

# **Proposal for a Research Project: Family language policy in multilingual transcultural families**

## **1. Introduction: Relevance of this project**

Oslo is in terms of population one of the fastest growing cities in Europe today, following the intensified global trend of urbanization. According to forecasts, by 2050 nearly 70% of the global population will live in cities, up from around 50% today (UN2012),<sup>1</sup> with international mobility being one of the significant reasons for the growth in urban conglomerations. In Oslo 31% of the population has an immigrant background so far in 2014<sup>2</sup> and nearly 50% of the population is projected to be of migrant descent by 2040, with approximately 70% having a background from countries outside of Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand (*Statistics Norway* 2012).<sup>3</sup> One of the most significant cultural consequences of such mobility and urban development in post-modern society is what Vertovec (2007) calls “super-diversity”. An increasingly large number of transcultural families is an outcome of super-diversity in urban areas, with multilingualism<sup>4</sup> as a dominant feature. Some transcultural families result from immigration and transnational movement, while others are from intercultural marriages and bonds. Some are recently established, others have existed for generations; globalization only serves to intensify the encounters of different traditions, values and languages of the various members of the family. Given the forecasted demographics of Oslo, there is a need to strengthen the knowledge base on the social and linguistic dimensions of increased international mobility in order to ensure an integrated, democratic urban development (cf. *Horizon 2020 Urban Europe*).<sup>5</sup>

The main goal of the proposed project is to generate beyond state-of-the-art knowledge on one of the central dimensions of intensified mobility – **family language policy in multilingual transcultural families**, with a focus on language practices and language ideologies. We seek to investigate some of the key forces in processes that may potentially lead to the demise of regional or minority languages and culture, or to their spread. A language policy that fails to preserve language diversity in its broad sense will have not only economic but also political, social, cultural and cognitive costs. A strengthened knowledge base of multilingual family language policy will provide insight into how transcultural families manage their linguistic and cultural heritage in contemporary urban spaces.

## **2. Aspects relating to the research project**

The emerging research field of family language policy (FLP) bridges the gap between studies of child language and the field of language policy research in its approach to understanding language maintenance and shift in multilingual families and communities (Li Wei 2012; King & Fogle 2013; O hifearnáin 2013; Schwartz & Verschik 2013). FLP can be defined as explicit and overt, as well as implicit and covert, planning in relation to language use and literacy practices within home domains and among family members (King, Fogle & Logan-Terry 2008). In line with current trends in language policy research (Shohamy 2006, Spolsky 2009), FLP involves linguistic practices, which reveal implicit language planning (Li Wei 2012). FLP is, moreover, formed and implemented in interaction with wider political, social, and economic forces. Macro-level societal phenomena play a role in language maintenance and language shift; however, as Fishman (1991) so clearly pointed

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.un.org/esa/population/unpop.htm>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ssb.no/befolkning/statistikker/innvbef>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.ssb.no/emner/02/03/rapp\\_201211/](http://www.ssb.no/emner/02/03/rapp_201211/)

<sup>4</sup> Multilingualism as used here is understood as the ability of societies, institutions, groups and individuals to engage on a regular basis, with more than one language in their day-to-day lives. This broad definition embraces the distinction made by the Council of Europe between “multilingualism” and “plurilingualism” where multilingualism refers more to social organization, and plurilingualism to an individual repertoire of linguistic competence. However, the terms “bilingualism”, “plurilingualism”, and “multilingualism” are often interchanged. Traditionally, “bilingualism” was used to refer to more than one language, while the default term today has become “multilingualism”.

<sup>5</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm)

out in reference to reversing language shift, it is the micro-level of face-to-face interaction and social life within the family that plays a crucial role (cf. Lanza 2004a,b; Lanza 2007). Heritage language is indeed “profoundly connected to speakers’ attitudes and values” (Weiyun He 2012). Lanza and Svendsen (2007) revealed that family language ideologies played a decisive role in parents’ decisions to maintain the heritage language or use the societal language with their children, hence language policy at the family level.

FLP has been an underexplored area of sociolinguistic research (Li Wei 2012), and the proposed project aims to contribute to this emerging field of inquiry. Our project's **overarching research question** is: how do current socio-political and cultural contexts impact FLP in transcultural families in Oslo today? These research objectives serve to address this question:

- 1) To investigate how mobility and ongoing changes in socio-political and cultural environments impact the linguistic configurations of transcultural families and their decision-making processes for choosing what language(s) to use in family interactions;
- 2) To examine how multilingual families deal with potential incomplete acquisition, attrition or loss of the heritage language(s);
- 3) To investigate how transcultural families socialize their members into contemporary citizenry and engage with their cultural heritage through multilingual and multiliteracy practices (including new social media and computer-mediated communication);
- 4) To assess the impact of language contact in interaction, on identity construction among different members of the family;
- 5) To examine how children creatively negotiate agency through multilingualism and multiliteracy and how they potentially act as so-called “language brokers”, cultural mediators for the family, and agents of change.

## 2.1. Background and status of knowledge

Our project is situated at the cutting edge of two well-established areas of sociolinguistic research: language socialization (LS) and linguistic ideology (LI). LS includes socializing *into* language to enable appropriate use of linguistic structures, and *through* language into effective social actors and community members (Schieffelin & Ochs 1986; Duranti, Ochs, & Schieffelin 2012). LI investigates how particular ways of using languages reflect and (re)produce socio-cultural values, and the beliefs and assumptions that people have about language (Irvine & Gal 2000). Linguistic ideologies are outcomes of socio-historical conditions of a nation, a community or a group, as well as experiences of individuals. Ideologies, moreover, are closely intertwined with identities. Both LS and LI converge in family language policies as they are formed and implemented in interaction with wider socio-political and cultural forces (King *et al.* 2008; Li Wei 2012). Our focus on what happens within the family highlights the significance of this important social unit that has hitherto received less attention in multilingualism research than other societal structures such as larger communities and schools.

The family is a community of practice, a social unit that has its norms for speaking, acting and believing and hence provides a focus on praxis, the cornerstone for language socialization (Lanza 2007). Migration and ongoing changes in socio-political and cultural environments have resulted in changing linguistic configurations of families, including those in which both of the caregivers have the same immigrant background as well as those involving different cultural backgrounds. Establishing a transcultural family resulting from an intercultural marriage or civil bond requires the negotiation of divergent cultural values and beliefs. Crippen and Brew (2007) point out that childrearing may be a significant source of conflict for intercultural couples. Indeed decision-making about intergenerational transmission of language and culture is an important issue for multilingual couples (Piller 2002, Varro 2003). Families may, moreover, involve other structures, including a single parent or caregivers from different generations. Research is needed on just how these various configurations impact on FLP.

Riley (2012: 493) points out that “... language ideologies are intrinsically implicated in all language socialization processes and vice versa – that is, language ideologies influence the sociocultural contexts that shape language socialization, and language ideologies are also among the

many cultural values socialized through language use". De Houwer (1999: 83) refers to an "impact belief", which she defines as "... the parental belief that parents can exercise some sort of control over their children's linguistic functioning". Such impact beliefs may be influenced by cultural as well as personal preferences and can be strong as when parents provide negative sanctioning to certain linguistic practices, and thus employ control over the child's language use, or they may be fairly weak in that there is an attitude of anything goes. Parental ideologies will thus influence parents' own linguistic practice and interaction strategies with their child, and this in turn may have an impact on the child's language development. Okita (2002:232) notes that language use in bilingual families is "... deeply intertwined with the experience of childrearing", a finding also in King and Fogle (2006). Garrett (2007: 237) advocates an examination of cases of "bad subjects", which in a bilingual context refers to the "apparent failure or refusal of children to acquire both languages". The traditional view of language socialization is that adults socialize children; however, as Gafaranga (2010) points out, children also exert agency, or "the socioculturally mediated capacity to act" (Ahearn 2001: 133), in multilingual contexts and may even contribute to language shift (Svendsen 2004).

Various local and societal ideologies enable and constrain language choices and linguistic practices in the family with potentially conflicting ideologies also coming into play, for example, when varying importance is attached to language as a core value of identity. Spolsky (2009: 18) notes that "The home language is influenced by the sociolinguistic ecology inside and outside the home and by the parents' beliefs about the best strategy". This sociolinguistic ecology may include significant persons such as grandparents (cf. Ruby 2012). In a review of the field of early child bilingualism, Romaine (1995) proposed six basic types of language choice patterns in the family according to the native languages of the parents, the language(s) of the community, and the strategy the parents employ with the child: (1) One person – one language; (2) Non-dominant home language/ One language – one environment; (3) Non-dominant home language without community support; (4) Double non-dominant home language without community support; (5) Non-native parents; and (6) Mixed languages. Romaine's typology is still often cited, but as Lanza (2007) points out, other aspects of family bilingualism are not covered by it, such as the parents' and the community's ideologies of language, the language(s) the parents use to communicate with each other, as well as peer or sibling language use (cf. Lanza & Svendsen 2007). Moreover, the sixth type concerning mixing languages actually overlaps with the other types; for example, parents claim to maintain the One person – one language principle yet they code-switch, that is, they use more than one language in interaction, both within and across utterances (Lanza 2004a, Svendsen 2004).

The issue of language contact has figured especially in studies of FLP involving childhood bilingualism. In her work on Norwegian-English bilingual families in Oslo, Lanza (2004a) presents a framework for analyzing the role of parental discourse strategies in response to bilingual children's language mixing and the children's bilingual outcomes. The particular discourse strategies can, moreover, also be construed as part of identity constructions in interaction. The framework draws on language socialization and discourse analytic approaches to studying family interaction, yet it can be applied analytically to examine any conversation involving the negotiation of language choice. Gafaranga (2010) extended Lanza (2004a) through a focus on the bilingual children in caregiver-child interactions in Rwandan Kinyarwanda – French bilingual families in Belgium. He showed how language shift was "talked into being" in family interactions through the use of a particular discourse strategy – the 'medium request' – used primarily by children to turn the language of interaction to French. Moreover, when caregivers resisted the children's language negotiation to turn to French, parallel conversations in the two languages resulted, thus with the children being allowed to use their preferred medium. Hence children may be agents of change.

The social order is produced and reproduced through linguistic practices and ideologies, and in a multilingual context the use of code-switching has been highly documented as a strategy in identity negotiation. The approach to identity, or rather identities, we take is a constructionist one in which identities are perceived as negotiated and emergent in interpersonal communication (cf.

Bucholtz & Hall 2005). Zhu Hua (2008) demonstrates through the sequential organization of code-switching how conflicts in values and identities are negotiated, mediated and managed in bilingual family interactions. Contrary to the stereotype of the obedient Chinese child, children challenged their parents' positions with multilingual language use contributing to the emergence of new interpersonal relationships and social values. Recent studies of youth language in urban contexts outside the family point to the complex patterns of language contact in interaction involving many languages (Svendsen & Røyneland 2008), with such multilingual practices involved in identity constructions (Quist & Svendsen 2010). These practices have been assigned various names. For example, Otsuji and Pennycook (2010: 240) refer to the phenomenon as “metrolingualism” – “creative linguistic practices across borders of culture, history and politics”. Others prefer “translanguaging” (Li Wei 2011; Garcia & Li Wei 2014). Makoni and Pennycook (2007) and Blommaert (2010) call for the deconstruction of the concept of “language”, preferring the emphasis on *repertoires*, as language boundaries are at times impossible to demarcate in such linguistic practices. There is a need to investigate to what extent these multilingual practices figure within the family and the ideologies associated with them.

Literacy socialization is traditionally relegated to the school (Sterponi 2012). In transcultural families, this usually implies literacy development in the societal language only, whereas multiliteracy may be a goal. Stavans (2012) demonstrates how home literacy practices can in fact contribute to literacy at school among a cultural group that preferred oral not written discourse as the foothold for their literacy-driven parent-child interactions. New social media and computer-mediated discourse provide a platform for language maintenance, identity constructions and multiliteracies (cf. Androutsopoulos 2010). With the introduction of iPad and other similar reading tablets, even toddlers are initiated into mediated linguistic, and more generally semiotic, literacies. A strengthened knowledge base on digital competence and multiliteracies is of utter importance since half of the immigrants to Norway, and their descendants, have, as illustrated by Guthu and Holm (2010), poor digital competence at the same time as the Norwegian government plans to use digital media in order to create a more inclusive society.

In a study concerning second language literacy in a Norwegian context (Golden & Larsen 2005), minority-language students were asked to evaluate their proficiency in the four areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing in both Norwegian and their first language. Results showed that it was the students' oral proficiency that seemed to influence their overall evaluation of their best language. The students that considered their first language to be their best language gave themselves higher points in both listening and speaking in their first language, but not in reading and writing. In fact some of them were not literate in their first language. What is interesting is that even though these students could neither read nor write in their first language (the language of their home), they still considered their first language their “best” language. Issues of identity with the home language appear to be at play in this regard (cf. Svendsen 2009 for similar findings).

Another dimension that potentially brings in literacy in a second language concerns children in transcultural families in which the caregivers may lack second language competence and/or may not be literate. In many such immigrant families, children are selected to be “language brokers”, who translate and interpret for their parents and others, most importantly in institutional settings. In the process of language brokering, “the children may develop a stronger grounding in both languages and cultures, explore and resolve a sense of ethnic identity, and enhance their sense of self-efficacy” (Weisskirch 2010: 80). More research is needed to understand the variables, such as gender and age as well as language competence, that may have influenced the language brokering experience for all involved.

In sum, the five multi-faceted objectives to address how current socio-political and cultural contexts impact FLP in transcultural families in Oslo today require the use of various methodological approaches to study them comprehensively and thoroughly.

## 2.2. Approaches, hypotheses and choice of method

In order to attain our objectives and thus answer our major research question, data collection will

involve a triangulation of methods, including large-scale questionnaire surveys, ethnographic community profiling, focus group interviews, and in-home recordings of interaction. The data will be analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. This comprehensive approach through a triangulation of methods is novel for current research in the field, and highly innovative.

#### (a) **Large-scale survey**

In order to address all of the objectives, we will undertake an initial **large-scale survey** the purpose of which will also be to document the type of multilingualism that is present in Oslo. According to Statistics Norway, 31% of the Oslo population has an immigrant background. These statistics, however, do not reveal the extent of multilingualism in the family, and what languages are involved. Various aspects associated with multilingual FLP will be addressed in the survey; e.g., Spolsky (2012) highlights the neighborhood as well as religion as important variables in language maintenance. Gender variables will also be addressed as well as questions concerning language practices and ideologies. As a point of departure for developing this large-scale survey, we will draw upon the expertise and experience of Professor Annick De Houwer, who undertook a similar survey in Flanders, Belgium, an officially monolingual society, in order to investigate variables involved in active multilingualism (De Houwer 2004, 2007). FAFO (Institute for Labor and Social Research) has extensive experience with data collection among minority groups, and will assist us in the implementation of the survey. Professor Lars Anders Kulbrandstad (Hedmark University College), who has investigated language choice and attitudes among multilinguals in Norway, will also collaborate on the survey. The Language Council of Norway is also involved in the project as their responsibilities have been extended from the Norwegian language in particular to the general language situation of Norway, including minority languages. We will draw on their expertise in mapping the status of language use in Oslo.

The Oslo survey will be advertised locally through many channels and we anticipate a large response. We will engage the software solution *QuestBack*, an online platform geared at large-scale surveys. Our Department has experience with this platform through previous large-scale surveys. Given that some of the relevant populations that we wish to target may not have access to the internet, we will also prepare the survey in a written version to be administered among the respondents. The results from this written alternative will be entered into the online database. We will ensure access to the large-scale survey through advertisement in the local media, schools, health stations, and other community institutions. We will first pilot our survey on a smaller sample.

#### (b) **Ethnographic community profiling**

Through ethnographic community profiling, we will gain important insights concerning the relevant communities. Through previously funded research projects on language socialization, language use and social network among Filipinos in Oslo, ethnographic community profiling of this important group from Southeast Asia has been documented (Svendsen 2004, Lanza & Svendsen 2007). Hence, there is a unique opportunity to explore changes in multilingual family language policy and practices in real time – a methodological approach that is rarely exploited in research.

Although the results of our large-scale survey will point towards interesting groups deserving follow-up study, we will nonetheless aim at profiling two important groups that deserve more attention, particularly in the Norwegian context – the Poles and the Somali. The introduction of the EU's free internal market has contributed to a large immigration of Poles. This work market has contributed to the Poles being one of the largest groups in Oslo (SSB2014). Among the largest groups in Oslo, we also find the Somali, who have emigrated to Norway mainly as refugees. Very different socio-political, economic and cultural contexts have influenced these two groups' migration to, and stay in, Norway; the role of women will be of particular interest across these two groups. These contexts render the study of FLP in their transcultural families particularly interesting from a theoretical, family-structural, and practical perspective. Professor Li Wei (University of London, Birbeck), internationally renowned for his work on community profiling and in-home interactions among multilinguals, will be involved in the project on a collaborative consulting basis.

### (c) Focus group interviews

With the results of the large-scale survey as a background, we will determine the choice of particular groups to follow up with and investigate in depth. **Focus group interviews** will be used to engage participants in discussions relevant to FLP, to reveal their ideologies and practices in regards to language use in the family (cf. our research objectives). Focus group interviews are planned discussions designed to elicit views on a defined area of interest in a non-threatening environment, inviting to a relatively free flow of conversation. Marková *et al.* (2007) promote focus groups as a methodological tool, an analytical means for exploring socially shared knowledge (cf. Golden & Lanza 2012, 2013). We will engage focus group discussions involving members from the same cultural group in addition to discussion groups composed of members from different cultures, considering various gender compositions. We aim to engage in at least 5 focus group discussions of at least one hour of interaction, to be video-recorded. All of the objectives (1 – 5) for this project will be addressed in the focus group interviews.

The types of questions that can stimulate discussion about FLP include, among others, queries concerning support given to the home language and literacy by public and private funding; what types of advice are given to caregivers at health stations and schools; how parents react to what politicians say about language in super-diversity, to what newspapers are writing about language in superdiversity; investigation of literacy practices in the family, including children's use of digital media (iPad, computers, texting, etc.); how parents deal with feedback from schools concerning their children's language development and scholastic performance, to what extent transcultural families socialize their members into contemporary citizenry. Caregivers' conceptions of gender differences in practices will also be addressed.

Explicitly stated ideologies can be traced in such focus group conversations. As a point of departure for investigating *implicit* language ideologies and identity constructions in the focus group discussions, narratives of personal experience will be examined (cf. Golden & Lanza 2012). Brockmeier & Carbaugh (2001:1) point out “the importance of narrative as an expressive embodiment of our experience, as a mode of communication, and as a form for understanding the world and ultimately ourselves”; it is thus an important unit of analysis for identity construction (De Fina 2003). A particularly useful tool for investigating identity construction through ideologies in narratives is the metaphor, as explicated in Conceptual Metaphor Theory (Gibbs 1994; Lakoff & Johnson 1999; Kövecses 2002) (cf. Golden & Lanza 2013). As Cameron (2008: 197) points out, “People use metaphor to think with, to explain themselves to others, to organize their talk, and their choice of metaphor often reveals – not only their conceptualizations – but also, and perhaps more importantly for human communication, their attitudes and values”.

### (d) In-home interactions

Once we have results from the large-scale survey and have begun our focus group interviews, we will select relevant families for recording micro-interactional data in the family. Our selection of families with particular ethnic backgrounds will be based on our preliminary results. This data type focuses on addressing objectives 2, 3, 4 outlined above. We aim to follow at least 3 different families across various types of interactions, resulting in up to at least 10 hours of interactions for each family. Audio recordings will be made by the families (cf. Lanza 2004) while we will make video recordings of each family. Conversational interactions in particular multilingual families will provide us with a close view to language socialization practices and implicit ideologies. A particularly fruitful family gathering for examining language socialization processes is mealtime (Quay 2008). As a starting point, we will use interactional frameworks of analysis provided by Lanza (2004a) and Gafaranga (2010), outlined above, whose works provide a focus on various dimensions of intergenerational transmission of language and child agency. We will also examine instances of “conflict talk”, that is, intergenerational disputes of various kinds, particularly those involving code-switching (cf. Zhu Hua 2008). Variation according to gender will be addressed in the analyses. The data will be transcribed according to established transcription conventions and

entered into a computer database, using the program *Transana*, a tool that combines video and soundfiles for segmenting, labeling and transcribing speech.

The outcomes of the proposed research in this proposal will be theoretically founded analyses that attend to each of the research objectives, all of which address the major research question for the project.

### 3. The project plan, project management, organisation and cooperation

The project plan of activities and milestones is outlined in the application.

The project team members both reinforce their individual points of expertise and complement one another. The project leader **Elizabeth Lanza** has documented leadership experience and demonstrated commitment to research training. She has worked on language socialization in bilingual families with a focus on conversational interactions, as well as language ideology and language policy, and identity constructions in discourse. Personally, Lanza has an immigrant background and experience with raising children bilingually in Norway. **Anne Golden** has expertise in second language acquisition, with a focus on multiliteracy and the use of metaphors in language learning and use. **Bente Ailin Svendsen** also has expertise in second language acquisition with research in youth language in multicultural urban areas, and language socialization in multilingual families. Golden has particular expertise in quantitative methods and extensive experience with focus group interviews. Svendsen employs both qualitative and quantitative methods in her research while Lanza's work is qualitatively oriented. Both Lanza and Golden were part of the nationally funded research project *Language, Culture and Identity in Migrant Narratives* (2008 – 2013), which provides important theoretical underpinnings, competence, and results that feed into the proposed project. Svendsen was one of the leaders of the Oslo team for the nationally funded project *UPUS* project (*Developmental Processes in Urban Linguistic Environments*), which also provides comparable important input to this project. Lanza, Golden and Svendsen will be involved in *all* of the methodological approaches outlined in the proposal. Once the large-scale survey is launched, work on the focus group discussions will begin, and then the family interactions, both informed by ethnographic community profiling. During the overlapping period for the collection of the latter two data types, Golden will have responsibility for the focus group work and Svendsen, for the family recordings. The doctoral and postdoctoral fellows will be involved in this work with their individual research projects.

*MultiFam* was the Norwegian partner of a proposed project for European HERA funding for which Lanza was the Principal Investigator: *Multilingual Encounters in Transcultural Families in Europe (METraFamE)*. Both Golden and Svendsen were part of the Oslo team of the HERA project, along with the teams led by Li Wei (University of London, UK) and Annick De Houwer (Erfurt University, Germany). Our HERA application was one of the 89 shortlisted for the Full Proposal phase. We were ranked among the top 30 applications (from among 593), however, were informed in March 2013 that our project did not receive funding.

The research in this project will draw on multiple synergy effects through its incorporation within the research plans and activities at the Center of Excellence for which Lanza is the Director: *Center for Multilingualism in Society Across the Lifespan – MultiLing* (started June 2013). Golden and Svendsen are also part of the Center and in the core group. MultiLing aims to generate scientific knowledge on individual and societal multilingualism across the lifespan that will address the challenges and potentials multilingualism poses for the individual in the family, school, other institutions, and society in general. The proposed project is in line with the goals of MultiLing and will be part of a research environment that has the competence needed to ensure the success of the project. MultiLing has many collaborating partners at both the national and international levels in addition to those already noted in this proposal. Research seminars, guest lectures, and other research-related activities will provide stimulating events for those working on the project, particularly the fellows. These activities will be part of MultiLing's contribution to the proposed project. Our application for funding focuses on fellowships (1 doctoral and 1 postdoctoral). MultiLing has an ambitious and bold agenda, and seeks at present postdoctoral and doctoral funding

in order to achieve its research ambitions. Hence our present application for funding of *MultiFam* in order to earmark research on family language policy in multilingual transcultural families. Funds for three international guest research stays are also included in the budget to strengthen and ensure international research collaboration during the project period.

#### 4. Key perspectives and compliance with strategic documents

##### 4.1. Compliance with strategic documents

The need to address language socialization in transcultural families is specifically called for in the Official Norwegian Report (NOU 2010: 7<sup>6</sup>; cf. Quist & Svendsen 2010), and motivated by the fact that there are no large-scale Norwegian Census data, as in the Netherlands, Australia and Canada that reveal the status of *de facto* multilingualism in the family, as called for in the White Paper No. 35 (2007-2008): *Mål og mening. Ein heilskapleg språkpolitikk*<sup>7</sup> (cf. *Horizon 2020 Urban Europe*).<sup>8</sup> The proposal is anchored in the University of Oslo (UiO)'s Humanity Faculty's strategic priorities where Multilingualism is singled out as a research area in need of strengthening,<sup>9</sup> and in line with the Department's strategic priorities. Moreover, it is anchored in UiO's strategic priorities as stated in *Quality and Relevance, Academic priorities for research and education at the University of Oslo*: "Language and cultural studies will be further developed in line with increasing globalization and the growth of the multicultural society."<sup>10</sup>

##### 4.2. Relevance and benefit to society

Our project will impact different academic disciplines as well as stakeholders and user communities. It contributes to the development of the new research subfield of FLP by advancing concrete knowledge on variations in specific communities. Furthermore, it contributes to the field of early multilingual acquisition by providing much needed information on input factors that drive multilingual development in children. The body of new knowledge on FLP generated by this project is likely to have significant impact on policy and practice. An understanding of the interrelationships between multilingual practices and identity construction can facilitate an appreciation by wider society of the benefits of multilingualism and what it means to be a contemporary citizen. The project aims to provide knowledge to central policymakers and stakeholders such as heads of schools, teachers and social services, and thereby envisages contributing to decisions on language instruction and potential support. Multilingual, transcultural families and communities themselves will gain from this research by learning from each other about effective multilingual communicative strategies in the family domain, which will in turn promote social well-being in multilingual development (De Houwer, 2013).

##### 4.3. Environmental impact

There is no particular environmental impact involved in this project.

##### 4.4. Ethical perspectives

Consideration of the environment may be construed as being closely linked to research ethics. All research activity will take heed of ethical aspects in regards to data collection and analysis conforming to the requirements of the *Norwegian Data Inspectorate* and as administered through the *Norwegian Social Sciences Data Services* (NSD), its partner for implementation of the statutory data privacy requirements in the research community. Research in the social sciences is often about power relationships, and there are possibilities for developing a research agenda through which both the researcher and the researched can benefit (Lanza 2008). The ethical issues raised here will be an integral part of our work. Feedback to minority communities will be a priority, as noted in our

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/kd/dok/nouer/2010/NOU-2010-7.html?id=606151>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.regjeringen.no/pages/2090873/PDFS/STM200720080035000DDDDPDFS.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm)

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.hf.uio.no/for-ansatte/organisasjon/strategi/Faglige%20prioriteringer%20ved%20HF\\_080229.pdf](http://www.hf.uio.no/for-ansatte/organisasjon/strategi/Faglige%20prioriteringer%20ved%20HF_080229.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.uio.no/forskning/tverrfak/Kvalitet-og-relevans.pdf>

dissemination plan. Moreover, funds are set up in the budget for assistance from the relevant minority groups for various steps in the research process. In this way our projected research is in line with a research process through which both the researcher and the researched can benefit: research *on*, *for* and *with* social subjects.

#### 4.5. Gender issues

We will seriously address equal opportunity in recruitment and promote academic advancement for minorities and gender balance in our recruitment of the doctoral and postdoctoral candidates. The gender perspective, moreover, will also be addressed in our proposed research, as noted above. The research team, including the national and international partners, comprises 4 women and 4 men.

### 5. Dissemination and communication of results

#### 5.1 Dissemination plan

We aim at research articles in international and national channels. Of particular interest are the journals *International Journal of Bilingualism*, *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, *Language in Society*, *International Journal of Multilingualism*, *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, as well as the Nordic journal *NORDAND* (Nordic Journal of Second Language Research), and the national journal *NOA* (Norwegian as a second language).

#### 5.2 Communication with users

In addition to our dissemination plan, we plan an extensive outreach to the public and main stakeholders and users. The senior researchers, especially Svendsen, have a track record of media participation and practical engagement with user audiences.

- Contact with health stations, preschools, schools and management offices involving families.
- Annual open lecture on multilingual FLP to mark May 15, the UN's International Day of Families.
- Website in Norwegian that provides information on, and links to, all aspects of language policy and language use in Norway of potential interest to multilingual families, with a focus on Oslo, with assistance from the Language Council of Norway.
- Q&A online forum through a Facebook page that our research assistant will assist us with
- Cooperation with a family magazine on a special issue on multilingual FLP. Throughout the project, we will publish interviews, results from our research, arrange seminars in collaboration with our user groups.
- Brochures midway and at the end of the project for dissemination of our results.

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