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Smith Christmas, Cassie

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Cassie Smith-Christmas<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Soillse, Lews Castle College, University of the Highlands and Islands, Stornoway, Scotland

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## Being socialised into language shift: the impact of extended family members on family language policy

Cassie Smith-Christmas\*

*Soillse, Lews Castle College, University of the Highlands and Islands, Stornoway, Scotland*

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This paper examines a family language policy (FLP) in the context of an extended bilingual Gaelic-English family on the Isle of Skye, Scotland. It demonstrates how certain family members (namely, the children's mother and paternal grandmother) negotiate and reify a strongly Gaelic-centred FLP. It then discusses how other extended family members (the children's father, his sister and brother) occasionally participate in this Gaelic-centred FLP; however, at the same time, these speakers also participate in language shift by maintaining English as their peer group language and replying in English when addressed in Gaelic. The paper argues that these linguistic practices socialise the children into the norms of language shift, resulting in the children's low use of Gaelic. The paper also discusses the possible negative impact of the father's use of Gaelic in disciplining his children.

**Keywords:** family language policy; language shift; language maintenance; child language socialisation; Scottish Gaelic

### Introduction

Although language policy is commonly associated with the higher echelons of social organisation, such as government and education, a recent vein of inquiry has turned its attention to examining language policy at the level of the family. Known as Family Language Policy (FLP), this developing field seeks to bring together two previously separate disciplines: language policy and child language acquisition (King, Fogle, and Logan-Terry 2008). FLP studies are necessarily situated in an investigation of child language socialisation – that is, the child's acquisition not only of language as a linguistic code, but how social roles and relationships are both embedded and reified by the use of language (see Schiefflin and Ochs 1984, 1986). Though not limited to bi- or multilingual families, the FLP framework is integral to discussing families in multilingual environments, as the presence of at least two languages in the child's immediate sociocultural environment means that at some level, decisions about what language(s) to use with the child will surface. A number of studies that deal with aspects of bilingual first language acquisition (BFLA, as termed by de Houwer 2009) examine the relationship between the enactment of a particular FLP and the child's linguistic and social competence in the two languages (e.g. de Houwer 1990; Döpke 1992; Lanza 1997; Takeuchi 2006; Schwartz 2008; Altman et al. 2013). In general, these types of studies illustrate two major overarching premises: first, that the child tends to develop greater linguistic competence

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\*Email: [Cassie.SmithChristmas@uhi.ac.uk](mailto:Cassie.SmithChristmas@uhi.ac.uk)

in the majority language than the minority language (i.e. the lesser-used language in the child's immediate sociocultural environment, such as German in Australia [e.g. Döpke 1992]). Secondly, the degree to which the child *does* develop social and linguistic competence in his or her minority language is contingent upon a variety of factors; however, generally it is found that parents who adopt what Altman et al. (2013) would term a 'strongly pro-minority language' FLP tend to see more success in their child's acquisition and use of the minority language than parents who adopt a more 'pro-bilingual' FLP.

King, Fogle, and Logan-Terry (2008, 914) note that the majority of studies situated within the BFLA framework have focused on families who purport to use the one parent one language (OPOL) strategy. In many of these studies, the child's 'minority' language is usually a majority and often a world language in its own right. Studies which focus on families in which one of the languages under investigation is an autochthonous minority language (e.g. Kulick 1992; Makihara 2005; Meek 2007; Morris and Jones 2007; Ó hÍfearnáin 2007; Armstrong, forthcoming) and/or a stigmatised variety (e.g. Garrett 2005; Paugh 2005) therefore broaden the scope of research into family multilingualism. Not only do many of these studies shed light on child language socialisation ideologies and practices different from certain beliefs and practices associated with mainstream languages (as exemplified, for instance in Kulick's [1992] study of Gapun, Papua New Guinea), but they also provide a valuable insight into bilingual FLPs within the context of *language shift*. This insight in turn helps elucidate the mechanisms by which language shift occurs at the level of the family as well as the *reflexive relationship* between language shift within the family and within the community, an understanding of which is critical to maintaining any minority language (cf. Fishman 1991).

This paper seeks to add to the body of work which investigates an FLP in the context where one of the languages under investigation is an autochthonous minority language. In this case, the language is Scottish Gaelic, an endangered language spoken by less than 58,000 speakers in Scotland, according to the 2011 Census (NROS 2013). Besides investigating an FLP in the context of an endangered language, this paper also seeks to broaden the BFLA perspective by examining an FLP in terms of the *language ecology of the family* (cf. Luykx 2003). Lanza (2007, 61) notes that studies of family multilingualism tend to focus primarily on parent-child dyads; for example, aside from exceptions such as Makihara (2005), other family members, such as aunts and uncles, and to some extent, grandparents (though see Ishizawa 2004; Meek 2007; Ruby 2012) have only played a peripheral role in discussions of family multilingualism. This study seeks to redress this gap by looking at how an extended family dynamically and dialogically negotiates an FLP *in situ*, and considers the role that family members' differing habitual code preferences, language practices and ideologies contribute to (or detract from) the successful enactment of the Gaelic-centred FLP. The paper begins by demonstrating how the Gaelic-centred FLP is instigated and reified by two main actors: the children's mother and their paternal grandmother. It then considers how other family members (namely, the children's father, aunt and uncle, referred to as the 'second generation') occasionally participate in this Gaelic-centred FLP and discusses how these occasional orientations to the Gaelic-centred FLP are brought into play. The paper then argues that despite the overarching Gaelic-centred FLP, the second generation's near-exclusive use of English, as well as the father's propensity to discipline the children in Gaelic as a 'last resort' strategy, socialises the children into language shift and contributes to their low use of Gaelic.

### Sociocultural context: language shift on the Isle of Skye

Gaelic is a language that was once spoken over most of what is modern-day Scotland, but its contraction began in the twelfth century, eventually resulting in the language becoming predominantly confined to the vast mountainous area known as the Highlands, and the islands off the west coast of Scotland, known as the Hebrides. The family that forms the locus of this study lives on the Isle of Skye (pop. 10,008), a Hebridean island that was once a stronghold of the Gaelic language, but which has witnessed acute language shift. For example, the 1881 Census reported that the entire population of Skye spoke Gaelic, but by the 1950s, which is when the 'first generation' speakers in this study would have entered primary school, the number of Gaelic speakers had decreased to 83.9% in northwestern Skye and 71.9% in the southwestern, more urbanised, part of the island (see Duwe 2006a, 2006b). This shift is even more robustly illustrated by the results of the 1957 Scottish Council for Research in Education survey (SCRE 1961): in Skye, nearly half of pupils aged 5–7 whose first language was English had Gaelic-speaking parents, meaning that parents were choosing to abandon Gaelic in favour of English as the home language. The reason for parents speaking English and not Gaelic with their children presumably stemmed from Gaelic's historical low prestige vis-à-vis English (see MacKinnon 1977; Dorian 1981; Withers 1988), especially in an educational context; for example, reportedly until the 1930s, children on the neighbouring Isle of Lewis were physically punished for using Gaelic in school (MacKinnon 1974, 55). Although Gaelic's exclusion from educational life was reversed with the advent of bilingual, and later, Gaelic Medium Education on Skye in the 1970s and 1980s (see Robertson 2001, 2003), as well as the establishment of the only exclusively Gaelic-medium college, *Sabhal Mòr Ostaig*, in southern Skye in 1973, English had replaced Gaelic as the peer group language for children born after the 1970s (Smith-Christmas and Smakman 2009). By 2001, the number of Gaelic speakers had fallen to 39.7% in northwest Skye and 39.9% in southwest Skye (Duwe 2006a, 2006b). In terms of the wider sociocultural context of the language, a number of gains have been made in recent years, such as the establishment of Gaelic as a national language of Scotland in 2005 (see Dunbar 2006), as well as the proliferation of Gaelic media such as television and radio (see Cormack 2006; Lamb 2008). However, despite these advances in terms of high domains (cf. Fishman 1967), as a whole, the situation of Gaelic at the family and community level remains precarious. The gravity of the situation has most recently been demonstrated in Munro, Taylor, and Armstrong's (2011) study of Siabost, on the Isle of Lewis, which finds that intergenerational transmission and community use of the language has all but ceased within this area hitherto considered a Gaelic stronghold.

### Method

This paper is situated in an ethnography of the 'Campbell Family'.<sup>1</sup> I first made contact with the family in 2007 in a research capacity, but since then, my role of 'researcher' has turned to 'friend of the family'. I have stayed with Nana, the Campbell family matriarch, either in her own home in Skye or in a holiday cottage on the Isle of Harris, on numerous occasions. Nana lives alone; however, her brothers and sisters, her children and their children are constant visitors in Nana's house. Nana's youngest son and his wife, along with their three children, live 100 metres behind Nana's house, which means that the children, and especially Maggie (3;4), who is the focal point of this paper, move freely between the two houses. As Nana's guest for extended periods, I have had ample opportunities to observe and participate in daily life as it unfolds in the Campbell family;

I take part in activities, such as meals, playtime, driving in the car, and various household tasks, and I have also had many opportunities to observe and informally discuss individual family members' language beliefs and attitudes with them. In July 2009, I recorded the family over a two-week period, resulting in a 10-hour corpus, which I transcribed and which was verified for accuracy by Nana. Because family members were very familiar with me and my presence in the Campbell family, I contend that the Observer's Paradox did not have a noticeable impact on speakers' language use during the recording period. Once the corpus was transcribed, I coded speakers' conversational turns for language choice according to whether they used monolingual Gaelic, monolingual English or codeswitching (referred to as 'Mixed turns') within each of their conversational turns. Discussion of the family language ecology and the roles that various family members play in developing (and in some cases inhibiting) the Gaelic-centred FLP is therefore mainly situated in ethnographic observations of the family, and these observations are augmented by pertinent examples from the 2009 corpus. As the wider study (see Smith-Christmas 2012) in which this paper is situated uses a microinteractional approach (cf. Auer 1984; Li Wei 1998; Cromdal 2004) to examining family language choice, this paper also adopts a microinteractional approach as its method of analysis. Besides providing a useful framework for elucidating the complexity that arises when examining language choice in an extended family, using this method of analysis is also in line with Lanza's (2007, 61) call for more microinteractional-oriented studies of child language socialisation.

### **Generational language shift and maintenance in the Campbell family**

The seven Campbell family members who are the focus of this paper were all raised in Skye. The eldest speaker is Nana, who was born in 1946 and, in terms of this study, is referred to as a 'first generation' speaker. Like Nana's first-generation peers in this study (Nana's siblings and cousins), Nana was raised in a home where Gaelic was the main, if not exclusive, language and Nana acquired English when she went to school. As mentioned in the section Sociocultural Context: Language Shift on the Isle of Skye, during this time Gaelic was declining in terms of its intergenerational transmission and community use in Skye. However, for the most part, Gaelic remained and still remains the language of Nana's peer group. Nana married another Gaelic speaker from Skye, and their first-born son Seumas (b. 1971) only spoke Gaelic when he entered school. However, English was now replacing Gaelic as his generation's peer group language and Seumas reportedly 'brought home the English': he began using English to his siblings, Màiri (b. 1975) and Aonghas (b. 1978). The siblings (referred to as the 'second generation' within this study) began to use only English with each other, and they also began to answer their parents in English when addressed in Gaelic, a habit that would anger their late father. Now, this practice is an accepted norm within the family, as the Campbell siblings often reply to Nana in English when she speaks to them in Gaelic.

In contrast to the Campbell siblings, Aonghas' wife Peigi (b. 1978) was not raised in a home where Gaelic was the main language. Both Peigi's parents spoke Gaelic, but they chose to speak English to Peigi, using Gaelic only as a secret inter-parent language. Peigi, however, learned Gaelic to fluency in an institutional context and, since then, has worked in professions that require fluency in Gaelic. Peigi is very overt in her desire for and adherence to a Gaelic-centred FLP with her children David (b. 2002), Maggie (b. 2006) and Jacob (b. 2010). In various discussions over the years, Peigi has indicated that one of the impetuses for this Gaelic-centred FLP is the fact that Gaelic was never passed on to



her as a child; additionally, she is aware of the critical need for parents to use Gaelic in the home in order to ensure the language's long-term survival. In many ways, Peigi can be seen as the lynchpin in terms of reversing language shift within the family (see Smith-Christmas and Armstrong, [forthcoming](#)). In the 2009 recordings, for example, 265 out of Peigi's 353 turns within the corpus were coded as 'monolingual Gaelic', with a further 35 turns coded as 'Mixed'. One hundred and forty-five of these Gaelic or Mixed turns were said directly to the children, illustrating that Peigi strongly maintains Gaelic in her home, both with her children and with other family members. Peigi's high use of Gaelic in the 2009 recordings contrasts sharply to other second-generation members' language use; for example, Seumas (Peigi's brother-in-law) was the highest second-generation Gaelic user after Peigi, yet only 39 of his 199 turns in the corpus occurred in Gaelic, with a further three coded as Mixed turns. Only 16 of Peig's husband Aonghas' 125 turns were monolingual Gaelic, with a further six coded as Mixed turns.

One of the observations made of the Campbell siblings (Seumas, Màiri, and Aonghas) from the 2009 recordings was that when the Campbell siblings *did* use Gaelic, it tended to be in conjunction with talking to Maggie or David. It is postulated that this was the result of their occasional orientation to the FLP as set up and practiced by Nana and Peigi. In turn, the third-generation members did not evidence of a high degree of Gaelic use and generally spoke English when speaking to each other and their caregivers. Maggie (who was 3;6 at the time of the 2009 recordings) evidenced much less Gaelic use than David did at that age, an observation that resonates with other BFLA studies, as the decreased use of the minority language among younger siblings is not uncommon (see Döpke 1992). David was four when I first met the family, and although he was fluent in English, he had advanced command of Gaelic and frequently used the language with his grandmother Nana. However, once David went to school, he repeated the pattern of 'bringing home the English', resulting in the youngest Campbell family members using primarily English with each other.

The following sections will describe two of the ways that Peigi and Nana enact a Gaelic-centred FLP: by maintaining dual-lingualism and by actively setting up the use of Gaelic for child-centred contexts, then move on to discussing the role that the other family members play in the enactment (or impediment) of this FLP.

### **Maintaining dual-lingualism: resisting 'talking language shift into being'**

In his 2011 article, Gafaranga argues that minority language -speaking parents 'talk language shift into being' by capitulating to their children's preference to use the majority language. One of the observations of the Campbell family is that Nana (the children's grandmother) and Peigi (the children's mother) actively resist this practice of adopting the majority code, instead adopting a 'dual-lingual' paradigm; that is, interactions in which speech partners have mutual understanding of each other's codes, but in which one partner consistently uses one code, and the other speech partner another, a term Saville-Troike (1987) coined in arguing that these types of conversations are qualitatively different from truly 'bilingual' conversations. In the Campbell family, dual-lingualism takes the form of Nana and Peigi using Gaelic, while Maggie and David normally reply in English. Peigi has commented that she sometimes finds it hard to continue in Gaelic when her children constantly respond to her in English. Even Nana, who has had a wealth of experience in using the dual-lingual paradigm with her own children, has commented to me that she occasionally finds it hard to maintain dual-lingualism with her grandchildren because she finds their use of English 'demoralising'.



The following conversational example, drawn from the 2009 recordings, serves to illustrate the concept that Peigi and Nana try to maintain the exclusive use of Gaelic with Maggie. This example was chosen not only because it demonstrates this premise, but also because it contains an instance in which Maggie *does* use Gaelic. Within the corpus, 75 of Maggie's total 680 turns were coded as 'Gaelic' (with a further 57 coded as 'Mixed'), the majority of which consist of a single Gaelic lexical item within a turn or the insertion of a Gaelic lexical item within an otherwise English sentence. Here, Peigi and Nana are talking to Maggie about one of her rock 'pets', which has unfortunately lost one of its eyes:

*Example 1*

- 1 Peigi *sin math na peataichean* =  
[They're] good the pets
- 2 Nana =*oh aye uabhasach snog* =  
very nice
- 3 Maggie =I don't like them
- 4 Nana oh *carson?*  
why
- 5 Maggie because (.) they don't smile to me
- 6 Peigi *[[tha (siud) aca]*  
they have that
- 7 Nana *[[tha am fear sin] a' gàireachdainn* eh @@  
that one's smiling
- 8 Maggie he can't look now
- 9 Nana *ach chan eil (.) fhuair e ach aon t-sùil*  
but no he has got but one eye
- 10 Maggie *an t-sùil*  
the eye
- 11 Nana *aon t-sùil*  
one eye

In this example, it is clear to see that Nana and Peigi consistently attempt to maintain monolingual use of Gaelic with Maggie. (English language discourse markers, such as Nana's 'oh' and 'aye' in Turn 2, are so integrated into everyday Gaelic speech that they are not viewed as code-switches to English.) In observing Nana's speech with Maggie compared to Nana's speech with other interlocutors, Nana appears to maintain a higher degree of monolingual Gaelic speech when speaking to Maggie, as Nana frequently code-switches when speaking to her first-generation peers (cf. Smith-Christmas 2014). This suggests that Nana views monolingual use of Gaelic as conducive to the enactment of the Gaelic-centred FLP.

It is evident from this excerpt that Maggie understands Gaelic and, to some extent, has productive abilities in Gaelic, as evidenced by Turn 10. (However, it should be noted that Turn 10 is a near-repetition of the coda of Nana's Turn 9.) Thus, Nana and Peigi's language maintenance efforts seem to be having some effect in that Maggie can clearly understand Gaelic even if her production is limited.

### Actively encouraging the use of Gaelic in child-centred contexts

Besides maintaining dual-lingualism, another way in which Nana enacts a Gaelic-centred FLP is by deliberately creating Gaelic-centred contexts with Maggie. One of the ways in which she does this is to offer to read books that are written in English in Gaelic. Although Maggie and David own a number of Gaelic books, many of the books

in their home library are in English. Nana, however, always offers to read an English book in Gaelic, a practice that I have observed Màiri, the children's paternal aunt, participating in as well. The following example not only illustrates how Nana insists on reading the story in Gaelic (even though Maggie wants it read to her in English), but also how Seumas (Maggie's paternal uncle) attempts to support Nana in this endeavour:

*Example 2*

- 1 Maggie =nobody (.) there read that book  
 2 Nana *dè fear?*  
 which one  
 3 Maggie that one.  
 4 Nana ann a' *Ghàidhlig*  
 in Gaelic  
 5 Maggie yes  
 6 Nana oh /*glè mhath*  
 very good  
 7 Maggie no *B- Beurla*  
 English  
 8 Nana eh?  
 9 Maggie *Beurla*  
 English  
*Beurla?*  
 English?  
 10 Nana  
 11 Maggie yes  
 12 Nana *carson?*  
 why  
 13 Maggie I /like *Beurla* (.) I don't like (.) *Gàidhlig* (.)  
 English  
 can you read it?  
 14 Seumas ((repressed laughter (0.7)))  
 15 Maggie (?)  
 16 Seumas you don't like *Gàidhlig*?  
 17 Maggie **WH**< aye > **WH**  
 •  
 26 Maggie I want to read *Beurla*  
 27 Seumas a:h *leugh ann a' Ghàidhlig e Nana*  
 read it in Gaelic  
 28 Maggie no=  
 29 Nana =*leughidh Nana ann a' Gàidhlig iad*  
 Nana will read them in Gaelic  
 30 Maggie no (.) I to want ((to leave it))  
 31 Nana o::h (.) *dhùil òsg Teddy Beag 's thòisich e air sreothart/aich.*  
 Little Teddy woke up and he started to sneeze

Like the first example, this example demonstrates Nana's persistence in dual-lingualism with Maggie. Further, it demonstrates Nana's resistance to ceding a key child-centred activity – storytime – to an English-language medium. Nana insists on conducting storytime in Gaelic, even though Maggie overtly requests to have the story read in English and even states that she does not like Gaelic, but likes '*Beurla*'. (Interestingly, Maggie uses the Gaelic word for the English language, '*Beurla*', in making assertion.) Nana, however, insists on simultaneously translating the story 'Little Teddy Left Behind' by Anne Mangan into Gaelic, thus not only providing an important source of Gaelic language input, but also demonstrating that an important part of family life can remain a Gaelic domain, even if the source of the domain (the story, in this case) is

originally in English. Although there is not scope to show more of the interaction here, once Nana starts reading the story in Gaelic, Maggie does not appear to mind Nana's choice of language; Maggie actively engages with the story as Nana reads it, and even spontaneously produces Gaelic words such as *'fliuch'* ('wet') and *'gealach'* ('moon') when asked questions related to the story.

One of the interesting aspects of this short example is how Seumas orients to Nana's enactment of the FLP. As previously discussed, Seumas, like his second-generation siblings, is not a frequent Gaelic user, and is the one charged with 'bringing home the English'. However, in this example, he clearly orients to the idea that Gaelic should be used with the youngest members of his extended family. He overtly supports Nana in the language choice battle against Maggie, not only in the content of what he says in Turn 27 (*'leugh ann a' Ghàidhlig e Nana'* ['read it in Gaelic Nana']), but also by using Gaelic for this encouraging imperative. It is postulated that Seumas' overt display of support for Nana's enactment of the FLP is brought about by Maggie's negative stance towards Gaelic. Although Seumas himself does not frequently use Gaelic, he has commented to me that he thinks that his mother's and sister-in-law's persistence in maintaining Gaelic with the third generation is 'great'. Therefore, while he is not a key player in enacting the Gaelic-centred FLP, 'attacks' on the language, such as Maggie's statement in Turn 13, prompt him to take a positive and active orientation to Nana's enactment of the Gaelic-centred FLP.

### Setting up Gaelic as the child-centred code

Seumas' participation in the Gaelic-centred FLP does not necessarily only coincide with Maggie's negative stances to Gaelic; in other instances, for example, both he and his siblings collaboratively try to construct a Gaelic-centred FLP with the third generation. This is shown in the following example, where the Campbell siblings (Seumas, Aonghas [Maggie and David's father] and their sister Màiri) use Gaelic when directing talk to Maggie and David, but use English when speaking to each other:

#### Example 3

- 1 Aonghas you can pick your nose oh  
*innis do Nana dè a thachair ri Susan – Susan dè a tha*[[chair ri Susan  
tell Nana what happened what happened to Susan
- 2 Nana [[Oh Susan  
*bhochd*  
poor Susan
- 3 Aonghas *dè thachair riutha rithe=*  
what happened to them to her
- 4 Seumas =*Susan cò*  
Susan who  
(Maggie stops crying)
- 5 Nana *Susan à Malcolmina*  
Malcolmina's Susan
- 6 Seumas *dè a thachair*  
what happened
- 7 Aonghas do you hear [[what she said to her
- 8 David [[broke her arm
- 9 Aonghas going to Uist all well I'm off to Uist for my holidays I'm going to miss Mammy and  
Sally Granny Ferguson and (.) Aonghas  
(laughter) (2.2)

- 10 Nana oh *Susan a bha seo* mmm-hmm mmm-hmm  
that was Susan
- 11 Seumas when do you see her Aonghas?
- 12 Aonghas when I go over she pops over the fence
- 13 Màiri she's a funny wee thing
- 14 Nana *cà' an do bhrìst i a làmh a ghaoil cìamar a*  
where did she break her arm love how
- 15 Maggie No
- 16 Màiri *bhrìst Dave e*  
Dave broke it
- 17 Aonghas no it's Polly
- 18 Nana *an robh Dave ann?*  
was Dave there?
- 19 Aonghas she was on Polly's piggy-back wasn't she=
- 20 Nana was Dave there (.) no (.) *an robh Dave ann?*=  
was Dave there
- 21 Aonghas *=siud David gabh pìos cèic eile*  
there David have another piece of cake
- 22 Nana *@@ an robh Dave ann aig an àm?*  
was Dave there at the time
- 23 Aonghas what?

This multi-party interaction, which at first glance may seem quite chaotic, begins with Aonghas and Nana trying to engage Maggie in conversation, most likely as a strategy to stop her crying. They use Gaelic for this endeavour, asking Maggie questions about her friend's broken arm. Seumas joins in the conversation in Turn 4 and uses Gaelic in doing so, and continues to use Gaelic in Turn 6. In Turn 8, David answers the question in Seumas' Turn 6, indicating that David believes that he is the intended recipient of Seumas' question. In Turn 7, Aonghas embarks on a humorous anecdote about the girl who broke her arm, and he uses English in this narration. Seumas and Màiri comment on this anecdote in English. Màiri then uses Gaelic in Turn 16 to tease David, playfully accusing him of breaking the girl's arm. However, Aonghas appears to misinterpret Màiri's teasing, and clarifies in English that it was someone else who was responsible for the girl's broken arm. In Turn 21, Aonghas uses Gaelic in directing David to eat a piece of cake, then uses English in Turn 23 in answering Nana's question.

In looking at this extract holistically, an underlying structure appears to emerge: when the Campbell siblings speak together, or answer Nana, they use English, but when they direct their statements towards the children, they use Gaelic. Further, the third-generation members appear to understand that the use of Gaelic is directed towards them, as in both instances the child's response occurs after the adult's use of Gaelic (David's Turn 8 and Maggie's Turn 15). In this particular interaction, there appears to be two main initiators for the use of Gaelic – Aonghas and Nana – and Seumas and Màiri follow their lead. As mentioned in the section Generational Language Shift and Maintenance in the Campbell Family, at the time of the 2009 recording, Aonghas was not a frequent Gaelic user, and thus the fact that he rarely uses Gaelic perhaps makes his language choice more 'marked' (cf. Myers-Scotton 1988), thereby bringing language choice to the forefront of Seumas and Màiri's consciousness. Seumas and Màiri therefore adapt their language behaviour accordingly, orienting to their somewhat latent ideology that the youngest Campbells should be raised as Gaelic speakers. Seumas and Màiri have both said to me on separate occasions that it is important to them that Maggie and David are raised as Gaelic speakers, but as seen from this example and Example 2, this ideology needs to be brought into the forefront of the interaction for them to adjust their language use accordingly; in

other words, in most instances, neither Seumas nor Màiri will *instigate* the use of Gaelic with the children, but they will occasionally support other family members' endeavours in negotiating and maintaining a Gaelic-centred FLP.

### Use of Gaelic in a disciplinary context

Example 3 illustrated how Aonghas occasionally plays a role in encouraging his siblings to participate in a Gaelic-centred FLP. However, as noted in the section Generational Language Shift and Maintenance in the Campbell Family, like his siblings (but unlike his wife Peigi), at the time of the 2009 recordings, Aonghas was not a frequent Gaelic user. In the majority of instances in which Aonghas *did* use Gaelic with his children, these utterances occurred in conjunction with disciplining (14 out of 20 Gaelic or Mixed turns said to one or both of the children). Although disciplining forms a high proportion of Peigi's Gaelic utterances to her children (81 out of 145 turns), Peigi tends not only to consistently use more Gaelic with the children, but also uses Gaelic for content-driven discourse (i.e. using Gaelic in engaging the children in topical conversations, such as seen in Example 1). Aonghas, on the other hand, tends to reserve Gaelic for instances in which he is especially frustrated with the children. In looking at the 2009 corpus, Gaelic often appeared to be a 'last resort' strategy in terms of Aonghas' disciplining techniques, as seen in the following example:

#### Example 4

- 1 Aonghas don't do that  
 2 Maggie @@@  
 3 Aonghas it's not funny  
 4 Maggie yes it is  
 5 Aonghas no it's not  
 6 Maggie yes it is (0.7) why you looking at me stop looking  
 7 Aonghas I'm allowed to look wherever I want  
 8 Maggie Is that David?  
 (2.8)  
 9 Aonghas I'm looking at you because I'm speaking to you (.)  
     *bi modhail*  
     be polite (i.e. 'behave')  
 10 Maggie I am *modhail*  
        Polite

From this example, it is evident that Aonghas' language use with his daughter is different from Peigi or Nana's language use with Maggie (cf. Examples 1 and 2). Most of the conversation is in English, which contrasts to Nana and Peigi's maintenance of dual-lingualism, and it is only when Aonghas appears to be frustrated at his lack of progress in disciplining Maggie that he switches to Gaelic (Turn 9, in which he commands her to '*bi modhail*' ['behave']). In the scope of child language socialisation studies, the use of the minority language in disciplining is not uncommon; for example, Paugh (2012) finds that despite forbidding their children to speak Patwa because of its low prestige, Dominican parents often use Patwa as a 'last resort' strategy in disciplining. Further, Pavlenko (2004) demonstrates that despite possible dominance in their L2s, bilingual parents sometimes use their L1 in disciplining, as certain L1 disciplinary commands are perceived as more emotive (cf. also Harris, Aycicegi, and Gleason 2003). What is pertinent to the discussion of the FLP here is not only Aonghas' use of Gaelic in disciplining (as well as his high degree of English use with Maggie), but also the way it socialises Maggie into associating Gaelic with specific contexts. One of most striking

observations of Maggie's language use in the 2009 corpus was that Maggie tended to use Gaelic when she wished to argue with her caregivers, as exemplified here by Maggie's use of the word '*modhail*' ('polite') in Example 4. In her study of language socialisation of children in a Kaska-speaking area, Meek (2007) finds that due to its association with community elders and authority, children tend to use Kaska predominantly when they wish to take up assertive stances vis-à-vis each other. This strong association between language and a particular context (i.e. disciplining/arguing) serves a reasonable explanation for Maggie's high degree of Gaelic in taking up argumentative stances vis-à-vis her caregivers. It is also important however to consider how the association of Gaelic with such an unpleasant context might negatively impact Maggie's use of Gaelic in other contexts. As Pavlenko (2004, 183) writes, 'In the process of first language socialisation, L1 words and phrases acquire affective connotations and become integrated with emotionally-charged memories'. Therefore, if Maggie associates the use of Gaelic primarily with negatively 'emotionally-charged memories' such as being disciplined, it seems likely that she would be less inclined to use Gaelic in other more positive contexts.

### Discussion

As mentioned in the introduction to this paper, FLP research has tended to focus on families which purport to use the OPOL policy. By looking at the *language ecology of the family* especially in terms of the second generation's interactions with the third generation, this paper has gained a deeper insight into how the intersection of family members' differing habitual code preferences, language practices and ideologies contribute to, or sometimes impede, the enactment of the FLP and its goal. In terms of the ideological creation of the Gaelic-centred FLP and its habitual enactment, Nana and Peigi are the main leaders; they frequently speak Gaelic to Maggie and David, even though the children normally answer in English. Nana and Peigi also actively try to encourage the use of Gaelic in child-centred activities, such as demonstrated in Example 2 by Nana's insistence on reading a story written in English in Gaelic. Occasionally, the Campbell siblings – Seumas, Màiri and Aonghas – orientate to the ideology that the third generation should be raised as Gaelic speakers, and adjust their language use to coincide to this belief. However, as seen in Example 3, English remains the inter-sibling language and the siblings respond to Nana in English even when she addresses them in Gaelic. Further, English is often the medium adopted to interact with the third generation, as seen in Example 4.

It is clear from the excerpts that Maggie has passive as well as (limited) productive abilities in Gaelic. Given Nana's and Peigi's reification of a strongly Gaelic-centred FLP, it is perhaps surprising that Maggie does not evidence a greater use of Gaelic, in light of research that correlates a strong pro-minority FLP to a relatively high degree of minority language use (e.g. Takeuchi 2006; Altman et al. 2013). However, when other family members' language practices are brought into scope, it is evident that although both Nana and Peigi are trying to maintain a 'Gaelic-speaking home', in many ways, Gaelic is still a minority language within the household. By not using Gaelic as their intra-group language, as well as answering their own mother in English, not only do the Campbell siblings limit Maggie and David's linguistic exposure to Gaelic, but they also fail to socialise the children into the norms of adult peer-to-peer talk in Gaelic. Makihara (2005), for example, demonstrates that although Spanish is dominant on Easter Island, children's exposure to adults' conversations in Rapa Nui is critical to developing their skills in their minority language. However, aside from Nana's conversations with her own siblings or

Peigi's conversations with first-generation speakers, Maggie and David's exposure to adult conversation in their minority language is limited. Furthermore, the second generation's language practices – English as the peer group language and using English when addressed in Gaelic – *model* language shift. Language socialisation is predicated on adults' modelling language practices and social norms and the children's subsequent understanding and use of these models; therefore, if the model within the household is one of language shift, it is not surprising that the children's language use reflects this model. It is highly possible that this generational lacuna also means that Maggie and David primarily associate Gaelic with Nana's generation (cf. Meek 2007, 28, in which children described Kaska as 'my grandma's language', a perception postulated as detrimental to the language's maintenance).

When the Campbell siblings *do* use Gaelic, it is generally to talk to the children, sometimes as a means to discipline them, and this, coupled with the second generation's modelling of language shift, means that Maggie and David have perhaps developed a very 'vertical' understanding of Gaelic language use: caregivers speak Gaelic to their children, but children speak English to each other and also speak English to their caregivers. Further, as demonstrated in Example 4, the children's father Aonghas tends to reserve Gaelic for situations in which he is especially frustrated with the children and this relationship between Gaelic and a disciplinary context further reinforces this 'vertical' perception of Gaelic. Furthermore, the use of Gaelic primarily in disciplinary contexts also possibly creates negative associations with the language, which may further reduce the probability of the children using it in other contexts.

In her study of child language socialisation in an Aymara-Spanish environment, Luykx (2003) highlights the need to consider the totality of the child's environment when discussing language socialisation; although such an endeavour would be beyond the scope of this paper, it is important to emphasise that Maggie and David's language experiences and perceptions of Gaelic use in the family are by and large reproduced in their wider sociocultural environment of Skye. Gaelic is not the language of Maggie and David's peer group, nor is it the language of their parents' generation peer group; it is confined mostly to the older generation. Both Maggie and David attend school taught through the medium of Gaelic, but although this is a positive development in terms of Gaelic maintenance in Skye, this nonetheless reinforces a 'vertical' perception of Gaelic: the teachers speak Gaelic to the children, but the children speak English to each other (cf. Stockdale, MacGregor, and Munro 2003). Despite the recent gains of Gaelic in terms of the media and public space, it would be evident to any child growing up in Skye that English is the dominant language. Therefore, in terms of the totality of Maggie and David's language socialisation, the concept of Gaelic as a minority language, both within the wider community and within their own home, is reinforced, as is the perception that Gaelic is used primarily by their grandmother's generation and that it functions primarily as an adult-*to*-child language.

## Conclusion

One of the key aspects that differentiate this study from the majority of FLP and BFLA research is the high density of minority language speakers that the child interacts with on a daily basis. For example, in studies in which the parents are using the OPOL strategy, usually only one parent speaks the minority language and the rest of the child's interactions take place in the majority language. Studies have shown that contact with relatives in the 'home' country, for example, can play a role in the child's ability and



willingness to use the minority language (cf. Clyne 2003; Takeuchi 2006). Maggie, however, has a number of relatives who use Gaelic with her, yet her language use does not appear to reflect this potential advantage. What this paper has shown is that although they occasionally speak Gaelic to Maggie and David, for the most part, the Campbell siblings (Seumas, Mairi, and Aonghas) both *participate in* and *reproduce* a model of language shift within the family. Thus, although the Campbell siblings occasionally orient to the ideology that the children should be raised as Gaelic speakers, their overall language use socialises the third generation into the norms of language shift, as well as creates a perception of ‘vertical’ Gaelic use.

In the introduction, it was stated that studies situated in scenarios where one of the languages is an autochthonous minority language, as well as studies which look at multiple family members’ interactions with the child(ren), broaden perspectives of FLP and BFLA research. This paper shows that although the family language ecology may *seem* more conducive to the maintenance of the minority language in that there are more family members who can and occasionally do use the minority with the youngest speakers, the fact that at the same time, these speakers *model* language shift means that this potential advantage is greatly diminished. Not many BFLA or FLP studies have involved family compositions such as the Campbell family; however, it is quite likely that with an autochthonous minority language that is undergoing shift, this varied composition in terms of language use and ideologies among different family members may be more the rule rather than the exception.

Transcription conventions  
 : Elongated sound  
 @ Laughter  
 - Cut-off  
 word Emphasis  
 = Latching speech  
 [[] Overlapping speech  
 (.) Micropause (less than two-tenths of a second)  
 / Rising pitch  
 (?) Uncertainty in transcript  
 • Turns omitted  
 WH Whispered Speech

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### Note

1. All the speakers’ names are pseudonyms.

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