

Code Switching and Language Attitudes of Two 10-11 Years Old Bilingual Child

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Abstract : Estonians and children having Estonian as a one of their languages have lately become the fastest growing minority or bilingual group in Finland which underlines the importance of studying this target group. The acquisition of bilingualism by an infant is affected by many different issues like the child's personal traits, language differences, and different environmental factors such as people's attitudes towards languages and bilingualism. In the early years the most important factor is the children's interaction with their parents and siblings. This poster gives an overview to the material and some preliminary findings of ongoing PhD study concerning code-mixing, code-switching and language attitudes of two bilingual 10-11 year old children. Data was collected from two different bilingual families, one of them living in Tampere, Finland and one of them moved during the study to Tallinn, Estonia. The data includes audio recordings of the families' interactions with their children when they were aged 2-3 years old and then when they were 10-11 years old. The data also includes recorded semi-structured queries of the parents, as well as recorded semi-structured queries of the children when they were in the age of 10-11 years. The features of code-mixing can vary depending on norms or models in the families, or even according to its use by two parents in same family. The practices studied in the ongoing longitudinal case study, based on a framework of ethnography, contain parental conversational strategies and family attitudes as well as CS (code-switching and code-mixing) cases occurring both in children and adult language. The aim of this paper is to find out whether there is a connection between children's attitudes and their daily language use. It would be also interesting to find some evidence, as to whether living in different countries has different impacts on using two languages. The results of dissertation maid give some directional suggestions on how language maintenance of Estonian-Finnish bilinguals could be supported, although generalizations on the base of case study could not be done.

Keywords : code switching, Estonian, Finnish, language attitudes

Conference Title : ICMELT 2016 : International Conference on Multilingual Education, Learning and Teaching

Conference Location : London, United Kingdom

Conference Dates : January 18-19, 2016