’ stories, we could see that their Finnish partners are very supportive of the heritage language maintenance. Even though the Finnish fathers have

the upper hand for coming from the dominant culture, none of them forced the mothers only to speak Finnish with the children. Family language decisions were made through mutual conversations and negotiations. It seems that such a situation is possible since gender equality value has largely been part of today's Finnish society. Fathers and mothers have an equal say in the family. Nevertheless, this is just a preliminary observation that I think is worth mentioning. The gender dimension in intercultural marriage is a complex topic beyond the focus of this thesis and requires a study of its own.

The next chapter presents my reflections on this thesis journey, where I ponder about how to assess the quality of my research and resolve the ethical dilemma surrounding the research process.

## **7 Reflecting on the research journey: Trustworthiness and ethics**

In the process of writing my thesis, I came across a question on whether “I got this right.” I was wondering if my findings were the correct answers to my research questions. I doubted whether I wrote wrong or inaccurate accounts of my participants’ voices. These questions drove me to the issues of validity and reliability of my research.

However, I was reminded of the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of this research. I started my research from a constructivist paradigm where I assume that there are multiple truths and realities. The concepts of validity and reliability are nevertheless rooted in the positivist view of quantitative research. Validity refers to how “truthful” the study is; it determines whether the research measures what was intended by the research question (Golafshani, 2003, p. 599). Reliability refers to the extent which results are consistent if the study is reproduced using the same methodology (Golafshani, 2003, p. 598). These definitions do not necessarily fit into my research paradigm and contradict the nature of narrative research which celebrates the diversity of interpretations (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998b, p. 6). Hence, in the context of narrative research, the concepts of validity and reliability need to be redefined.

Various perspectives regarding validity and reliability in qualitative research are present (Creswell, 2007, p. 202). The stances range from researchers who view qualitative validity through the lens of its quantitative equivalents (LeCompte and Goetz, as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 203), to the other end—those who consider that the term “validity” in qualitative research as irrelevant (Wolcott, as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 203).

Lincoln and Guba (as cited in Golafshani, 2003, pp. 601-602) argue that in qualitative research, the notion of validity sufficiently implies reliability. As a consequence of validity, reliability comes along. In qualitative research, both are seen as integral since there can be no validity without reliability (Golafshani, 2003, p. 601). In qualitative research, the concepts of validity and reliability seek to answer the corresponding question “How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences that the research findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to?” (Lincoln and Guba, as cited in Golafshani, 2003, p. 601).

Therefore, instead of using validity and reliability, in this narrative research, I decided to use the term “trustworthiness” (Mishler, 1990, p. 420; Polkinghorne, 2007, p. 477; Seale, 1999, p. 467). Mishler argues that focusing on trustworthiness rather than validity shifts the presumably objective truth and neutral reality to the social world of multiple realities constructed through

discourse and actions (Mishler, 1990, p. 420). Trustworthiness is about giving the reader the call to decide if the evidence, arguments and knowledge presented in the research are believable, trustworthy and meaningful for them (Polkinghorne, 2007, p. 477).

Based on the definitions mentioned above, I decided to gauge the trustworthiness of my narrative research using the approach used by Paradis (2019, p. 99). The approach combines concepts from Heikkinen et al. (2012) and Lieblich et al. (1998b). From Heikkinen et al. (2012, p. 8), *reflexivity* and *ethics* are the two main concepts chosen. Meanwhile, Lieblich et al. (1998b, p. 8) provide the three criteria to assess: *width*, *coherence*, and *insightfulness*.

Creswell (2007, p. 217) defines reflexivity as researcher uncovering her standpoint. Reflexivity refers to how a researcher brings herself into the research. As subjectivity is inherent in narrative research, reflexivity is about how the researcher presents herself as both the producer and product of the text (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, pp. 60-62; Creswell, 2007, p. 213). With shared reflexivity and honest disclosure of the researcher's dilemmas, an open and critical dialogue between the researcher and the readers can start.

From the beginning of this research, I had been clear about my position. I tried to reveal my stance and subjectivity in the research topic. This research was initially driven by my personal inquiry as an Indonesian diaspora mother who found it challenging to raise bilingual children. Maintaining my heritage language at home did not come as naturally as I expected. Hence, as a way to find solace that I am not alone in this struggle, I wanted to know how other Indonesian diaspora mothers deal with the challenges. My first assumption was that the challenges faced by mixed-marriage mothers would be even more tremendous than what I experienced. Their presumably complex situation is the main reason I chose them as the participants of this study. Furthermore, I tried to be open about my own belief regarding heritage language maintenance. A collection of views that might have influenced the way I read my participants' stories.

I also realised that working on narrative research demands authenticity. As Clandinin and Connelly said (2000, p. 62), the researcher becomes visible in the stories. My own stories or perhaps secrets come to the surface as much as those of my participants'. Narrative inquiry makes us vulnerable by revealing parts of ourselves to the public. Thus, as researchers, we cannot stay silent or picture an idealised, moralising, inquiring self. Being honest and authentic in the texts is the ethical way to face these vulnerabilities.

Researcher's positionality guides interpretive actions in narrative research (Creswell, 2007, p. 212). Subjectivity, albeit inherent, should be dealt with critically. It means that through reflexivity, the researcher can understand her psychological and emotional states throughout the research process. This experience will help us attain the personal and social transformation that we are aiming for.

Seale (1999, p. 472) argues that receiving feedback from a research community is helpful to promote critical reflexivity. Along the process of writing this thesis, I asked some of my fellow EDGLO students to read and comment on my drafts. I sent my drafts gradually to my supervisor for her reviews. I also had the chance to present my preliminary thesis findings during the thesis seminar. The inputs that I received from my colleagues had been very constructive.

Reflexivity is strongly tied with the concept of ethics. The ethical standpoint that I took in this research revolved around the moral ethics of harm reduction as well as principles of respect, competence, responsibility and integrity (Bold, 2012c, pp. 5-6). Relational ethics of care which requires "researchers to act from our hearts and mind, acknowledge our interpersonal bonds to others and take responsibility for actions and their consequences" also inspires my ethical considerations (Ellis, 2007, p. 3). My personal relationships with my participants present a unique ethical dilemma. As they recognised my values and beliefs, they might have said things that would please me. They might have been hesitant to reveal their genuine opinions that they knew would conflict mine. Furthermore, being their friends, I might inadvertently abuse the trust they gave me. I might have revealed too many details about their lives in the stories. Their anonymities might have been violated.

Hence, I tried to assert that the goal of this research was to empower them and listen to their voices. The interview was a space where they could be free to express themselves. I was not there to judge their opinions. Moreover, throughout the process of writing their stories, I tried to involve my participants. I stayed in contact with them to confirm some of the details that I was writing. I asked them to read my findings draft and advise me should they find any features that make them uncomfortable. Based on their reviews, I could evaluate whether I wrote the stories responsibly. Their constructive feedback also helped me to assess the quality of my writing.

### *Width, coherence and insightfulness*

Lieblich et al. (1998b, p. 173) suggest three dimensions to appraise narrative research: width, coherence and insightfulness. The width dimension refers to the comprehensiveness of the evidence, the quality of the interview, observations, as well as the proposed interpretation and analysis (Lieblich et al., 1998b, p. 173). The quotations I presented in the stories, including the original quotes in Bahasa Indonesia, could help the readers to assess the comprehensiveness of my findings. I also attempted to convince my reader by showing my familiarity with the topic. I presented different theories and related research in the theoretical framework.

The coherence dimension is about how different bits of the interpretation create a wholesome and meaningful picture for the readers (Lieblich et al., 1998b, p. 173). In the middle of writing my findings, I was questioning the merit of doing the thematic analysis as the elements discussed were already present in the narrative analysis section. I could not find any new information in the thematic analysis. I felt like the main difference between the two was merely the way they were presented—the thematic analysis organised elements of the stories into categories.

However, as I went back to my methodology and re-read the concept of analysing a narrative data, I was reminded of one important thing. While the individual stories from the narrative analysis are unique, the thematic analysis links all the stories together by finding common threads among them. The thematic analysis section also provides the space to discuss my findings as internal coherence could be achieved by linking the findings and theories. Furthermore, as I received feedback from my participants, I noticed that the thematic analysis is helpful to earn external coherence as well. The mothers said that the thematic analysis “sums it all up.” It helped them understand how their experiences were different or the same with other mothers. I eventually realised the thematic analysis part is relevant for its link with this coherence dimension.

The insightfulness dimension refers to the sense of novelty and originality in the stories and its analysis (Lieblich et al., 1998b, p. 173). Up to the point when I was finalising my thesis, I could not find any other research regarding family language policy in the Indonesian diasporas within the Nordic context. As family language policy study is context-specific, I believe that this research brings a new insight into the field. Furthermore, the stories presented in this thesis could be helpful for Indonesian diaspora mothers or those in intercultural relationships who are facing the challenges of heritage language maintenance. This thesis journey has made me reflect on

my own language policy at home. I have learned a lot from my participants' experiences, and I wish to share their stories with fellow mothers out there as well.

Nevertheless, this study has only started a dialogue regarding heritage language maintenance of Indonesian diaspora in the Nordic context. There are several limitations of this study that call for more research in the future. The sole reliance on the mothers' perspectives excludes the voices of the fathers and the children. Further research that accommodates all family members perspectives is needed. Furthermore, the richness of narrative data would be more insightful if paired with sufficient observational data. Ethnographic research would provide more in-depth understandings on the dynamics of Family Language Policy construction and enactment.

## 8 Concluding remarks

This study reveals how Family Language Policies are negotiated in Indonesian-Finnish intercultural families in Finland, as seen from the mothers' perspectives. Several elements are involved in these negotiation processes: *Language ideology, language practices, language planning, intra-family factors* and *macro-societal factors* (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; King et al., 2008; Schwartz & Verschick, 2013). The nature of Family Language Policy is dynamic and subject to re-negotiation in the continuing life of a family (Palviainen & Boyd, 2013). Different milestones in the family's life, such as a child's developmental stages, starting Päiväkoti and school, or moving to another country, can mark a new period of re-negotiation. Negotiations primarily happen between actors in the family. In these Indonesian-Finnish intercultural families, the mothers and the fathers have an equal say in deciding the home language. The Finnish fathers have been generally supportive of the mothers' efforts in maintaining Bahasa Indonesia. Nevertheless, despite the active role from the parents, children's agency in choosing what languages they want to use appears to be a deciding factor in the enactment of Family Language Policy. More extensive Family Language Policy research that accommodates children's practices is needed.

Furthermore, the stories reveal that macro-societal factors play an influential role in the negotiation process. A particularly strong dissonance was felt by the mothers in regards to the language situation in Finland. On the one hand, immigrant heritage language maintenance is acknowledged as part of the linguistic rights. The state encourages the preservation of one's mother tongue through the state apparatuses such as Neuvola, Päiväkoti, and school. On the other hand, they felt that another conflicting discourse was present. The immigrant languages are perceived as a threat to Finnish society's social cohesion. Homogeneity is largely preferred, primarily reflected by the attitude of the labour market in Finland. Apart from major European languages, immigrant linguistic diversity is not valued as a source of creativity and innovation. This dissonance creates tensions in how they construct their Family Language Policies. The historical context of Bahasa Indonesia as "the language of development" constructed an unconsciously strong belief in the economic value of language. Hence, being denied recognition of the economic aspect of their heritage language is especially problematic for these Indonesian mothers. Further research is needed to explore whether or not the rhetoric of the protection of ethnolinguistic rights alone is sufficient to promote the maintenance of Bahasa Indonesia in the context of Indonesian diaspora communities.

With Indonesia's specific history put into perspective, the adoption of school language as the home language has been part of the habitus of urban educated Indonesians for generations (Dharmaputra, 2018). Understandably, the mothers in this study emphasised the strong influence of education and care system in their home language practices. When children start Päiväkoti and school, negotiating a Family Language Policy with heritage language maintenance goal becomes more difficult. The findings of this study agree with Muslim and Brown's (2016) argument that for Indonesian diaspora, the family context provides limited space for heritage language maintenance as society has a stronger role in socialising children into the dominant language. Hence, conscious and deliberate efforts in the construction and enactment of Family Language Policy are needed for the Indonesian diaspora heritage language maintenance.

The mothers' perspectives also provide insights into how the education system in Finland is grappling with the increasingly diverse linguistic profiles of its students. Questions arise of how much language-sensitive pedagogy and language awareness in the teaching professionals have been developed, especially in the early childhood education level. It is essential to scrutinise the situation where plurilingual children are deprived of their rich linguistic repertoire, as it poses harm to their overall cognitive and emotional development (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981, 2004). The Finnish welfare state model relies on the large participation of women in the workforce. Therefore, an extensive care system is provided to enable equal access for women to balance career and motherhood. Nevertheless, with the growing diversity in Finland, parents demand inclusive early childhood education and care that caters for all kinds of families equally. The stories portray the tensions between a well-established system initially designed for a relatively homogenous society with the current reality of an increasingly heterogeneous population.

Finally, these Indonesian mothers' voices have shed light on the diverse sociolinguistic profiles of families with intercultural and migration backgrounds in Finland. Various immigrant communities and languages cannot be painted with a broad brush and labelled simply the "others." Each community has its own unique historical and cultural underpinnings that influence their language beliefs and practices. Family Language Policy studies in different immigrant communities are needed to bring insights into how families, communities, and the education system can work together to support heritage language maintenance in Finland.

“I occasionally experience myself as a cluster of flowing currents. I prefer this to the idea of a solid self, the identity to which so many attach so much significance. These currents, like the themes of one’s life, flow along during the waking hours, and at their best, they require no reconciling, no harmonizing. They are “off” and may be out of place, but at least they are always in motion, in time, in place, in the form of all kinds of strange combinations moving about, not necessarily forward, sometimes against each other, contrapuntally yet without one central theme. A form of freedom, I’d like to think, even if I am far from being totally convinced that it is. That skepticism too is one of the themes I particularly want to hold on to. With so many dissonances in my life, I have learned actually to prefer being not quite right and out of place.”  
– *Out of Place: A Memoir*,

(Said, 2012, pp. 314-315)

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# Appendix 1: Consent form

## Research Consent Form:

### UNIVERSITY OF OULU OULUN YLIOPISTO

#### Consent for Participation in Interview Research

This form details the purpose of the study, a description of the involvement required and your rights as a participant. The purpose of this study is to gain insight into narratives about family language policies in Indonesian-Finnish intercultural families in the context of Finland. This research is conducted by Aliva Sholihat, a master’s degree student at the Department of Education & Globalisation, Faculty of Education, University of Oulu, Finland.

The methods that will be used to meet this purpose include:

- one-to-one interviews (includes hand-written notes and an audio recording)
- possible follow-up questions (later on during the research process)

You are encouraged to ask questions and raise concerns any time about the matter of the study or the method I am using. Please contact me any time through the following email address: [alivasholihat@gmail.com](mailto:alivasholihat@gmail.com)

Our discussions will be recorded to help me accurately capture your insights in your own words and will **only be heard by me** for the purpose of this study. This data will be stored securely and will not be uploaded to collaborative or cloud servers. This interview is voluntary. You also have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. In the event, if you choose or withdraw from the study all information you provide (including recordings), will be deleted and omitted from the final report.

Insights gathered by you and other participants will be used in my Master’s Thesis report, which will be read by our professor and potentially shared with our cohort. Though direct quotes from you may be used in the paper, **your name and other identifying information will be kept anonymous**. If you would like to review the manuscript, you may request to see it before the presentation.

By signing this consent form, I certify that, I,....., agree to the terms of the interview as continued above.

.....  
Signature of the participant

.....  
Signature of the researcher

.....  
Date

## **Appendix 2: Interview guidelines**

### **Demographic Information**

- Participant's age
- Educational background
- Length of stay in Finland
- Spouse's ethnic and linguistic background
- Child's age and sex

### **Life history**

Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?  
How does growing up in Indonesia look like?

### **Intercultural marriage**

Can you tell me how does it feel to be in an intercultural relationship?

### **Probe into FLP dynamics**

Can you tell me about your family language situation at home?

### **Language ideology**

What language(s) is important to you?  
Can you tell me about your view on the value of your mother tongue/heritage language?  
Do you ever feel reluctant to speak Bahasa Indonesia or want to speak only Finnish/English?  
Can you tell me about your view on bilingualism?  
Why/How did you decide to raise your child to (not) speak Bahasa Indonesia?  
What are the advantages/disadvantages of learning Bahasa Indonesia for your child?  
If your child cannot speak Bahasa Indonesia, what do you think are the consequences?

### **Language practice**

Can you tell me about your language practice at home?

- What language do you speak to your spouse?
- What language do you speak to your children?
- What language do the children use to speak to their parents?
- What language do siblings use to speak to each other?

Has the communication between you and your spouse changed in any way since you had your child?  
How has your language use changed over time?

### **Language management**

Can you tell me about how you've been approaching your child's language development?

Possible points to probe:

- What have been your goals?
- Have they changed over time?

- How do you want your child to develop Bahasa Indonesia?
- What do you do (or not do) to support your child's Bahasa Indonesia?
- Have you consulted anyone? What kind of advice did you receive?

Can you tell me about the strategy that you use to promote speaking Bahasa Indonesia at home?

Possible points to probe:

- Do you use specific language allocation strategy? (e.g. OPOL, specific language for a specific time, etc..)
- Do you find it hard to stick on your plan?
- What do you do when your child does not comply with your rule?
- How do you respond to your child mixing languages?
- How do you evaluate your bilingual child-rearing?
- Are you happy with your child's Bahasa Indonesia mastery level today?
- What factors do you think influenced your child's mastery of Bahasa Indonesia?

### **The role of spouse**

Can you tell me about the role of your spouse in your bilingual child-rearing?

Did you discuss with your spouse on your family language planning and practices?

### **Emotional aspect**

Can you tell me how you feel about your overall experience of child-rearing in a (bi/multilingual) intercultural family?

What kind of feelings do you associate with speaking/teaching Bahasa Indonesia to your child?

Do you feel unsure about your current language practices and strategies?

Have you ever encountered conflicts with your family or relatives about your child's bilingual upbringing?

### **External factors**

What do you think about the overall language situation in Finland?

Can you tell me about the school attitude towards your heritage language maintenance?

Do you think you get enough support from the government/education system in preserving your language?

What do you think about the support you get from communities around you?

What about the support you get from the Indonesian diaspora community in Finland?

Do you join any groups/activities for the sake of your child's Bahasa Indonesia development?

How do you describe the general attitude of the Indonesian mothers around you (with regard to maintaining Bahasa Indonesia)?

Among the Indonesians you know, who do you consider as successful in bilingual childrearing?

What do you think are the keys to their success?

*The interview questions may include but are not limited to the points above. The interviewer guides the participant through follow-up questions based on the participants' responses.*