



Inter-married families: hybridising teaching-for-two-languages and parenting in regional Australia

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ABSTRACT: Children learn language through engaging in a rich language environment. However, some parents make a decision to rear their children bilingually/plurilingually, in a context where the community around them does not use the home language (HL). For some families only one of the parents speaks HL, thus they are in a position of combining their parenting role with an additional one of language teaching. Such role combinations involve emotionally demanding work, which takes place invisibly in the home. Parents develop a hybrid role combining elements of teaching with the relationship and care work expected of them as parents, moving between roles as context requires. In this paper we explore four in-depth case studies of families where one parent is the speaker of a HL different from that spoken by the other parent and the community. We explore their perceptions of the impact of hybridising teaching and parenting roles. The HL speaking parents talked of the cost of their multiple roles, and the challenges of being the HL speaker in terms of stress and tiredness. Their inability, in their eyes, to fulfil both roles (teacher and parent) perfectly led to their feelings of inadequacy and failure which can then impact on their parenting and family life.

Keywords: Parenting, one-parent-one-language, bilingual, parents-as-teachers

Introduction

This paper explores the experiences of parents in inter-married families who are attempting to rear their young children (under 5 years of age) to function effectively in

two languages. This study is specifically located in a context where one parent's home language is English (the language used in the community and country in which families live) and the other parent's home language is not. We identify the non-English language as the home language (HL), thus *the term HL as used in this paper refers always to the home language of the parent whose first language is not English.*

In this inter-married context, parents have chosen an additional responsibility, that of teaching children a language other than the community language, i.e. teaching HL. This is most often the domain of the HL speaking parent only. Thus we position these HL-speaking parents as acting in two roles, of being both a parent and a teacher of HL. We explore in the study this combination of parenting and teaching of HL. The families in this study live in relative isolation from HL communities, in regional Australia, which means that support for them is somewhat limited (Golfenshtein, Srulovici, & Medoff-Cooper, 2016). Parents may well be the only speaker of HL within hundreds of kilometres of their place of residence.

This isolation of HL speakers is partly due to the shift to English experienced by many second and third generation migrants in Australia, where complete loss of HL is common (Bradley & Bradley, 2013; Clyne, 2005). HL is more likely to be maintained when there are extended family members involved and when educational settings support the language (Verdon, McLeod, & Winsler, 2014). However, many families who migrate to regional Australia, as they are encouraged to do by the Federal Government's State Specific and Regional Migration (SSRM) programme (Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2014), are less likely to be engaged in a relevant speech community. In this context we define a speech community as a group of people who either live near each other and/or whose social interactions create a group identity and who share a language (Crystal, 2010). We note speech communities tend to be perceived as co-located. The size of the social networks within a speech community is an indicator of the chances of success in passing on HL to children (Kirsch, 2012). Regional Australia is characterised by very small speech communities in most languages other than English, and in many circumstances, one parent in a family may be the only speaker of a particular language in an area (Sims & Ellis, 2014; Sims, Ellis, & Knox, 2017).

We posit that parenting associated with rearing children to function with HL as well as English in the context of regional Australia, without the support of a relevant speech community, is a challenge. Parenting in this context is more difficult than rearing children with the community language only and because this difference operates in the home it is invisible to outsiders. How parents manage this additional parenting challenge is therefore also invisible, a concern identified as an issue for the work involved in parenting more generally (Hutchison, 2012). As identified by Sue (2004) making the invisible visible

creates space to address issues of equity. With recognition and understanding of parental experiences come opportunities to develop appropriate supports and a community narrative that acknowledges and validates parental work. Thus this paper addresses the following research question:

How do parents in regional Australia perceive and enact their role in teaching their child HL impacts on their parenting and on their family lives in the context where there is only one fluent HL speaker in the family?

Literature review

It is widely accepted that children learn language through engaging in a rich language environment (Byers-Heinlein & Lew-Williams, 2013; Duursma, 2014; Sims & Hutchins, 2011). This involves hearing the sounds of the language around them from before birth. The more language input they have, the more words they learn and the richer their language development (De Houwer & Bornstein, 2016). However, simply hearing language is not enough; the manner in which children are engaged in language is important. Research suggests that participating in interactions that focus on communication (not correctness) is crucial (Taylor, Donovan, Miles, & Leavitt, 2009). In effective language environments parents engage in natural conversation in the context of caring relationships. This is a form of language identified many years ago as low control language (Landry, Smith, Miller-Loncar, & Swank, 1997) where children are equal partners in communication. This is a language socialisation approach to language development where language learning is understood in the context of a social group (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984) in face to face interactions (Lanza, 2007).

Parents as teachers

However, when parents have made a decision to rear their children bilingually/plurilingually, in a context where the community around them does not use the HL, they are in a position of combining a teaching role with their parenting role. There is a long history in the Global North of parents being encouraged to perform as teachers; often identified in terms of parents as children's first teachers (Niklas, Cohrssen, & Tayler, 2016). This is accompanied by an increasing formalisation of that parental teaching role

in a range of different sectors. ¹ In the early intervention literature², for example, parents are routinely expected to take on a teaching role to support the development of their children (Leung, Tsang, & Lo, 2017; Olçay-Gül & Tekin-Iftar, 2016) and there are now a range of parent education programmes that focus on supporting parents to create effective home learning environments (Landry et al., 2017). Parents involved in such programmes often report increased feelings of self-efficacy and confidence based on improved child outcomes (Besler & Kurt, 2016).

Kopeliovich (2010) however, identified incorporating an explicit teaching role (i.e. a teaching role that is more formalised than the kinds of teaching normally expected of parents) within the parenting role as emotionally demanding work, as is any work based on personal interactions (Wharton, 2009). The compounding effects of multiple emotional demands on parents is reflected in a range of literature. For example, Hutchison (2012) argues that the competing demands of parental supervision of children's homework, employment, home-making responsibilities and parenting are extreme and can significantly impair children's academic achievement if not managed effectively. O'Brien (2008) positions this as related to parental emotional capital, suggesting that there is only so much emotional capital available to parents in fulfilling the expectations placed upon them, and additional demands (for example in being the only available speaker of HL and thus responsible for children's HL education) can lead to burnout. Looking at a different sector, the home schooling literature supports this idea, suggesting maternal strain resulting from combining formal teaching and home-maker roles often leads to mothers burning out and returning their children to mainstream schooling (Hochschild, 1997; Lois, 2006; Murphy, 2014). Lois (2006) argues that this arises from "the sheer amount of interpersonal management they had to perform before any 'education' could take place" (p. 515). These role overloads meant that mothers felt they did not perform any of their roles adequately.

Hochschild (1997) suggests that the very fact that both the parenting and teaching work undertaken in home schooling is performed in the home means that it is under-valued and not appreciated. She positions this work as the third shift (the three shifts being paid

¹ Note we use the term Global North as defined by Connell (2007) to refer to nations of the world that colonised other nations and therefore imposed colonial power. The terms Global North and Global south do not necessarily refer to geography as there are colonised nations in the north that are part of Connell's Global South.

² The early intervention sector works with children who are disadvantaged through for example, disability or poverty.

employment, home care and child education) and the fact that the work is mostly unacknowledged means parents feel “life at home is hard work” (p. 94). The invisibility of the work of parenting in the home is compounded by neoliberal positioning of families and caring responsibilities. As expressed by Tronto (2017), personal responsibility has become a moral principal meaning that families, making a choice to rear their children bilingually/plurilingually, should not then complain that such a decision leads to hard work.

Parents as HL teachers

The identification of the emotional elements of combining parenting and teaching is important because this links with recent research focusing on the importance of responsive parenting as a key element in supporting children’s development (Britto et al., 2017). Black et al. (2017, p. 79) summarised as follows: “*positive associations between nurturing care and children’s health, growth and development have been demonstrated worldwide, supported by neuroscientific evidence.*” As Black et al. (2017) identify, children’s development, of which language development and HL learning are a component, is best supported when it takes place within the context of responsive parenting/teaching. The literature discussed above suggests this is not always the case, as parents may take on more of a didactic teaching function in relation to HL learning, believing that given their children’s relative isolation from other HL speakers, they need to provide more formal instruction.

The differences between learning HL through normal interactions and formal teaching is reflected in work by Döpke (1988; 1992) who looked at the parenting practices of inter-married German-Australian families living in Australia and their attempts to raise their children bilingually. She discovered that child-centred communication and playful activities in interaction were conducive to children’s acquisition of both languages: “Playful activities and playful child-caring activities are perfect opportunities for language teaching” (Döpke, 1988, p. 103). The use of teaching techniques by the HL parent was also found to assist in language learning. Furthermore, children with parents who spoke different languages, similar to those in monolingual families, were found to prefer more responsive parenting, choosing to “model their language production on the parent who is more skilful in incorporating the child’s perspective and needs into the verbal interaction” (Döpke, 1992, p. 140).

Didactic teaching strategies (what has been referred to above as formal teaching strategies) are often employed in language schools. These strategies are thought to create an unnatural learning environment that is not beneficial or effective (Eisenclas, Schalley, & Moyes, 2016; Seedhouse, 1996). Replicating these teaching strategies in the home is not

likely to fulfil parental expectations relating to children's competence in HL. Working with families from minority, disadvantaged backgrounds (Sikiö et al., 2016) suggests that where parents took on a formal, didactic teaching role the result tended to impair children's literacy skills rather than enhance them. In contrast, most research suggests that parental engagement in their children's learning is generally positive (Cabus & Ariës, 2017) and it is not unrealistic to assume that this translates to parental involvement in their children's acquisition of HL. Thus parental engagement in children's learning is mainly beneficial but the way in which parents attempt to engage with their children in order to teach (i.e. the balance between learning HL through responsive parenting versus formal, didactic teaching) is important.

Parental engagement in children's learning, viewed through the responsive parenting lens, involves embedding learning in everyday interactions (Pannone, 2017). Responsive parenting involves nurturing care, positive and responsive interactions, individualised attention, engaging children through play and joint problem-solving (Britto et al., 2017).

In contrast, a parental formal teaching focus separates teaching from everyday life (Pannone, 2017). Here the emphasis is more upon managing and monitoring children's language and learning (McInnes, Howard, Crowley, & Miles, 2013). Popkewitz (2003, p. 37) calls this pedagogicalisation of parenting where "*as a surrogate teacher*" the parent is expected to take on didactic teaching strategies. With this understanding of teaching, parents attempt to teach more formally rather than using the nurturing care approach discussed above. The home schooling literatures positions this as a less effective strategy. More successful home schooling mothers prioritised their mothering over their teaching role (Lois, 2006). It appears that "*the most vital components of parental involvement are subtle and have more to do with love, high and reasonable expectations, and positive and informative communication*" (Jeynes, 2016, p. 103). In other words, the parent-as-formal-teacher role is only likely to be successful when embedded in a responsive parenting frame.

However parents often do not position themselves exclusively in either the parenting or teaching frame. Pinter (2016) suggests that parents switch from moment to moment between their parent and teacher identities. This means that "*children have a chance to learn new words and phrases in HL when the teacher role is acted out, while they can gain important practice and have an opportunity to take on more dominant roles when the adult is in the parent role*" (p. 249). Lois (2006) claimed successful home schooling mothers were those who created "*role harmony – integrating some roles and prioritising others*" (p. 523). This suggests individual adjustments to role expectations enable parents (who are also functioning as teachers, in a teaching role above and beyond that normally expected

of parents) create a new identity, an identity combining both the parenting and teaching roles.

The literature thus suggests that when parents are attempting to teach their child a language additional to the community language, in a context where they are attempting to do so without a community of HL speakers around them, they will experiment with different role combinations (parent + formal teacher roles) in order to find a hybridisation that works for them. Given the lack of support in the community context in which this study is located, it is important to understand the experiences of these parents, with the aim of identifying the kinds of supports that would assist them.

Methodology

Conceptual framework

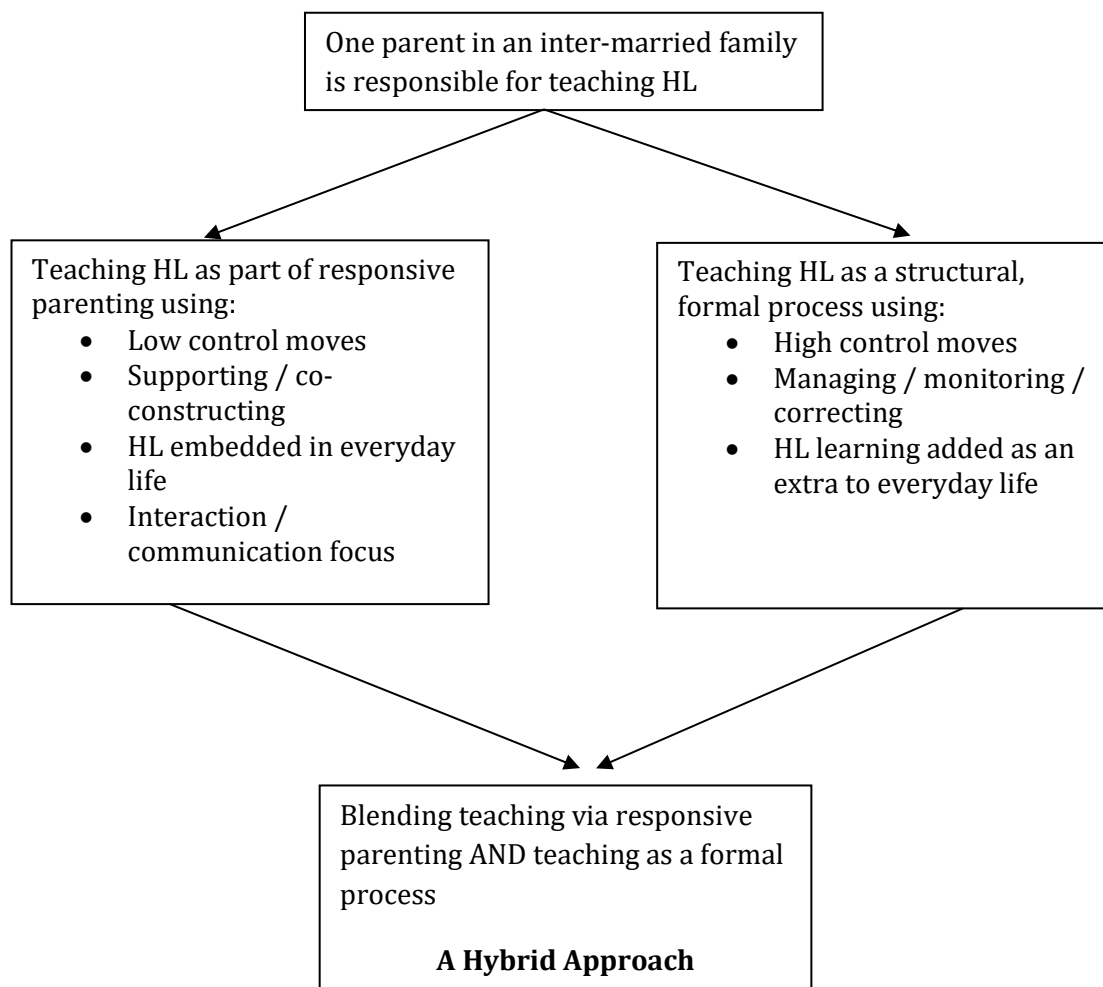


FIGURE 1 Conceptual Framework

This study is based on an interpretivist ontology, which allows a positioning of each participant in the research as owning their own truth (Wright & Losekoot, 2016). We use a symbolic interactionism ontology (as discussed in Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) in claiming that we develop shared meanings with participants through language. This shared meaning specifically targets parents' understanding of their role as the source of their child's HL learning. The framework identified in Figure 1 guided our thinking. We identified elements of responsive parenting and more formal teaching from the literature and posit that parents blend their teaching and parental roles to create their own, unique hybrid.

Participants

This paper draws on data from a larger study examining the experiences of families in 3 small, regional towns in Australia (Sims, Ellis & Knox, 2017). All families in the base study had a child under five years of age at the beginning of the study and were committed to rearing the child bilingually. The paper addresses an issue arising from the data and thus does not address the research questions driving the base study. Thus, for the purposes of this paper we have purposively selected, from the main study participants, four families where one parent's home language was English, (the community language), and the other parent's home language is a language other than English (HL) using the selection criteria identified in Table 1.

TABLE 1 Participating families. (Families are assigned a code in order to protect their identity.)

HL SPEAKER	THE NON HL SPEAKING PARENT HAS BASIC to MEDIUM LEVEL OF HL	THE NON HL SPEAKING PARENT HAS LITTLE OR NO HL
Mother is the HL speaker	<i>Family 1</i> Mother – Ali Father – George Target child – Simon Younger sibling – Brent	<i>Family 2</i> Mother – Jill Father – Mark Target child – Michael Older siblings – Sam, John Younger sibling – Ben
Father is the HL speaker	<i>Family 3</i> Mother – Mary Father – Joe Target child- Rebecca Older sibling - Rachel Younger sibling - Naomi	<i>Family 4</i> Mother – Eleanor Father – Kurt Target child – Spiderman Younger sibling – Fritz

Note that the names allocated to the family members are pseudonyms. In addition we have not identified HL to further protect the identity of our participants. This is important given the relative smallness of the regional area from which our sample is drawn and the very limited HL speech communities present in each of the languages involved. We also note that some parents had languages other than English and HL but in all cases the family were focusing on HL and English only.

Data collection strategies

Data collection was iterative and collected over a period of 3 years in 4 or 5 cycles (cycles were 4–6 months apart (see Table 2)).

TABLE 2 Data collection strategies for all families

Year	Cycle	Strategy
1	Pre-cycle	Baseline interview
1	1	3 interviews <u>Interview 1</u> : parents talked about their family language plan, what they had been doing, and the factors that were impacting on carrying out their language plan <u>Between interview 1 & 2 and 2 & 3</u> : families' videoed interactions with their children using HL. <u>Interviews 2 & 3</u> : videos were reviewed, families explained what they were doing and reflected on the opportunities they were providing their children in HL.
1	2	3 interviews as above
2	3	3 interviews as above
2	4	3 interviews as above
3	5	3 interviews as above

For the purposes of this paper transcriptions of the interviews were used, and one video was selected for each family where the HL speaking parent was involved in reading a book with the target child for more in-depth analysis. The intent in selecting a book reading activity for closer analysis arose from the important role books are recognised as playing in children's language development (Niklas et al., 2016). The language in books is more complex than spoken language and discussions that move beyond the story are linked to improvements in vocabulary (Duursma, 2014). Thus book reading is a specific activity that provides opportunities to explore how parents engage with their children in a language activity.

Analysis

For this paper transcriptions of the interviews as identified above and the book reading videos were coded. We note that "*Coding, once it begins, has already surrendered to a*

theory of knowledge" (Tuck & Yang, 2014, p. 811) and in this paper this is reflected in the conceptual framework illustrated in Figure 1. Codes were developed for each element identified in the framework. The analysis of the video segment was NOT only focused on the actual words spoken but on the behaviours (non-verbal communication) associated with utterances – for example voice intonation and flow were used to identify if the interaction was natural and focused on communication or controlled by the adult in demanding a response. As above, the elements identified in the conceptual framework were used to code the behaviours in the videos. Once the coding was complete, a further pass through the data was undertaken to identify elements that were not encapsulated in the conceptual framework. Codes were developed into themes using the process of constant comparison (Glaser, 1965). Glaser's work is the classic approach upon which constant comparative method is based and involves comparing data assigned to each theme in order to define the theme and identify its boundaries, integrating themes where appropriate and using these to link to theory.

Ethical issues

The study was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee based at the researchers' university. This committee operates under the requirements identified in the Australian National Health & Medical Research Council, Australian Research Council, and Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (2007 [updated 2015]). Parents gave informed consent as per the requirements in Australian legislation, and their willingness to participate was confirmed before beginning each cycle. Children gave assent for their parents to video HL interactions. We note, as explained above, our care to use not only pseudonyms for the families but also not to identify the HL.

Results and discussion

Family Stories

Family 1

Ali grew up in a multilingual community so for her, raising her children with other languages is completely normal. She is initially targeting the HL but wants to introduce a third language at some point in the future. Ali originally spoke English to Simon, but when the family moved to Australia she realised that he would never learn HL if she did not focus on this. At his point she switched to using HL exclusively with him and refuses to speak in English. George is very supportive of their family language policy and speaks exclusively in English to Simon. George understands most of what she says but has to concentrate to do this so will often ask Simon: "What did mummy say?" Ali does not

require Simon to respond to her in HL: “I don’t think it’s fair to him to force him.” Ali preferred George not to use HL with Simon. She is concerned that he speaks with an accent and she does not want Simon to copy this. George says he would love to learn HL but Ali does not have the energy to teach him.

Ali used to read books sometimes to Simon in HL. If they were in English she would translate as she read. Now that Simon is getting older, the books are getting more complex, and they have a new baby she finds this particularly tiring. George now does most of the reading to Simon in English. Since the birth of their new baby Ali has spent even less time with Simon as George has added the breakfast routine to his care responsibilities.

The videos demonstrate multiple interactions between Ali and Simon. In these interactions Ali speaks in HL and Simon mostly replies in English, although there are some words that Simon always uses the HL, e.g. ‘yellow’. Ali does not ask for corrections or for Simon to repeat words in HL. These videos show a focus on communication where Ali comments on Simon’s activities; where mother and son explore things of interest together. For example they have a conversation about snowstorms and snow ploughs in [country name] just before the family visit to this country.

In the selected video Simon and Ali are in the kitchen. Ali is moving around the kitchen while Simon is sitting at the kitchen table, painting and having his breakfast. Throughout the video Ali speaks to Simon exclusively in her HL. Simon always speaks in English, whether he is responding to Ali or asking her a question. After Simon finishes painting, Ali brings him a new Star Wars Sticker book to play with while she continues doing things in the kitchen. Simon looks through the book and tells Ali what is in there, pointing to different things and naming the characters and spaceships from Star Wars. He often asks her to look at things in the book. She responds to his comments and comes over to look at the book, asking Simon questions about the pictures as well. Simon starts removing stickers and discusses with Ali where to put them and asks her to put them in the book. Ali chooses some the stickers and puts them in as well.

Family 2

Jill grew up in another country, travelled to Australia as a student and eventually married an Australian, Mark. She initially did not think providing opportunities for her children to speak HL was important but changed her mind as she came to realise how much the language and culture were part of her. Mark travels a lot with his job and is often away from home. When Mark is home the family speak English most of the time as Jill thinks it is rude to exclude him from conversations. She tries to speak more HL when Mark is away but the children, particularly the older children who are now school-age, are resistant and prefer to use English: “Are you going to talk normal now Mum?” Jill works part-time and

the children all began formal non-parental care when they were a year old. Jill notes that the children's interest in HL declined once they began preschool and school. Jill has no contact with any HL speakers in her home town and very little contact with family in the home country. This leaves her feeling isolated and limits the HL speech community for her children significantly. By cycle 3 (before the family return to her home country for a holiday) Mark showed renewed interest in learning some HL.

Jill feels better able to connect with her children using HL. For example, when talking about mother-baby interaction she says it felt much more natural to her to use HL. She felt that she just didn't have the words in English. She says HL part of her identity and wants the children to know her culture and be familiar with her language.

The videos show sequences of Jill counting out pieces of chocolate cake in HL, singing HL songs at bedtime and providing translations and reading stories to the children in HL. She reflects on how she really has to work hard to provide HL learning opportunities, so that for her it feels like "2 steps forward and 1 back." She relates this to the difficulty for her of constantly code switching. Sometimes she experiences difficulty in switching between languages. For example, sometimes at work with a HL speaking client she struggles to find the words she wants in HL. She also identifies feeling time pressures, particularly when the children begin school as she feels this leaves her with little time to put the required effort into the HL as it is just easier to get things done in English.

In the selected reading sequence Michael is lying in bed with Jill. She is reading him bedtime stories in HL that she is translating from English as she reads. She emphasises key words as she reads, looking towards him and then back to the book often. She uses gestures, which at times involve dropping the book and adding in her own comments to emphasise the story and pointing to various things and naming them. She uses some English words (e.g. "it's all gone, see") and a lot of voice intonation. Michael uses mostly English in his responses but occasionally uses HL. She occasionally ad libs (makes up words and phrases that are not in the book), providing additional explanation, looking towards Michael. By the third book Jill just reads, pointing to pictures as she goes but this time with no additional explanation. She continues to use gestures; at one point she uses English and throws arms wide asking "where's Ponder".

Family 3

Joe and Mary lived and worked in Joe's home country for some time. Mary is reasonably fluent in HL. Their first child was born in the HL country, the family moving to Australia when she was three years old. Joe's mother visits for several months each year and when she visits the family they speak exclusively HL. When she is not there, Mary mostly uses English with the children. Mary is the main carer for the children. Joe works full-time and uses the HL to the children most of the time but sometimes he reverts to English with the

children because it's easier: "At home for me it's a constant struggle. It's just too easy to turn to English". Mary talks about carrying the burden of the home, particularly when Joe is working long hours, and this makes it difficult for her to use HL.

Grandmother has a huge influence on HL in this family. They regularly skype her in the home country and she only accepts HL from the children. When grandmother visits she deliberately engages the children in learning HL. She is a retired teacher. Joe sees that her engagement with this children as his mother's role: "That's what she's here for. She's here to spend time with them. So the amount of exposure – she just sits, of course as a grandmother she's here for three months seeing her grandkids, so she has all the time in the world. She's here continually interacting with them. So it's amazing, a huge change. You can see the difference". Whilst she is visiting Joe allows her to take over his lessons with the children to have a break. However, when grandmother is not there, Joe tries to spend time with the children in the evenings and on the weekends teaching them to read and write in the HL; the HL alphabet is different to English. He reads books in the HL and they have regular religious activities conducted in the HL. Family conversations tend to be mainly in English because of Mary who says: "HL conversations are slower because words have to be repeated and explained". Joe sometimes finds the lessons time consuming and tiring depending on his work commitments. He notes that "I'll be honest, I'm not disappointed by myself but it's a struggle. It's not where I wish they were, their level. But it is what it is". This family's goal is HL fluency for their children as in the future they may go and live back in the HL country.

The videos show interactions between Joe and the children. He points to things (pictures in books, objects) and asks "what is that?" He then sings with the children in HL and again he constantly stops and asks for them to repeat words in HL.

In the selected video Joe is sitting on the sofa with the three girls and reading them a book (Mary explains in the associated interview that the story is in rhyme in HL and is beautiful). He reads with occasional glances at the children and asks who, what, when, where, why questions in HL. The children point to things in the book and ask questions in English and HL, mostly Rachael, and Joe responds in HL. At one point he says 'nose' in HL and touches Naomi on the nose. The other girls also touch their noses and repeat the word in HL. Joe then points to things on the page and talks about them in HL. All the children appear to have a good understanding of what Joe is saying and are engaged with the story. They repeat words in HL as Joe is reading. Joe gets animated when the girls use HL. At the end of the book Joe asks a question in HL and Rachel responds with English 'rabbit.' Joe responds in HL and looks at Rachel then Rebecca. They say "rabbit" in the HL and Rebecca sits up with an exclamation, gets off the couch and starts hopping like a rabbit. Joe speaks to her in HL and the video ends.

Family 4

Kurt has been in Australia for many years and for a long time spoke only English. It was only when his first child was born that he thought about sharing his language and culture. For some time he struggled as he had lost a lot of his HL. He does not have a strong relationship with his parents (who also live in Australia) so is the sole HL speaker. Eleanor has tried to learn HL but feels she is very limited.

Kurt explains that adding the HL element to his parenting makes it really hard work. He says that “I also sometimes feel like an alien because I’m the only one who speaks a different language, and I don’t want to be an alien to my children, it’s push and pull – I think I don’t really want to do this – what is the cost to myself?” He reflects that he is really exhausted given his work commitments and his language-teaching role. Throughout the data collection period this family fluctuated in the amount of language input provided depending on Kurt’s work commitments and his level of tiredness. After a particularly stressful period he said: “I felt like stopping the HL thing because I found especially with Spiderman, um he’s asking lots of questions, and to be able to give him an answer in English, like that [clicks fingers] mostly, whereas with HL, I have to think longer and harder, and not only do I have to work harder, but then Spiderman will also have new learnings, new words, and then I’m thinking actually I’m short changing you because I could explain it to you in English and you would get it immediately”.

Using HL makes this family feel as if they are divided: “it does create a ... not a division, but a separateness sometimes in the communication ... but a feeling, there’s an essence ... in that there is one language here and another over there.” Eleanor notes that Kurt is “taken out of the core part of the family to speak the language with the boys whereas I think that if you were all just speaking the one language there wouldn’t be that element of otherness there sometimes because it’s a different language”. At the same time Kurt said he sometimes felt left out when the family were using English as “he couldn’t get a word in” but that when he was speaking HL Eleanor and Spiderman spoke less which created space for him – he agreed that in the videos where he was speaking HL he looked happier.

The selected sequence involves Eleanor, Spiderman and Fritz going through an ABC Colour and Number picture book with Kurt nearby. Eleanor says in the related interview that she often uses picture books as she has enough HL to share words, colours, single items etc. Spiderman points to pictures and names them in English, getting more excited. He recites to the end of the alphabet in English then turns towards Kurt who speaks to him in HL. There is a brief conversation between Eleanor and Kurt in HL whilst Fritz continues to peer at the book. Spiderman says “I’ll count in English first” and does so pointing to the numbers. He then repeats the count in HL. Eleanor points to something in

the book and asks, using HL “what is this in HL?” Spiderman turns to Kurt and asks how to say it in HL. He then immediately asks Kurt how to go through the alphabet in HL. Kurt does one letter at a time and Spiderman copies one at a time. Meanwhile Fritz points to some pictures and vocalises.

Discussion of themes

The following section discusses the themes arising from the data and how they link across cases.

Not quite part of the family when speaking HL

Three of the four case study families identify that using HL creates a situation where not all family members can participate effectively in all interactions. The one exception is Family 3 where Mary had sufficient HL to participate in conversations, albeit with additional effort on her part. Jill clearly identifies her choice to use English when Mark is home because she thinks it is rude to talk to the children in a language he does not understand. Kurt feels he has more space to express himself when the family are trying to use HL because Eleanor and Spiderman are not fluent in HL and therefore cannot contribute as much. Despite this, he explains that he does not feel part of the family when he uses HL. He said that using HL makes him feel like he is an alien. Ali insists on using HL in the family all the time when Simon is present but this sometimes leaves George out of the communication and Simon often offers to translate for him.

Clashing roles makes for hard work

Ali, as the main caregiver for Simon, uses HL all the time and in the videos we see her using a range of responsive parenting strategies. She engages in conversation without insisting Simon responds in HL and without requiring him to imitate. Her interactions with Simon are embedded in their daily life rather than being structured as lessons undertaken at special times. Jill also uses similar strategies and positions HL as the language of emotion (see below): the language in which she can more easily engage with her children on an emotional level. Jill, however, also works part-time and finds it difficult to find time to inject the HL into normal family routines because of time pressures. She therefore constructs artificial learning and teaching situations with the children in order to provide them with more HL input. For example she had the children practising ordering food in the HL before the family visited the home country.

Joe and Kurt, both of whom leave the family home for paid employment and who therefore do not have the daily caregiving responsibilities for their children as do Ali and Jill, schedule special HL lesson sessions with their children. Joe talked about special sessions

at the weekends where he teaches his children elements of HL (including reading and writing for his older daughter). Kurt also talked about making special times where he taught his son and how the pressures of his work impacted on his ability to deliver these lessons. However, in addition to undertaking this teaching role where they used some of the common didactic teaching strategies, both also used regular family activities (for example book reading).

When reading with their children all four HL speaking parents took opportunities to name things in HL, and all attempted to engage their children by asking questions (some scripted in the book text but others not) in HL about the story using a range of body language to help convey excitement and encourage engagement. The videos show the two fathers demonstrating more elements of the teaching role in these interactions with the children and it is these fathers who discussed the extent to which they found this hard work. Kurt and his family reflected several times that they felt like giving up their dream to have their children speak HL because he often feels exhausted. Eleanor talked about this as an intellectual exercise, which is tiring and requires emotional capacity to fulfil (as the limited-HL speaker). Joe talked about how he ceased his lessons when his mother visited because she was able to engage with the children in HL. He also identified how his work roster limited his ability to offer HL lessons. There were times when he was too tired to cope with the additional workload of the lessons.

Ali reflects on the demands of being the provider of HL. She explains how later in the data collection period she stopped reading stories to Simon. This was because the intellectual challenge of simultaneously translating the more complex books requested by Simon as he grew older became too challenging. She explained that, by the end of the data collection period, she hardly read to Simon at all so that book reading for Simon has now become an English experience with his dad. Jill also identifies the work involved in providing HL learning opportunities, particularly because of the decision to use English when Mark is present. Sometimes she feels she is fighting a losing battle. She also discusses the increasing difficulty to provide HL learning opportunities when the children go to school.

All four HL speaking parents identified their hybrid roles (parent + HL teacher) as hard work, putting them in situations where they don't always perform in ways that they would like to. This sometimes makes them feel bad, as if they are letting their children down. Parents share how for them the conflicts between providing HL learning opportunities, earning an income, and managing home responsibilities are sometimes overwhelming. As identified above, these conflicts play out in the private domain of the home and are not recognised by the community nor by services. This means there are no avenues for support available for these parents juggling the conflicting demands.

It is also worth examining Mary's situation as the most fluent HL speaker of the English-speaking partners. Mary had a strong commitment to supporting her children to be HL speakers and often used HL in her normal daily interactions with the children. However, she found it difficult to use HL all the time, particularly when she was tired or stressed. For Mary using HL was a constant struggle, and whilst she felt disappointed in herself, found that on many occasions using English was simply the only way to manage. Eleanor too talked about how using HL was hard work for her. She had tried to learn HL many times and was slowly gaining vocabulary, but she felt like she was "doing an assignment" (an academic exercise) all the time and could not relax and be herself when using HL. Parenting for Mary and Eleanor was simply not natural when using HL and thus was a drain on their emotional, physical and intellectual resources.

Language of emotion

Jill identified the need for her to use HL with her children, particularly when they were little, because she felt she could not engage with them in appropriate emotional depth when she was using English. Jill described this as necessary to convey the intense emotional elements in her interactions with her children. Mary also talked about this; as the basic (not fluent) HL speaker in her family, she explained how she wanted to use her limited HL with her children but found the deep intimate interactions did not come naturally to her in HL and she had to use English. This idea is supported by Pavlenko (2008) who argues that emotional concepts vary across languages so that expressing deep emotions can be a complex task in another language.

This use of HL for emotional interaction is a key element in responsive parenting (Britto et al., 2017). Nurturing care involves reciprocal and responsive interactions, combining verbal and non-verbal forms of communication where the adult provides both verbal and non-verbal responses that facilitate emotional security along with cognitive and linguistic frameworks upon which later learning will be built (Sims, Ellis & Knox, 2017). Whilst it is clear that these interactive strategies can be learned (early childhood educators for example have to learn how to work with infants and parenting programmes teach responsive parenting strategies) for many parents this is instinctual and emotionally-based. We suggest that when parents are intensely engaged in the emotional elements of parenting, the cognitive processes involved in using another language are not easily accessible to them, making the use of a non-HL challenging in these contexts.

Hybrids: parent and teacher

The conceptual framework for this study indicated that we sought to examine the kinds of hybridisations the parents developed. For the HL-speaking parents it appeared that the two mothers, both of whom undertook more of the caregiving responsibility for their children than their husbands, developed a hybrid that focused more towards responsive parenting whilst moving into a more formal teaching role occasionally. Both provided names of things in the story books they were reading with their children in HL, but emphasised these with non-verbal language that encouraged the naming to be part of the ongoing story. Both talked about embedding HL in normal daily routines – cooking, eating, bathing etc. In parallel to the findings about what constitutes successful home schooling discussed in the literature above, both these mothers appeared to create a HL learning environment through a strong focus on responsive parenting.

The hybridisation developed by the HL speaking fathers was slightly different probably because they were not the principal carers of their children. Both used HL in normal family routines as part of responsive parenting but this was not always an easy fit for them because they felt that explaining things in HL made it harder for the children to understand, making normal family interactions more burdensome. Thus they often shifted to English. Both these fathers offered special learning opportunities, separate from their normal family routines. In these learning activities they took on more of a teacher role, using didactic instruction techniques. Both identified how difficult it was for them to find the time to do these additional activities and how pressures on their time often resulted in these lessons not happening. Both fathers were clear that the teaching role was relinquished when they did not have the resources to make it work, but the parenting role was not.

The hybrid role is flexible and changes from time to time. For both Ali and Jill movement between teaching and parenting occurred from moment to moment within an interaction and this movement is also evident in Joe and Kurt's data. However, both Joe and Kurt were more likely to move into a stronger teaching role and maintain that for slightly more sustained periods of time. These teaching occasions were dependent on their emotional reserves and were not likely to happen then the two men had other calls on their time.

Conclusions

All the HL speaking parents talked of the cost of their multiple roles, and the challenges of being the HL speaker in terms of stress and tiredness. Their inability to always fulfil both roles perfectly led to their feelings of inadequacy and failure. HL speaking parents talked about feeling isolated within their families. Despite these feelings, using HL was essential as it supported their deep emotional engagement with their young children. As such, HL

was the foundation upon which they were able to build what is now identified in the literature (see World Health Organisation and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, 2018, for example) as responsive parenting.

The ways in which the HL speaking parents created their hybridised role was different in each of the families. Part of this was related to the ways in which each family chose to assign income-earning and child-caring responsibilities. Where HL-speaking parents took on the main caregiving role, they were able to embed HL learning opportunities within their normal daily interactions and routines. Where HL-speaking parents took on the main income-earning role they were more likely to create special HL learning opportunities such as book reading sessions. Their limited time with their children, and their desire to support their children's HL learning, made this a practical strategy.

We note these experiences are occurring inside the private lives of families. As a consequence we suggest avenues of support for these families are limited (or non-existent) so the families are managing alone. This is particularly an issue in regional Australia where families are unlikely to have other HL speakers nearby, meaning informal and formal community support is not available to them. Bringing this invisible struggle to visibility opens opportunities for colleagues, friends, community members and service providers to recognise and support these families through validation of their efforts and goals, and through providing practical support where relevant. In a world where boundaries between countries and cultures are rapidly dissolving, and the ability to function (linguistically and culturally) across different nations is increasingly valued, we need to do all we can to assist those families who are helping their children gain the necessary skills and knowledge.

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