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**SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**



**Living in Harmony:**

**Intergenerational Negotiation of Family Language Policy in  
Singapore**

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## Abstract

Studies in Family Language Policy (FLP) have often examined the influences that parents and grandparents have on a child's language development separately (e.g. Curdt-Christiansen, 2016; Ren & Hu, 2013; Ruby, 2012). Yet, it is vital to consider the complex relationships of mutual influence in multi-generational families, especially in collectivistic contexts where grandparents are also key caregivers. This thesis bridges this gap by examining how three young Singaporean-Chinese families with dual-career parents, co-construct FLP with grandparent caregivers who act as surrogate parents while they are at work. Through ethnographic methods of observation and interviews, the study reveals a continuum between parental and grandparent caregiver ideologies ranging from convergent, to conflicting perspectives. Despite the diversity of parental and grandparental ideologies, negotiation of FLP was motivated by cultural values such as harmony and mutual respect, as well as parental recognition of their imposition and dependence on grandparent. This study highlights the agentive role of grandparents in influencing and inserting their ideologies into the day-to-day linguistic practices of the young children. Hence, any discussion of FLP in collectivistic contexts such as Singapore needs to consider the role of any significant caregivers and their part in contributing to the language ecology of the future generation.

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## Chapter 1 Introduction

Recent studies in Family Language Policy (FLP) have actively examined a broad range of family ‘internal’ forces such as child agency (Fogle & King, 2013; Gafaranga, 2010), parent’s beliefs of their children’s developmental potential (Pérez Báez, 2013), and the role of other family members (Curdt-Christiansen, 2013; Gregory et al., 2007), relating these factors to how they influence parental language ideology, practice, and management in the home domain.

Increasingly, more attention is being paid to the pivotal role that grandparents play as caregivers. However, these studies usually examine separately the influence of parents and grandparents on the child’s language development (e.g. Curdt-Christiansen, 2016; Smith-Christmas, 2014; Ren & Hu, 2013, Ruby, 2012). I argue, however, that it is critical to consider the complex relationships of mutual influence in multi-generational families where the grandparents are key caregivers in increasingly prevalent dual-career families. This thesis examines how young Singaporean-Chinese dual-career parents co-construct and negotiate FLP with grandparent caregivers who act as surrogate parents while they are at work, and instantiates how complex relationships and familial ties interact dialectically to demonstrate how culture, “identities, and networks, shape how families view and invest in particular languages” (King, 2016, p. 728).

Building on the premise that both parents and grandparents are volitional agents situated within a complex, culturally-situated social relationship (Low & Goh, 2015), this study seeks to address a significant gap in the literature by highlighting another key ‘internal’ factor within the study of parental language ideologies – the relationship between grandparent caregiver and parents. The thesis draws attention to how grandparents may influence, disrupt, or augment parental language ideologies and consequently, impact language management and practices at home.

## Chapter 2 Literature Review

### 2.1 Introducing Family Language Policy

During its early years, language planning and policy focused mainly on tackling macro scale issues – initially attempting to solve country’s ‘language problems’ (e.g. Fishman, Ferguson, & Dasgupta, 1968), before the field’s scope broadened to critically evaluating language policies as part of “dynamic social, cultural, and ideological systems” (King, Fogle & Logan-Terry, 2008, p. 908) situated mostly within public spheres, institutional contexts, and the workplace (Hornberger, 2015; Ricento, 2006). Yet, over the past decade, increased attention has been directed to studying the ‘ethnography of language policy’ (McCarty, 2011) – that is, the ‘bottom-up’ study of language policy in micro contexts such as that of the home domain (Schwartz, 2010). Scholars have sought to analyse language policy within the home based on key tenets of the language policy model proposed by Spolsky (2004), namely: language ideology (the beliefs people hold about language), language management (the manipulation of language for specific purposes), and language practices (what is done with language). This field, known as Family Language Policy (FLP), has become a critical domain of sociolinguistic inquiry (Spolsky, 2012) and an area of growing interest in the field of sociolinguistics (King, 2016; Caldas, 2012).

FLP endeavours to explain the relationship between the multi-faceted factors that influence planning of language use within the home domain among members of the family (Lanza & Li, 2016; King, Fogle & Logan-Terry, 2008). As with language policy on the macro scale, FLP can be an explicit and overt decision (cf. Shohamy, 2006; Schiffmann, 1996) involving matters such as the selection of ‘appropriate’ languages to be used in different contexts (Dumanig, David, & Shanmuganathan, 2013; Holmes, 2008). Alternatively, it may be covert (Li, 2012), with the family’s implicit beliefs expressed through linguistic practices of the family. Thus, employing ethnographic means of inquiry, FLP provides a powerful lens to show how language policy is mediated, negotiated, understood or misunderstood through careful analysis of overt and covert ideologies as well as practice.

Studies in FLP have recently moved beyond looking at the direct outcomes of language policy in the home domain, where measuring successful bilingualism and the outcome of language

maintenance and shift within multilingual families is only a part of the goal (Lanza & Li, 2016). Instead, scholars are increasingly using FLP as a framework to understand how families, relationships, and identities are being constructed through language by “demonstrat[ing] how...real and imagined futures, identities, and networks shape how families view and invest in particular languages.” (King, 2016, p. 728).

## **2.2 Language ideology within FLP**

Language ideology can be defined succinctly as the beliefs people hold about language and its use (Spolsky, 2004). It is also often regarded as the impetus for subsequent language planning and management (King, Fogle & Logan-Terry, 2008). Yet, as Duranti (2009) highlights, ideologies do not exist in a vacuum as “there is no “view from nowhere” and, instead, any perspective on language is positioned, that is, is imbued with sociopolitical as well as personal investments” (p. 44). Thus, language ideologies can be seen as sociocultural-cognitive constructs (Verschueren, 2012) that are influenced by the confluence of different factors such as the perceived linguistic capital of a language (Bourdieu, 1991), political rhetoric and institutionalized power relations (Kroskrity, 2010), as well as the social and historical roles situated within one’s culture (Irvine, 1989).

In the context of bilingual and multilingual families, macro, family-external factors such as perceived economic value, socio-economic mobility, social desirability and political factors have been found to influence parents’ choice of what languages to speak within the home domain (Baker, 1992; Meyers-Scotton, 2006; Seloni & Sarfati, 2012). For instance, Curdt-Christiansen’s (2009) ethnographic study foregrounds how cultural and socio-economic factors influenced the language ideologies of Chinese immigrant parents regarding their children’s language acquisition and attainment within the multilingual context of Quebec. These parents viewed English as requisite for economic advancement, French as instrumental in providing access to the mostly Francophile Quebecois community, and saw Mandarin as an important symbol of cultural identity that was also requisite for their children to understand and appreciate their rich cultural heritage.

In addition, government policies on language use and education can also be pivotal family-external factors that influence parental language ideologies. Studies have shown that government policies can be persuasive in getting citizens to adopt particular language ideologies,

such as in Lane's (2010) case study of Kven speakers in Norway where she examined how state policies influenced speakers of the minority language Kven to switch to speaking Norwegian to their children.

These state policies may also be woven into educational policies, as seen in the case of Singapore. Despite the island state having four official languages – English, Mandarin, Malay, and Tamil, English is privileged as the 'First Language' and the language of administration, law, and business (Bolton & Ng, 2014; Tan, 2006) while the three other languages are designated as Mother Tongue Languages (MTLs)<sup>1</sup> which are supposed to act as cultural anchors to the ethnic heritage of different ethnic groups in multicultural Singapore (Rubdy & Tupas, 2009; Shepherd, 2005). The state also emphasizes bilingualism as its cornerstone of the education system (Ministry of Education, 2013) and integrates a bilingual curriculum that begins even at the pre-school level and continues throughout a child's education journey at least until the completion of secondary level education (Curdt-Christiansen & Sun, 2016). However, the disproportionate allocation of curriculum time such that nearly all subjects are taught in English has led scholars to draw parallels between MTL education in Singapore with 'language arts' or second-language classes (David, Cavallaro, & Coluzzi, 2009; Zhao & Zhang, 2014). Moreover, the fact that English is used as the testing medium in all national examinations for the humanities, arithmetic, and the sciences further strengthens the perception that English is the language to master for opportunity and advancement (Ng, 2014). Consequently, this English-privileging bilingual education system has resulted in the assignment of greater prestige and pragmatic value to English (Cavallaro & Ng, 2014), which scholars attribute as being a key factor in influencing parent's ideology regarding what 'successful' language development means for Singaporean children (Curdt-Christiansen, 2015; Leung & Uchikoshi, 2012).

Other recent studies using FLP as a framework to understand macro-level factors influencing parental language ideology have also examined the effect of immigration pressure (Barkhuizen, 2006; Schwartz, 2010), religious language policy (Moore, 2015), and educational empowerment (Fogle & King, 2013). Collectively, these studies underscore the significant impact of external factors in influencing parental language ideologies.

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that the definition of 'First Language' and MTL in Singapore do not correspond to the common linguistic definition of the terms, as English is prescribed as the 'First Language' of Singaporeans, while MTLs are assigned according to an individual's race or paternal ethnicity (Gupta, 1994).

In addition to family-external, macro factors influencing parental language ideologies, Fogle (2013) calls for more research on family-internal factors – factors that shape ideologies from within the family unit. Some previously examined internal factors include studies of how parental judgements about the inherent abilities of their children (Pérez Báez, 2013), cultural beliefs about child-rearing (Harkness & Super, 2006) and ‘bottom-up’ interactions such as child agency (Fogle, 2012; Gafaranga, 2010) may shape parental language ideologies, in turn influencing language management and practices within the home.

Of special relevance to this study is the line of family-internal research which draws attention to how family members such as siblings, relatives, and grandparents can contribute significantly to the child’s language development (Curdt-Christiansen, 2013; Meek, 2007; Gregory et al., 2007). For instance, recent ethnographic research by Smith-Christmas (2014) examined a grandmother’s role and the impact relative to other family members on her grandchildren’s acquisition and maintenance of Gaelic in a Scottish family. Her findings suggest that despite the seemingly favourable home environment within which the child’s mother and grandmother actively use Gaelic in their interaction with their children (e.g. in reading, and engaging the children with questions), the fact that the child’s father was socializing the children to the majority language resulted in no observable advantage in the family’s maintenance of Gaelic. Moreover, Curd-Christiansen’s (2013) comparison of Quebecois and Singaporean multilingual families highlights how grandparents can play important roles in a child’s language development and literacy practices; while Ruby’s (2012) research suggests that grandparents are key figures who can make heritage language learning meaningful and relevant for the children, contributing to the successful intergenerational transmission of heritage languages.

Yet, negotiating FLP between members of the family who play a significant role in a child’s language development is not always easy, as King, Fogle, and Logan-Terry (2008) suggest: “the family sphere can become a crucible for such ideological conflicts” (p. 911). While several studies have shed light on how grandparents and relatives influence child language development within the framework of FLP, these studies have usually focused on the relationship or interaction between grandparents and the child in question. This leaves open a significant research gap as we may enquire: how do parents and grandparents negotiate different language ideologies and FLP in collectivistic cultural contexts where grandparents are significant

caregivers to their grandchildren? This is highly relevant given the increasing number of dual-career working families around the globe, where grandparents increasingly take on dominant roles in caregiving, at times interacting with their grandchildren for the greater part of the day and acting as surrogate parents while the child's parents are working. Consequently, this study seeks to augment existing research by drawing attention to how FLP is negotiated between parents and family members who have a significant stake in a child's development, especially in collectivistic cultural contexts, thus providing greater insight as to how language ideologies and family language policy is negotiated in the home domain.

## **2.3 Socio-cultural context: Dual-career Chinese Singaporean families**

### **2.3.1 Dual-income households: A Growing Trend**

Dual-income households, defined as a family in which both husband and wife are working, is a prevalent trend in many countries in the twenty-first century (Wheatley & Wu, 2014). The last century has seen an increase in woman's rights activists actively campaigning for gender equality in the workplace and family, which, in conjunction with greater accessibility to higher education and closing income gaps, has increasingly redefined traditional family roles of husband and wife (Rupanner, 2015; Ferree, 2010; 1990). Women are increasingly likely to choose to remain employed even after setting up their families, and many seek to further their careers and climb the proverbial 'corporate ladder' (Neault & Pickerell, 2005). Thus, the notion of working, married mothers that was once "seen as an exception, has now become the rule" (Parker & Arthur, 2004, p. 4).

In fact, approximately two out of three mothers with young children below the age of six continue to work full-time in developed countries such as the United Kingdom (Cory & Stirling, 2015), United States (U.S. Department of Labour, 2015), Canada (Sinha, 2015), and Australia (Doley, Bell, Watt, & Simpson, 2015). In recent years, this demographic trend has also become a dominant social paradigm among young Singaporeans. Data from the 2015 General Household Survey (Singapore Department of Statistics, 2016a) suggests an increasing, upward trend in the number of dual-career families since 2000 with a 14% increase in dual-career families in the last five years (6 percentage points increase), a significant doubling as compared to similar periods

from 2000 to 2010 (see Figure 1 next page). In fact, in 2015, the proportion of dual-career families overtook single-income families in Singapore.

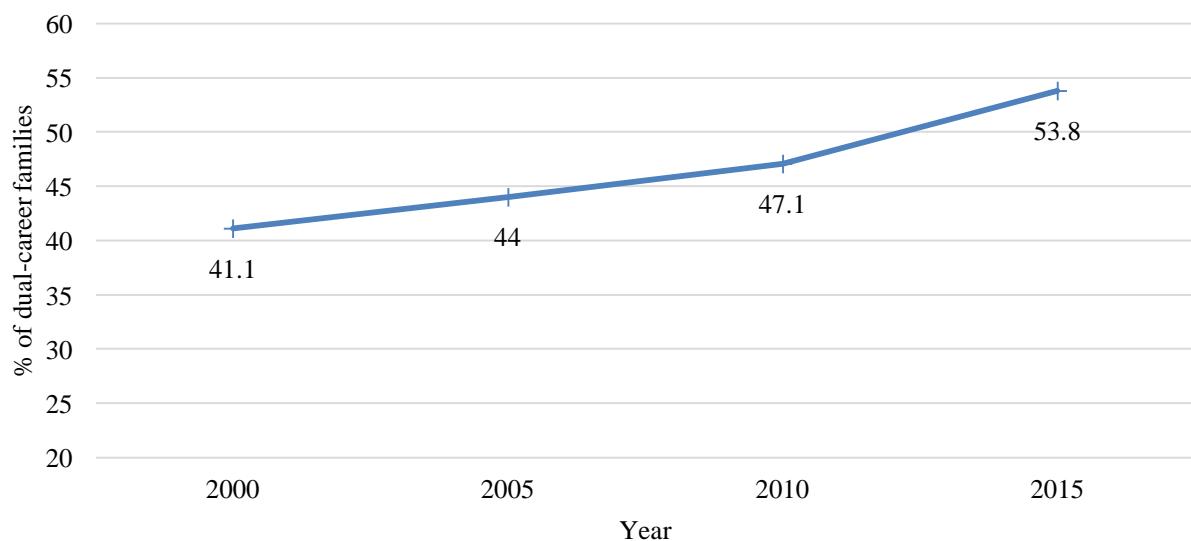


Figure 1. Percentage of dual-career families from year 2000 to 2015 according to census data (Singapore Department of Statistics, 2016a).

Moreover, the 2015 census findings highlight a growing trend of dual-career households across every age group surveyed when comparing detailed data from 2010 and 2015. Significantly, three-in-four young married families surveyed with husbands below 35 years of age were dual-income families in (Figure 2).

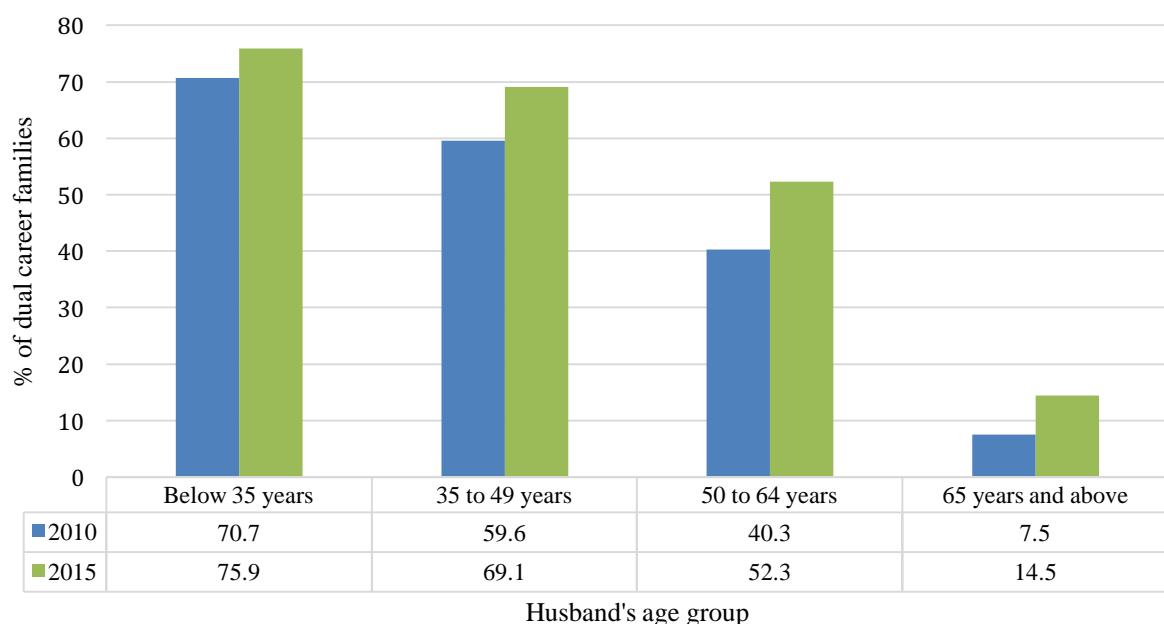


Figure 2. Comparison of dual-career families by husband's age group based on 2010 and 2015 census data (Singapore Department of Statistics, 2016b).

As a result of both parents remaining in the workforce, many dual-career couples seek child care arrangements to assist them in taking care of their young children. These arrangements range from sending the child to full-day infant/childcare centres, engaging domestic helpers as babysitters, and engaging in familial caregiving<sup>2</sup> (Tan, 2015). Of these arrangements, familial caregiving, especially those involving grandparents as caregivers, is Singaporeans' preferred choice. In a survey of the 'Social Attitudes of Singaporeans' conducted by the National Family Council (2011), eight in ten respondents believed that grandparents had a part to play in raising their grandchildren. This result is consistent with previous studies such as that of Thang, Mehta, Usui and Tsuruwaka (2011), which suggests that parents view grandparent caregivers as key figures for mentoring, nurturing, and as a role model to their children.

In addition to how grandparents are deeply trusted to put the interests of their grandchildren first (Wheelock & Jones, 2002), parents are further incentivized by the Singapore government to strive for greater intergenerational support for the family unit (Low & Goh, 2015). This is evident from the government's implementation of comprehensive support mechanisms such as the construction of 'three-generation' public housing to cater to the demand for multi-generational living (Ministry of National Development, 2014), as well as tax relief under the 'Grandparent Caregiver Relief' and 'Working Mother's Child Relief' schemes (Inland Revenue Authority of Singapore, 2016) that work in tandem to motivate parents to remain in the workforce and also encourage grandparents to take up the role of caregivers in the now ubiquitous dual-income families (Lee, 2013).

Thus, it is not surprising that one third of Singaporean grandparents reportedly provide regular care for their grandchildren and in fact, 25% of local households with children below 13 years of age cite grandparents as the predominant caregivers for their children (Ministry of Social and Family Development, 2015). In sum, given the growing trend of young dual-income families, intergenerational caregiving in Singapore is not aberrant but rather, a very common practice.

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<sup>2</sup> Familial caregiving refers to engaging the services of other members in one's extended family (e.g. grandparents, relatives) to take over caregiving duties while parents are at work.

### 2.3.2 Negotiating caregiving: Cultural values and corresponding tensions

Scholars within the field of family and intergenerational studies have also recognized the significant role of grandparents who take part in the raising of their grandchildren in contemporary Asian families. In seeking to understand the expectations for grandparents as caregivers of various dual-income families, researchers have found that grandparents posited diverse responses varying on a wide continuum. These range from excitement in being able to be a part of the child's development and feeling a strong sense of duty to nurture and mentor them (Thang et al., 2011; Thiele & Whelan, 2006), to considering it an unfortunate chore that deprived them of autonomy and freedom (Doley, Bell, Watt & Simpson, 2015). In spite of the heterogeneity of responses, one overarching theme consistent for the majority of grandparents is the importance of maintaining inter-generational harmony. This was a core concern that caused them to fear negative repercussions when their children, who are now parents of young children, asked for their help to provide caregiving support while they pursued their careers. This sentiment is also echoed in Low and Goh's (2015) recent study of ethnically Chinese Singaporean grandparent caregivers, where some grandparents interviewed sought to maintain harmony within the family by choosing to suppress their own views at times and defer to their children's suggestions while using ambivalence as a coping mechanism. However, the study did not explore the interaction between the parents and grandparents, neither did it examine the parent's reactions to the grandparent caregiver's ambivalence.

The maintenance of harmony is a cornerstone for the Chinese inter-generational family, and one that requires careful negotiation. Harmony refers to the Confucian ideal exemplified as propriety within the scope of interpersonal relationships – in other words, knowing one's place in the hierarchy of relationships when interacting with others, and acting in accordance with expected roles and norms (Baldwin, Means-Coleman, González & Shenoy-Packer, 2014; Mackerras, 2006). In addition, the broader notion of 不要伤了和气 *bu4yao4shang1le4he2qi4* “not destroying harmony” has frequently been cited as pivotal concepts for relations on both the societal and individual levels (Kolstad & Gjesvik, 2013). These notions are also considered within the theory of face negotiation (Brown & Levinson, 1978), where research in the domain of cultural communication suggests that collectivistic societies and cultures tend to be more concerned with the face of the other (Baldwin et al., 2014) and thus, predicting that interlocutors

are more likely to choose conflict avoidance strategies such as yielding and accommodating (Ting-Toomey, 2014; 2005).

Consequently, there is a need for parents and grandparent caregivers to collaboratively negotiate this complex relationship with dialectical tensions. On the one hand, parents may try to defer and suppress certain views in a bid to alleviate the tension of impinging on grandparents' autonomy (Negative Face) as the grandparents take up the responsibility to stand in as 'surrogate parents' for their children while they focus on their careers (Mehta & Thang, 2008). On the other hand, as much as parents recognise their need for the grandparents' assistance, many are also wary of them being 'overly involved' in matters such as the disciplining of their children (Breheny, Stephens & Spilsbury, 2013).

Thus, even if grandparents adopt a certain level of deference and non-interference to maintain harmony, they must also be considered as volitional agents who possess their own values and ideologies (Low & Goh, 2015). Moreover, within traditional Chinese culture, they are regarded as being 'higher up' on the social hierarchy of familial relationships as 前輩 *qian2 bei4* "elders" who are to be respected for their wisdom and experience (Thiele & Whelan, 2006). Hence, it is within such a complicated web of conflicting considerations that parents and grandparent caregivers negotiate this seemingly 'paradoxical' relationship, as FLP is "rarely a neutral, uncontested state of affairs" (Garrett, 2011, p. 516).

Such tensions are implicitly alluded to in the comparative examination of a Chinese Singaporean household and a Chinese immigrant household conducted by Li and Hu (2013). While the qualitative study examines how FLP and literacy practices are influenced by parental ideology and previous life experiences, the research is relevant to this current thesis as it describes how a domineering grandmother caregiver vehemently insists on speaking only Mandarin to her grandchildren while also encouraging the parents to speak more Mandarin at home. The article describes how parents allowed the grandmother to dictate what language choices and practices should be used in the home without going into detail about the reasons, motivations, or process. In addition, Curd-Christiansen (2016) recently highlighted the existence of conflicting ideologies between family members that resulted in conflicting language practices and expectations of their children, but the paper's main contribution was to shed light on how these mismatched ideologies and practices explain the trend of shift to English language as the

dominant household language in Singapore. Hence, there exists a need to consider how parental language ideologies are influenced by this uniquely interdependent relationship that is negotiated between grandparent caregivers and parents situated within specific cultural contexts. In addition, there is a need to train our focus on the outcome of linguistic practice of young children brought up in this tangled web.

## 2.4 Research focus

In answering the call for more insight into how “*families are constructed through multilingual language practices, and how language functions as a resource for this process of family making and meaning making.*” (King, 2016, p. 3), this thesis takes an inter-disciplinary approach and draws on concepts from fields such as cultural communication, family studies, anthropology, and sociolinguistics to provide answer the following questions:

- How is FLP negotiated between parents and grandparent caregivers in dual-career multilingual households within traditionally collectivistic and relatively hierarchical cultures?
- What are some factors motivating these negotiations?

## Chapter 3 Methods

### 3.1 Participating families: Selection and criteria

Three young families who relied on grandparents as the primary caregivers while parents were working were invited to participate in this study. Parents of potential participating families were personally interviewed to confirm that they met the following criteria:

- Singaporeans of Chinese ethnicity
- Parents and grandparent caregivers had no prior formal training in linguistics
- Both parents aged 35 and below
- Both parents employed full-time in external work<sup>3</sup> for at least 8 hours a day during a typical work week (i.e. Monday-Friday)

In addition, each family was chosen to reflect different strata on the continuum of Socio-Economic Status (SES), namely: high, middle, and low. Stratification was based on two measures: firstly, gross household income that was matched to the 25<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> percentile figures taken from the 2015 Survey on Household Income of Singapore (Singapore Department of Statistics, 2016b). Secondly, the participant families were grouped according to the level of educational achievement attained by parents and grandparents, according to the criteria set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Family profiles: Caregivers' education and occupations.

Family	SES	Child/age	Caregivers	Highest Education Received / Country	Occupation
1.	High SES (Gross household income above \$20,000/month)	YZ/3	Father Mother Grandfather (Paternal) Grandmother (Paternal)	B.Engr./USA B.A./Australia M.Sc./UK M.A./UK	Engineer Pre-school Teacher Lecturer Adjunct Lecturer (Retired)
2.	Middle SES (Gross household income approx. \$8,000/month)	JR/4 JN/2½	Father Mother Grandfather (Maternal) Grandmother (Maternal)	Diploma/Singapore B.A./Singapore O' Levels/Singapore O' Levels /Singapore	Engineering Technician Clerical Administrator Police Officer (Retired) Pre-school teacher (Retired)
3.	Lower SES (Gross household income approx. \$5,000/month)	CR/3	Father Mother Grandfather (Paternal) Grandmother (Paternal)	Diploma/Singapore Diploma/Singapore Primary Education/Singapore No formal education	Immigrations Officer Nurse Gardener (Retired) Chef (Retired)

<sup>3</sup> External work implies parents' jobs require them to be out of the house vis-à-vis working from home.

## **3.2 Methods of data collection and analysis**

### **3.2.1 Theoretical underpinnings**

Ethnographic tools of inquiry have been widely used to elucidate FLP as they provide rich, detailed, and nuanced data for analyses (King, 2016; Hallberg, 2006). One commonly used method involves interviewing as a means of directly eliciting participant's ideology, beliefs, and context-situated identities (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). These "ethnographies about self and society" (Denzin, 2001, p.24) can reveal the intricacies of language use and management, and are valuable tools in the study of FLP.

However, using interviews as a sole data source have led to concerns about interviewees trying to give socially desirable responses and describing what they should do instead of what they actually did in a situation (Alsaawi, 2014; Kaushal, 2014; Puri, 2010). To mitigate such concerns, regular participant observation was carried out to complement interviews with the three families. Participant observation of various interactions and day-to-day occurrences in different households allows researchers an in-depth and contextualized look at a particular social phenomenon (Swanborn, 2010). It should be noted that participant families were all close friends or relatives of the researcher whom the researcher had known for at least ten years. This familiarity allowed for a high level of participant comfort and disclosure necessary to obtain audio recordings of family behaviour and conduct interviews in a casual and naturalistic setting.

Finally, to provide a rich and contextualized frame of reference to inform the subsequent interpretation of family dynamics and participant ideologies, a detailed summary of each participant family's linguistic, educational, and economic background, as well as a day to day schedule of the children's interactions were collated. Taken together, participant observation, interviews, and the detailed family profiles provide a holistic and robust 'snapshot' of each family's FLP.

### **3.2.2 Data collection procedure**

Firstly, an informal interview was conducted with each potential family to assess their suitability for this research study. Approximately eight families were contacted, and three met

the criteria and were willing to participate. A second interview was then conducted to obtain participating families' key demographic data, linguistic background, language use, and daily schedules (See Appendix A).

Next, participant observation was carried out once every two to three weeks over a period of four months at the convenience of the participating families. All interactions were recorded with multiple ZOOM H4N audio recorders placed in the dining area and play areas to provide better coverage of interactions during the recording sessions. To ensure comparable observation of activities across families, recording sessions were usually conducted in the early evening approximately half an hour before the parents returned from work and lasted till around 9pm. These recordings captured a wide range of interactions including family conversations over meals, caregiver-child interaction during playtime, caregiver reading habits, and mundane daily activities, thus providing a broad view of the family's language practices. Each recording session lasted for approximately 120 minutes, and more than 1,400 minutes of interactional data were recorded in total for all three families.

At the end of the four-month period, semi-structured interviews were conducted with parents and grandparents to directly elicit their ideologies, concerns, practices, and views either in person at their residence or over the telephone if it was more convenient for them (See Appendix B for sample questionnaire). Interviews were carried out in mixture of English and Mandarin as per the participant's preference, and typically lasted 20-30 minutes. Detailed transcripts for each interview with different caregivers can be found in Appendix C.

In addition to formal interviews, field notes were taken during informal conversations with family members (See Appendix D for samples) as they were not recorded. These informal dialogues were not used as primary data but were used as supplementary context for the transcription and analysis of data.

### **3.2.3 Data analysis**

Grounded theory was used as a theoretical basis for analysis of qualitative data from the different families. Grounded theory emphasizes the need to examine data reflexively to allow for constant discovery and comparison without trying to fit them to preconceived structures, themes, and ideas (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Grounded theory has been used and further developed by others (e.g. Altheide, 1987; Birks & Mills, 2011) to show how the researcher can

find out what is going on within the situational and cultural context by observing new connections that inform the subsequent interpretation and ‘sense making’ of data collected. One such method that has been used for this study is ethnographic content analysis (cf. Altheide, 1987; Altheide, 2008), which allows for constant discovery and comparison of the data collected, with the process of data collection and interpretation being guided incrementally by the process itself.

Audio recordings were transcribed and preliminarily analysed in isolation after each interview, upon which any salient points, patterns or themes were noted. Subsequently, the analyses for both the participant observations and interviews for each family were cross-compared to augment the preliminary analyses. Thereafter, data from all three families was collectively analysed to elucidate any similar consensuses, struggles, perspectives, and themes.

In the next section, I present the findings of the data collected. Firstly, I present each family’s general language environment and the child’s daily schedule to provide a rich background for understanding each family’s unique language ideologies and language management practices. Following that, salient parental language ideologies are identified and these provide the context for the discussion of the research questions:

- How is FLP negotiated between parents and grandparent caregivers in dual-career households within traditionally collectivistic and relatively hierarchical cultures?
- What are some factors motivating these negotiations?

## Chapter 4 Findings and Discussion

### 4.1 Description of the three participating families

#### YZ's family

YZ is taken care of by his paternal grandparents while his parents are at work, and English is the de facto family language as agreed to by all members of the family. As seen from his daily schedule in Table 2, YZ's linguistic input is virtually always in English, even though his parents and caregivers reported having proficiency in English and Mandarin. Significantly, this family is rated as one with high SES due to high income and because all family members have studied in tertiary institutions, while YZ's grandparents even have Master's degrees from the UK and were lecturers in tertiary institutions such as universities and polytechnics.

Table 2. YZ's schedule on weekdays.

Time	Activity	People involved	Language(s) used
0630-0730	Wake up and prepare for school	Parents (50%), Grandparents (50%)	English
0730-0815	Travels to school with Grandfather on the train	Grandfather	English
0815-1200	Attends kindergarten	-	Bilingual curriculum where there are Mandarin classes daily.
1200-1230	Returns home from kindergarten	Grandmother	Grandmother converses with the child in English, though sometimes plays Mandarin songs for him in the car.
1230-1300	Lunch	Grandmother	English
1300-1330	Bath	Grandmother	English
1330-1600	Afternoon nap	-	-
1600-1620	Fruit and Reading	Grandmother	English books are read virtually all the time, but they will try to introduce some Mandarin vocabulary such as the name of the fruit being consumed.
1620-1745	Playtime (e.g. Playing at his sand pit, running around the garden)	Grandparents	-
1745-1830	Goes for a walk at the neighbourhood park (e.g. Introduced to fauna and flora)	Grandfather	English
1830-1900	Dinner	Grandmother	English
1900-2000	Supervised Playtime	Parents (50%), Grandparents (50%)	English
2000-2030	Bath	Father/Mother	English
2030-2115	Bible stories, family prayer, drinks milk and prepares for bed	Father/Mother	English. All family prayers are in English.
2115	Bedtime	-	-

#### JS and JN's family

JS and JN are dropped off at their grandparent's apartment every morning before their parents head to work, and the next time the children see their parents is at approximately 7:30pm (1930hrs) when they return to have dinner. While JS just started attending a full-day childcare, his sister JN essentially spends the entire day in the care of her grandmother. JS and JN's

grandparents, having only attained secondary school levels of education, and are more comfortable speaking in Mandarin. Hence, barring communicating with their parents, most of the children's language input at their grandparent's home is in Mandarin, as seen from their full day schedules in tables 3 and 4 respectively.

Table 3. JN's schedule on weekdays.

Time	Activity	People involved	Language(s) used
0700-0800	Wake up, prepare and leave for grandparent's place	Parents	English (75%), Mandarin (25%)
0800-0820	Breakfast (milk)	Grandmother	Mandarin
0820-0845	Play/take a short nap	Grandmother	Mandarin
0840-0900	Shower and freshen up	Grandmother	Mandarin
0900-0920	Feeding JN fruit	Grandmother	Mandarin
0920-1000	Accompany grandma to the market	Grandmother	Mandarin
1000-1100	Playtime at the neighbourhood playground	Grandmother	Mandarin
1100-1130	Freshen up, prepare for lunch	Grandmother	Mandarin
1130-1215	Lunch	Grandmother	Mandarin
1215-1330	Supervised play (Includes reading storybooks, listening and singing songs together.)	Grandmother	Mandarin
1330-1400	Time for milk	Grandmother	Mandarin
1400-1630	Afternoon nap	-	-
1630-1645	Accompany grandfather to pick brother from the childcare centre	Grandfather	Mandarin
1645-1730	Playtime at the playground with brother	Grandfather	Mandarin
1730-1740	Walk home	Grandfather	Mandarin
1740-1815	Fruits and Playtime with brother	Grandmother	Mandarin
1815-1845	Freshen up, prepare for dinner	Grandmother	Mandarin
1845-1930	Dinner	Grandmother	Mandarin
1930-2100	Supervised play, storybook reading	Grandparents (40%), Parents (60%)	Grandmother: Mandarin Parents: English (80%), Mandarin (20%)
2100-2115	Pack up and leave for home	Parents	-
2115-2150	Travel home (Children listen to classical music and English songs on the ride home)	Parents	Mixed use of both English and Mandarin
2150-2230	Prepare for bed	Parents	English (70%), Mandarin (30%)
2230	Bedtime	-	-

Table 4. JS's schedule on weekdays.

Time	Activity	People involved	Language(s) used
0700-0800	Wake up, prepare for school and leave for school	Parents	English (75%) and Mandarin (25%)
0800-1645	Childcare	-	English is used primarily at the childcare centre.
1645-1730	Playtime at the playground with sister	Grandfather	Mandarin
1730-1740	Walk home	Grandfather	Mandarin
1740-1815	Fruits and Playtime	Grandmother	Mandarin
1815-1845	Freshen up, prepare for dinner	Grandmother	Mandarin
1845-1930	Dinner	Grandmother	Mandarin
1930-2100	Playtime, storybook reading by parents, review of the day's activities in school with parents	Grandparents (40%), Parents (60%)	Grandparents: Mandarin Parents: English (80%), Mandarin (20%)
2100-2115	Pack up and leave for home	Parents	-
2115-2150	Travel home (Children listen to classical music and English songs on the ride home)	Parents	Mixed use of both English and Mandarin
2150-2230	Prepare for bed	Parents	English (70%), Mandarin (30%)
2230	Bedtime	-	-

## CR's family

CR's family presents an interesting arrangement in which she spends up to 6 days of the week at her grandparent's place. With both her parents working unpredictable and variable shifts throughout the week, she is usually dropped off at her grandparent's home on Sunday nights, and only returns to her parent's home the following Saturday morning. As CR's grandfather continues to work to support the family, the main source of caregiving, supervision, and linguistic input is from her grandmother (Table 5). Though CR's grandparents speak Mandarin and Teochew fluently, Mandarin is the dominant home language used for communication as CR's parents are unfamiliar with Teochew. CR also receives some English input from her parents, though their interaction with her is limited to a daily window spanning approximately an hour before her bedtime as they<sup>4</sup> usually arrive at the grandparent's home for dinner at roughly 8pm (2000hrs).

Table 5. CR's schedule on weekdays.

Time	Activity	People involved	Language(s) used
0745-0800	Wake up	Grandmother	Mandarin
0800-0820	Drink Milk	Grandmother	Mandarin
0820-1000	Reading, supervised play (e.g. puzzles)	Grandmother	Mandarin
1000-1100	Watching cartoons on the local English-medium channel, Okto	Grandmother	Mandarin
1100-1130	Self-regulated play (e.g. puzzles, dolls)	Grandmother	Mandarin
1130-1200	Bath time and water play	Grandmother	Mandarin
1200-1300	Lunch	Grandmother	Mandarin
1300-1630	Afternoon nap	-	-
1630-1700	Drink milk	Grandmother	Mandarin
1700-1830	Self-regulated play while grandmother prepares dinner	Grandmother	Mandarin
1830-1930	Dinner	Grandmother	Mandarin
1930-2100	Playtime with parents	Parents (70%), Grandparents (30%)	Mandarin (Grandparents, mother), English (Father)
2100-2200	Prepare for bed	Parents	Mandarin (Mother), English (Father)
2200	Bedtime	-	-

Considering both family demographic data and children's daily schedules together provides a broad-brush understanding of the diverse family backgrounds, provides context to understand certain ideologies that parents and grandparent caregivers may hold.

## 4.2 Parental language ideologies

Spolsky (2004) suggests that language ideology can be an important basis for language management. While parents from all three families agreed that bilingualism was important for their children, their ideologies differed in extent of belief that it was important to give each

<sup>4</sup> Due to the unpredictable nature of CR's parents working shifts, it is not uncommon for only one parent to be around at night on weekdays.

language equal emphasis and in their methods to foster bilingualism. In the following section, I detail how different parental language ideologies result in different efforts at language planning and management in each of the families.

#### **4.2.1 Beliefs about the importance of bilingualism and multilingualism**

“I believe it is important for the child to be as multilingual as possible. Erm, but if you were to ask me to balance between that and overall studies, I think the child has to be fluent in at least one, capable of comprehending and writing in another, then focus on the rest.” – YZ’s father (Transcript 1, Line 2)

Despite his parents affirming the importance of bilingualism for pragmatic and communicative purposes (Transcript 1, Lines 3 & 5), YZ’s linguistic input is virtually always in English during the 13 hours he spends awake as seen in his usual daily schedule (Table 3). Any Mandarin exposure is mostly limited to Chinese lessons at kindergarten on weekdays and an additional 1.5 hour Chinese enrichment class on Saturdays. Despite his initial commitment to raising a multilingual child, YZ’s father later alludes to English as the key language to learn, echoing verbatim the state’s rhetoric (cf. Lee, 2000) that he should acquire the “language of commerce [and] the language of trade” (Transcript 1, Line 5). In fact, YZ’s father is explicit about the prioritization of English over Mandarin, stating that

if he has a whole myriad of other subjects that he has to cope with, then the emphasis will be on a single language, the examinable language, which in this case is English so that he can comprehend the questions and answer well. (Transcript 1, Line 15)

This view highlights the pragmatic concerns of YZ’s parents, as they try to give their children a competitive edge over their peers even from a young age in hopes of affording them better educational opportunities and career prospects, a perspective that is also held by many other young adults and parents in Singapore (Xie & Cavallaro, 2016; Teng, 2015). As previous research in Taiwan by Jao and McKeever (2006) correlated parent’s level of education with their child’s eventual educational attainment, it is possible that YZ’s parents view English as a core-requisite for their son’s educational and career success and consequently, his parents are willing to downplay the importance of bilingualism and let Mandarin “take a back seat” (Transcript 1, Line 15) to let YZ focus on other academic areas such as arithmetic and the sciences. This view also hints at a common misconception where parents see learning more than one language as metaphorically taking up additional, competing ‘mental space’ which

they feel could be detrimental to their child's mastery of a one language (Grosjean, 2010). Indeed, the language ideologies of YZ's parents reflect how pragmatism and parental beliefs about their child's language and cognitive capabilities may combine to shape ideologies that hinder the thriving of bilingualism in the home domain.

In stark contrast to YZ's family, CR's parents and grandparents view multilingualism as an asset for communication with others (Transcript 5, Line 16). Her parents stress the importance of being proficient in English as it is the *lingua franca* in Singapore, yet without neglecting Mandarin, which they believe represents an ethnic Chinese Singaporean's roots and cultural heritage (Transcript 5, Line 6). Furthermore, as seen in the extract from an interview below (Example 1), CR's parents overtly express interest in letting their daughter learn more languages by enlisting the help of CR's grandparents to expose her to "some dialect"<sup>5</sup>, highlighting their support for a multilingual upbringing as they believe that CR is able to acquire more than just English and Mandarin at her age.

Example 1. Interview with CR's parents regarding language choice and ideology (Transcript 5, Lines 13-18).

- |            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Researcher | Do you guys as parents consciously choose what language each person will speak to your children? Like, do you state that the grandparents must use Mandarin, or English or something to that effect?                                                                                                                       |
| Mother     | In <i>dialect</i> also, if they can lah. I mean my mum-in-law can speak simple English, so sometimes she will teach her in simple English, but mostly Mandarin lah, but sometimes I also ask my parents or parents-in-law, because they can now absorb more, to <b>also teach her some dialect</b> .                       |
| Researcher | Why would you do that?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Mother     | Hmmm, don't want to lose lor. Like for me I cannot speak, so for my daughter if she can speak also quite good I mean, of course you know more language right, you can <b>converse with more people</b> right.                                                                                                              |
| Researcher | And for you (referring to CR's father)?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Father     | Yeah, <b>I always ask my mum to speak to her in Hokkien, or like 客家话 ke4jia1hua4 “Hakka language”</b> , but maybe it's like difficult so she stopped after a while. I wish to introduce it to her at a young age. [be]cause like during about 3 years old <b>they can absorb more languages</b> , that's what I think lah. |

It is clear that the ideology of CR's parents with regard to bi/multilingualism differs from that of YZ's parents on two levels. Firstly, YZ's parents believe that learning additional languages

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<sup>5</sup> In the Singapore context, 'dialect' differs from the common linguistic definition as it is used to describe a number of *mutually unintelligible* Chinese varieties such as Hokkien, Cantonese, Teochew, Hakka, and Hainanese. This point is elaborated upon further on the next page.

may hamper his proficiency in acquiring mastery of the English language, while CR's parents view multilingualism as an asset of great communicative value. Secondly, while YZ's parents seem to have their language ideologies shaped by their own success and the pressures of pragmatism and economic mobility, CR's parents hope to let CR acquire some understanding of these 'dialects', which are not examinable subjects, ruling out any impetus to prepare her for primary school, and arguably, do not provide any tangible benefits with regard to improving her career prospects or equipping her to climb the proverbial corporate ladder.

Yet, it was also interesting to find that JS and JN's (abbreviated henceforth as JJ) parents share the same ideological mindset as CR's parents – that learning more than one language will not be an impediment, instead, viewing it is an asset for their child. They too encourage multilingualism and the learning of other Chinese 'dialects' with their children, as seen in her mother's response in excerpt below (Example 2):

Example 2. Interview with JJ's parents (Transcript 3, Lines 54-55).

Researcher So, do you encourage or discourage the grandparents from using any kind of language with your children?

Mother 隨便 *sui2bian4*, “anything” lor. **If they want to speak dialect also better.** If they can lah...if they know how to, erm...because it's a good skill lah. Not like [in] my time, they only 多讲华语 *duo1jiang3hua2yu3* “*speak more mandarin*” right, so **we lost the benefits of speaking or knowing like dialects.** So, if they can, they are able to learn, or get a chance to learn, **I think it's good** lah.

Evidently, both JJ and CR's parents believe that being bilingual will be valuable tools in helping their children to better understand and socialise with others with different linguistic backgrounds (Transcript 3, Line 4). In the example above, JJ's mother laments that she never had the opportunity to learn the other Chinese 'dialects' due to the Speak Mandarin Campaign – implied by her quoting a favourite slogan of the campaign – “多讲华语” *duo1jiang3hua2yu3* “*speak more Mandarin*”. The Speak Mandarin Campaign was initiated in 1979 by then Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew to downplay the importance of other Chinese varieties such as Hokkien, Teochew, and Cantonese, while promoting Mandarin as the '*Mother Tongue*' of ethnically Chinese Singapore. This campaign, in conjunction with other state initiatives such as bans on media broadcasts in 'dialects', eventually resulted to the relegation and precipitous decline in the use of these Chinese varieties in preference for Mandarin in the 1980s and 1990s (Kwan-Terry, 2000). Thus, seeing that she was previously denied the chance to acquire this communicative resource, JJ's mother hopes that her children will not be deprived of the

opportunity and hopes to encourage the grandparent caregivers to incorporate these Chinese varieties when communicating with JJ. By overtly supporting the learning of these Chinese varieties, CR's and JJ's parents contrast starkly with YZ's family as their views reflect a general sense that expanding their children's linguistic repertoire is in and of itself, worthy of the time and energy invested at the 'expense' of brushing up on their children's English or Mandarin abilities.

This prioritization of bi/multilingualism in JJ's family is evident from the parent's actions. As JJ's grandparents are not especially fluent in speaking English, JJ's parents actively try to "balance" their linguistic input (Transcript 3, Line 15) by speaking to JJ in English when they are around. This can be seen from the excerpt below (Example 3) of a prototypical dinnertime conversation between JS his mother (M), and grandmother (GM) as they are trying to coax him to finish his food:

Example 3. Language use during a typical dinnertime conversation in JJ's family, transcribed from audio recordings on 22 September 2016, 42:31-43:17.

- |    |           |                                                                                                           |
|----|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | GM        | 吃鸡饭不要鸡？那怎么行呢？<br><i>'How can you have chicken rice without chicken?'</i>                                  |
|    | JS        | 不要不要<br><i>'Don't want, don't want'</i>                                                                   |
|    | GM        | 那吃豆...这些都好吃啊!<br><i>'These beans are great!'</i>                                                          |
|    | M         | I thought you like beans                                                                                  |
| 5  | JS        | 是妹妹喜欢的<br><i>'Sister likes them'</i>                                                                      |
|    | M         | but see 妹妹 <i>mei4mei4</i> "sister" eat so much already...so many beans already                           |
|    | JS        | (protests but unable to make out what is being said)                                                      |
|    | M (to GM) | 这个 chicken right? Chicken 要 cut lor....<br><i>'This chicken right? Chicken needs to be cut up lor...'</i> |
|    | M (to JS) | I cut for you?                                                                                            |
| 10 | GM        | 你要一点白芝麻吗？<br><i>'Would you like some white sesame seeds?'</i>                                             |
|    | M         | Eh 芝麻 is nice eh!<br><i>'Eh, Sesame is nice eh!'</i>                                                      |
|    | GM        | 白芝麻...放一点给你 ah<br><i>'Let me give you some white sesame ah'</i>                                           |
|    | M         | I cut the chicken for you...JS...JS, I cut the chicken for you okay?                                      |
|    | JN        | 我也要<br><i>'I want some too'</i>                                                                           |

15 GM (to M) eh 啊瑞敏也要...  
*'Eh, JN wants some too'*

Here, JJ's mother is seen as trying to create a linguistic environment where JS and JN are required to be able to understand and actively engage with both languages. This strategy parallels a modified 'one-parent, one language' strategy (Döpke, 1992; Barron-Hauwaert, 2005) that seems to have worked quite well as 2½ year old JN is able to understand both English and Mandarin, following conversations in both languages and requesting for some chicken in Mandarin (Example 3, Line 14). Furthermore, JJ's parents also highlighted remedial actions such as sending JS to attend the Mandarin service at their church on Sundays to mitigate his decreased exposure to Mandarin when he started attending an English-medium full-day childcare. Collectively, these actions reveal how JJ's parents adopt and implement language management strategies that are congruent with their language ideologies.

### 4.3 Negotiating a combined FLP

All in all, the findings from each of the different families in the preceding section reveal the diverse beliefs and ideologies that parents have regarding bilingualism and gives us a sense of their corresponding language management strategies contributing to each family's FLP. This sets the stage for a discussion of how the parents and grandparents, who sometimes have differing language ideologies and consequently, language management methods, negotiate a combined family language policy.

#### 4.3.1 Convergent ideologies – Augmented FLP

Example 4. Comparison between YZ's father and grandfather showing their congruent views. (Extracted from Transcript 2, Lines 9-10 and Transcript 1, Line 45).

	<b>YZ's Grandfather</b>	<b>YZ's Father</b>
Researcher	So who instituted that English is <i>Father</i> the main language here (at home)?	(Discussing the collaborative relationship parents have with grandparents)
<i>Grandfather</i>	<i>Who instituted? I think it is the whole family, actually it's me and the whole family. We speak in English, so, very naturally, we will use that.</i>	<i>We had a common purpose and goal that we need to bring him up well, be it linguistically, emotionally, physically, and spiritually – we know the end goal.</i>

YZ's parents and grandparents share largely the same language ideology. His father reveals that they have a "common purpose and goal" – linguistically speaking, they hope that YZ will

excel in English. This consensus is also echoed by YZ's grandfather who believes that it was a collective effort in deciding that English should be the dominant home language. This congruence is most poignantly seen in Example 5 below, where father (F) and grandfather (GF) reaffirm the importance of English as a core tenet in this family's combined language ideology.

Example 5. Dinnertime conversation between YZ's father and grandfather, transcribed from audio recordings on 3 October 2016, 34:02-34:19.

- |             |                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Father      | You haven't seen how my colleagues suffer because their language is not good, they can't even write a proper report to the director.                                |
| Grandfather | Yes, daddy sometimes also feel very [in]capable...you see how daddy's written English is not so good...always stressing when I need to write or mark student's work |
| Father      | Yah, so that's why YZ must have an excellent command of English....                                                                                                 |
| Grandfather | Mmmmm, English is very important in our society.                                                                                                                    |

In addition, YZ's grandparents also recognize that it is very much the responsibility of the parents to decide how, and by what means, their children should acquire language proficiency. For instance, YZ's father acknowledges that the child is their "full responsibility" (Transcript 1, Line 28), while YZ's grandparents choose to assert little authority over the actual language planning and management of their grandchild, affirming that the bulk of the decision-making process should be left to YZ's father and mother as "they are the parents" (Transcript 2, Lines 37-38). Hence, there is little need for actively negotiating or re-positioning ideologies since both grandparent and parental ideologies are largely congruent, as well as the fact that the grandparents wish to let the parents have a greater say in raising their child.

Given the views of YZ's grandparents, it is no surprise that they use English when speaking to him, be it in the presence or absence of his parents, as clearly illustrated in his daily schedule (Table 1). This combined FLP, augmented by both parent's and grandparent's language ideologies prioritizes English as "the language of the family" (Transcript 2, Line 10) while relegating YZ's Mandarin exposure to instances of vocabulary ventriloquation (Murphy, 2007), a pedagogical method sometimes employed in second-language learning classes where vocabulary in the unfamiliar language is plugged into sentences in the language the learner is familiar with (cf. Transcript 1, Lines 23-25). Evidently, his parents deem the sporadic use of Mandarin vocabulary in English sentences as being sufficient for YZ to learn Mandarin Chinese, while his grandparent's principle of letting the parents take charge results in them not taking additional steps to remediate YZ's poor mandarin proficiency, even though they recognize it as a potential problem (Transcript 2, Line 21). Hence, YZ's family exemplifies an

instance where grandparental and parental language ideologies converge in agreement to augment the similar ideologies they hold, and in this case, co-creating a stronger, more English-biased FLP.

#### **4.3.2 Complementing as a negotiation strategy**

“没有限制，没有限制！（他们）完全没有限制，就让我去教。反而是...反而是我有时告诉他们可以怎么做。” - JJ's grandmother (Transcript 4, Line 8)

'No restrictions, no restrictions! (Parents) don't restrict me whatsoever, it's up to me to teach. Instead..instead, sometimes, I am the one who tells them what they could do.'

Ideological tensions in FLP are also uncommon in JJ's family as JJ's parents take a casual and *laissez-faire* approach, trusting that grandparent caregivers possess the requisite experience in bringing up the children (Transcript 3, Line 50). As seen above, JJ's grandma excitedly points out that JJ's parents impose "no restrictions" on the way language is taught to their children. The openness of JJ's parents to the grandparent's way of doing things does not mean that they will suppress their own ideologies, but rather, they recognize the complementary role that they need to play to achieve their own ideological ideals of raising successful bilinguals.

Hence, complementing grandparent caregiver ideologies can be seen as a negotiation strategy whereby parents create their own interventions that avoid overtly clashing with grandparent ideologies or methods, while still preserving their ideological stance. For example, JJ's mother articulates that "if [their grandparents] speak mandarin to [them], [we]'ll just make it balanced by speaking English at night" (Transcript 3, Line 27). This exemplifies a strategy of working in tandem complimentarily with grandparent – where even if parents and grandparents have differing language ideologies or management strategies, parents choose to 'make up' for any deficits that they feel the grandparent caregivers are unable to fulfil to continue in parallel by carrying out their own interventions without imposing on the grandparent caregivers. Consequently, there is no suppression or overt conflict between parental and grandparental ideologies by adopting such supplemental approaches in the co-creation of FLP on their own terms.

### 4.3.3 Deference as a strategy for conflicting ideologies

Example 5. Excerpt from interview with CR's grandmother regarding her language ideologies as a grandparent caregiver (Transcript 6, Lines 15-18).

<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Original transcript</b>	<b>English translation</b>
Researcher	Oh, 这样你觉得他的英文比较重要还是中文比较重要，还是两个都一样重要？	Oh, so do you feel that English is more important than Mandarin, or are they equally important?
Grandmother	Err, 就是因为我们现在就是在讨论这个问题 lor, 我跟他讲, 现在这个孙子一直在跟我讲华语, 他以前完全话语有很多那些 er 好像你平时你在谈话, 在讲话有没有, 他都可以跟你讲出来了。可是我跟他讲在英文方面, 你。。你们就很少跟他讲是吗? 我说变成。。我就认为英文重要。可是 er 他的妈妈就有跟我讲: “我反而是觉得华语重要, 因为。。因为他在华文方面 huh, 他出到外面是很少讲话语的。”	Err, we are currently discussing this issue – I told her parents that my granddaughter and I always converse in Mandarin, and she already has the ability to use Mandarin for daily interactions. Yet when it comes to speaking English, I say “You guys (Parents) seldom use English with her, right?” Hence, I feel that English is important (for CR). But her mother will say to me “To me, Mandarin is more important, because she (CR) will be exposed to very little Mandarin outside”.
Researcher	是是	Yes, yes
Grandmother	就是他接触的人都是讲英语的。学校大多数也是讲, 除非上华文课。所以她就跟我讲, 他说: “你放心啦, 让他去自然不要紧的。英文方面他们自然慢慢”, 可是我跟他们讲: “你没有教他, 他没有一个正确的英文 leh。我说他, 等一下讲的英文是那种 ‘rojak’- 不标准的英文 leh。Then 他们一直说: 不担心啦。。。叫我不用担心...可是我会很担心啊。	So those people she will meet outside are English speakers. Apart from Chinese classes, English is always used in school. So she tells me that “Don’t worry lah, let nature take its course, it doesn’t matter. She will acquire English slowly, naturally”. And I said, “But if you don’t teach her proper English, she may speak a ‘rojak’, non-standard English”. But they will always say “don’t worry lah” and tell me not to worry...but I will be very worried ah.

It is evident from participant observation and the interviews that CR's grandmother is highly invested in her granddaughter's upbringing, repeatedly emphasizing her concern about her level of English exposure and proficiency. In addition, she was also anxious that CR will be unable to catch up with her peers' level of English proficiency, and instead, acquire a “*rojak*<sup>6</sup>, non-standard [variety of] English”, which is sometimes used as a metaphor for Singlish (Singapore Colloquial English) in Singapore, a variety that the state views as an ‘improper’ mix of Hokkien, Malay, Mandarin, and English (cf. Rubdy, 2007). CR's grandmother acts on this language ideology and tries to convince her parents to speak more English, which led to a

<sup>6</sup> *Rojak* is a sweet and savoury salad with an assortment of fried, toasted dough and soybean fritters tossed in prawn paste with cucumbers, pineapples, turnip, and beansprouts.

discussion during which CR's mother remembers her mother-in-law getting “very angry” about when they disagreed (Transcript 5, Line 63). In contrast to her grandmother's language ideology, CR's parents believe that she will be able to “learn English along the way”, “naturally”, and that they are “not worried about English” (Transcript 5, Line 69). Their strong beliefs that being proficient in both English and Mandarin motivated CR's mother to continue speaking Mandarin to CR, which can also be seen as an attempt to mitigate the possible deterioration of her Chinese proficiency when she enters Singapore's formal schooling system – one where English is used for teaching all subjects except ‘mother tongue’ lessons (David, Cavallaro & Coluzzi, 2009).

However, the conflict only found resolution when these divergent ideologies were reconciled by them giving-in to the grandmother's wish for them to speak to CR in English more often, in spite of them believing that it was not immediately necessary for CR (Transcript 5, Line 72). Hence, this particular example from CR's family highlights how deference and suppression of certain parental ideologies may be necessary in the negotiation of the combined FLP, something CR's parents felt very strongly about as seen in their articulation of the strong need to listen to the grandmother and to adopt her language ideology.

Collectively, these three examples from the three families provide a window through which we see great diversity in the way language ideology and FLP is negotiated – from grandparents augmenting parental ideologies, to how parents complement grandparent practices while maintain their language ideology, to the suppression of parental language ideologies in the face of conflicting priorities and ideologies. This brings to the fore following question: What are some factors at play that motivate parents and grandparents to act in the way that they do as they negotiate a combined FLP?

#### **4.4 Strategy-motivating factors in negotiating a combined FLP**

Canagarajah (2008) argues that the family is “not a self-contained institution” (p. 170), and indeed, the construction of every family's FLP is inevitably influenced by a myriad of historical, cultural, socio-economic, pragmatic, and political factors. Based on the data collected, two central factors have emerged as being pivotal to understanding how the combined FLP is negotiated between parents and grandparent caregivers, namely, cultural values prominent in Chinese culture such as the maintenance of harmony and mutual respect,

as well as parent's feelings of indebtedness stemming from their recognition of their imposition and reliance on grandparents to take care of their children. These factors are discussed in detail to shed light on why and how these factors regulate and motivate parents' or grandparents' actions in the co-construction of a combined FLP.

#### **4.4.1 Cultural influences – Maintenance of harmony and mutual respect**

The influence of culture pervades social life, and becomes the context within which all social interactions and actions are situated (Spencer-Oatey, 2012; Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952). Thus, when considering how parents and grandparents negotiate a combined FLP, one must take into account the broader cultural context to provide a valid and coherent understanding of how a combined FLP can be negotiated.

Parents and grandparent caregivers exist within a “culturally embedded social relationship” (Low & Goh, 2015, p. 305). This is to say that grandparent caregivers cannot simply be seen as ‘just another individual’ providing care or standing-in for the parents. In many Chinese societies, grandparents are known as 前輩 *qian2bei4* “elders” who ought to be respected for their wisdom and experience (Thiele & Whelan, 2006). Moreover, as the couple’s parents or parents-in-law, grandparents are not just *any* elder in society. Although the couple are now parents themselves, they are still seen as owing a debt to their parents for nurturing and raising them, known as “*养育之恩 yang3yu4zhi1en1*” in Chinese culture. Such notions of filial piety and respect for elders are still very much an integral part of culture and society within the Chinese community in Singapore (Chow, 2009) and it is within such a complicated web of social hierarchies and cultural considerations that parents need to delicately negotiate power and social-hierarchical relations with grandparent caregivers.

On the one hand, parents may question the extent to which they need to heed the advice of the grandparents and if they disagree, decide how to proceed without being seen as disrespectful. On the other hand, grandparents may consider how much say they have over the parents and grandchildren, and the extent to which they feel is appropriate for parents do things their way, instead of considering their advice as those with prior experience. These considerations are especially crucial since parents have requested grandparents to shoulder the responsibility as caregivers in their absence. Hence, it is within such a non-neutral ‘third-cultural’ space

(Bhabha, 2004) where parents and grandparents take on new roles and different identities that language ideologies and a combined FLP need to be negotiated.

Be it overtly expressed or covertly implied, an overarching theme recognised by all three families when negotiating these intricacies was the importance of maintaining harmony. For example, when asked why she chose to defer to her mother-in-law's strong suggestion for parents to speak more English at home, CR's mother affirmed that she wanted to "try and maintain the harmony" (Transcript 5, Line 80) despite conflicting views. Similarly, JJ's parents noted that while they were initially "quite conscious" about trying to assign who would speak which language to their children, they chose to "let it be" and allow grandparent caregivers to "go ahead" with whatever they felt was right without restrictions (Transcript 3, Line 33).

In the co-creation of a combined FLP, parents are not the only ones giving in. In fact, some grandparents explicitly recognise that "they are the parents" (Transcript 2, Line 37) and that they may have their own way of doing things (e.g. Transcript 6, Line 33). This belies a certain willingness to defer to and respect parental autonomy and decision making, a strategic compromise in viewpoint to maintain peace and harmony within the family unit. To illustrate, when asked if grandparents would openly comment or correct parents if they disagreed with their language use, grandparent caregivers from all three families agreed that they would do so tactfully and usually avoid direct confrontation. JJ's grandmother even stated that she would go to great lengths to use the spouse as an intermediary for any suggestions she had, so as to avoid confrontation and to prevent having to "伤他的自尊" *shangIta1de4zi4zhun1* "hurting his pride" (Transcript 4, Line 32). These seemingly roundabout methods shed light on the extent to which grandparents also value the maintenance of peace and harmony within the family.

#### **4.4.2 Recognizing their reliance on grandparent caregivers**

Another factor mediating the negotiation of a combined FLP is parent's recognition of their reliance on grandparent caregivers. Synthesizing examples from the three families, grandparent caregivers fulfil at least two major roles – a functional role (in tending to the child's basic needs), as well as an educational role (as surrogate parent, teacher, and role model). In fulfilling these roles, most of the grandparent's time is bound by them needing to care for their grandchildren. During a casual conversation with YZ's grandmother, she suggested that she sometimes feels burdened by the responsibility of caregiving, and that she

does not have the autonomy to leave the house for recreation as and when she pleases (Appendix D, field notes). Likewise, CR's grandmother mentioned that she used to keep a diary of each day's events, yet due to her tending to CR's needs throughout most of the day, she has been too physically and mentally exhausted to maintain her dairy for the past three years (Appendix D, field notes). Similar sentiments like these have also been reflected in other studies of grandparents within the context of Asian society (e.g. Low & Goh, 2015).

These efforts and constraints on grandparents do not go unnoticed by the parents. For instance, JJ's mother states

because they take care [of the children from] Monday to Friday, so sometimes it's quite tiring...so when we come back and they want to pass it over to us, we have to like...轮流 *lun2liu2* "take turns" lah, otherwise very tiring (Transcript 3, Line 53)

CR's mother is even more straightforward in recognising that they are heavily reliant on grandparents. She confesses that

[we] need them lah...because most of the time they are the ones helping ma, if not we cannot work, and [if] anything [happens] I can still fall [back] on them (Transcript 5, Line 80)

Evidently, parents recognise that their actions make certain impositions on grandparent's time, energy and autonomy. Using Face-Negotiation theory (Ting-Toomey, 1985) as a theoretical framework to analyse the situation, parents would be committing a 'face-threatening act' and impinging on the grandparent's negative face as their actions impede the grandparent caregiver's autonomy and freedom to do what they want, when they want. Face-Negotiation theory predicts that the perpetrator of such a 'Face-Threatening Act' would try to restore and repair the person's face (Oetzel, Garcia & Ting-Toomey, 2008), and within the collectivistic context of Chinese-Singaporean culture, previous research suggests that concern for "the face of the other" (Baldwin et al., 2014, p. 282) results in the increased likelihood of choosing conflict avoidance strategies such as yielding and accommodating (Ting-Toomey, 2014). As seen in the present study, parents often try not to disagree with grandparent caregivers by giving them authority and autonomy over certain critical decisions, be it through the suppression of their own ideologies when they are inconsistent with grandparent's ideologies (CR's parents), or not imposing further restrictions on grandparent autonomy by finding their own ways to complement the grandparent's approach and achieve their own ideological goals (JJ's parents).

Hence, it is likely that parents see their dependence on grandparent caregivers and their imposition on their autonomy, time and other resources predisposes them to be more willing to listen, complement, and defer to grandparent ideologies during the negotiation of a combined FLP.

## Chapter 5 Conclusion

### 5.1 Summary and research significance

This thesis offers a glimpse into how FLP is negotiated between parents and grandparent caregivers in dual-career households within traditionally collectivistic and relatively hierarchical cultures. Using ethnographic tools of inquiry, I have examined case studies of three dual-income, Chinese Singaporean families illustrating how congruent parental and grandparent ideologies may converge and augment the FLP, and how parents may find their own ways of complementing grandparent caregiver ideologies to maintain peace and harmony without placing additional demands on grandparent caregivers. At other times, conflicts between grandparent and parent ideologies requires deference and suppression of certain ideologies out of mutual respect and to maintain peace and harmony within the family unit. This study also shed light on two core motivating factors that regulated the negotiation of FLP between parents and grandparents: firstly, the influence of cultural values such as the maintenance of harmony, filial piety, and mutual respect; secondly, parent's recognition of their imposition and dependence on grandparents that predisposes parents to be more willing to subscribe to grandparent ideologies and co-create FLP with grandparents instead of adopting a top-down prescriptive stance based solely on their ideology.

Importantly, this research makes significant contributions to existing literature in the field by bridging a gap in previous studies based on the dominant idea of FLP being regulated by only parental language ideologies. This thesis is the first so far that emphasizes the agentive role of grandparents in this co-construction of the family's combined language ideology. It calls for research in the field of FLP to look beyond the nuclear family in cultures with more collectivistic views of parenting as we can no longer just consider parental language ideologies or grandparent ideologies in isolation.

In addition, these case-studies show that apart from influencing the children's language development, grandparents are significant agents in inserting their ideologies into the day to day linguistic practice of the young children. Hence, any discussion of FLP in collectivistic contexts needs to take into account the critical role of grandparent caregivers as active agents in language maintenance and shift. The case studies also reveal how some grandparents actively participate in reinforcing the macro language policies propounded by the state,

supporting Singapore's official languages at the detriment of other Chinese varieties that the state designated 'dialects' which are in fact, their own mother tongues. This has implications for scholars dedicated to ensuring language maintenance as it highlights the need for a more concerted and targeted effort at creating awareness that FLP, whether explicit or implicit, dictates the future language behaviour of the new generation.

## **5.2 Limitations and future research**

This thesis does not dare make sweeping generalizations based on a case-study of only three families selected from the researcher's own social networks. In addition, given the scope and word limits of the Final Year Project, the researcher is unable to fully account for the possibly different interactions between paternal or maternal grandparents' involvement in caregiving and its possible effect on the negotiation of FLP. Nevertheless, the thesis contributes significantly as it provides a strong case for the extension of the idea of a combined family language ideology and FLP.

As first study of its kind within the field, future research can examine parent-grandparent relationships within other cultural contexts and broaden our understanding of other factors that influence and motivate the negotiation of parental and caregiver language ideologies. Furthermore, studies within the local context may delve deeper into the parents and grandparent's perceptions of local varieties such as Singapore Colloquial English and their use vis-à-vis the use of more 'standard varieties' of English and Mandarin, and how these ideologies influence their combined FLP. Another area of exploration pertains to how in sync different agents are with the state's macro language policy, and could examine how grandparent caregivers contribute in the enforcement or resistance of these policies and its corresponding impact on language maintenance and shift.

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## **Appendix A: Family background and demographic survey template**

### **Child's biodata:**

Name:

Age:

Kindergarten/playgroup:

Language exposure at home:

### **In which languages do you speak when conversing with the following family members?**

	Almost always in _____	_____ > _____	_____ = _____	_____ > _____	Almost always in _____
Wife/Husband					
Mother – Child					
Father – Child					
Brothers/ Sisters					
Grandparents to Parents					
Grandparents to Grandchildren					

- For multilingual cases, note in a separate table<sup>7</sup>.

### **Parent's Language Proficiencies**

Proficiency in	Respondents	English Proficiency (1-7)	Mandarin Proficiency (1-7)
Speaking	Father		
	Mother		
Listening	Father		
	Mother		
Reading	Father		
	Mother		
Writing	Father		
	Mother		

### **Grandparent Language Proficiencies**

Proficiency in	Respondents	English proficiency (1-7)	Mandarin Proficiency (1-7)
Speaking	Grandfather		
	Grandmother		
Listening	Grandfather		
	Grandmother		
Reading	Grandfather		
	Grandmother		
Writing	Grandfather		

<sup>7</sup> In the case of the three families, English and Mandarin were cited as the dominant languages. Though CR and JJ's parents encouraged grandparents to speak other Chinese varieties to them, both parents and grandparents reported that in fact that these varieties were rarely used, if at all.

	Grandmother		
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## Parental and Grandparental Demographics

Household income	Gross income	
Type of dwelling (house)	Type	1,2,3 Room flat; 4-5 room flat; Apartment; Condominium; Landed Dwelling (Terrace, Semi-detached, Bungalow)
Birth Place	Father	
	Mother	
Number of languages spoken Dominant language	Father	
	Mother	
Language of education	Father	
	Mother	
Highest Education Level	Father	
	Mother	
	Grandfather	
	Grandmother	
Country of Highest Education	Father	
	Mother	
Profession / Previous profession	Father	
	Mother	
	Grandfather	
	Grandmother	
Language spoken by grandparents (to parents) when growing up	Father	
	Mother	
Language(s) that grandparents are most comfortable in	Grandfather	
	Grandmother	

## Appendix B: Interview questionnaire

### Interview questions for parents

Theme: Parents & Grandparent's ideologies : How do they match up?

- Thoughts about bilingualism
  - Is it important for your child to be bilingual?
- Aspirations for the children/grandchildren's language proficiency
  - How bilingual is 'enough'?
  - What are your expectations for your child's language proficiency, if you were to rate it on a scale of 1 to 7, one being really bad, and 7, excellent.
- Do you actively try to speak only one particular language with your children?
- Is there overt negotiation, or covert negotiation of FLP?
  - Is there a main 'language teacher' at home? Perhaps between you and the grandparents or say you and your spouse?
  - Do you consciously state/decide who will speak what language to speak to your children?

Theme: How is language education conducted at home?

- How would grandparents provide language education for their grandchildren?
- How would you as parents provide language education for their children?
- What kind of media do you/the grandparents expose your children to?
  - Do you/they read to the child? In what language?
  - What TV/Youtube programs do you let them watch? What language medium is used (ask for proportion too)
  - What do they listen to in the car?

Theme: Who has the greater say in educating the child?

- What are the grandparent's roles in taking care of the children? Are they mainly the caregivers or educators? And is it a collaborative relationship, or would you propose something and they try and follow it?
- What are the reasons you chose these set of grandparents (paternal vs maternal) to take care of your children? Does their language use feature as a consideration?
- If grandparents spend most time with the children, do they have more 'say' than the parents?
- Do you feel that you need to listen to what the grandparents say? Or follow their suggestions/ways of bringing up your child?
- So do you encourage/discourage the grandparents from using any particular language with your children?
- Will you openly correct the grandparent (immediately) if the language being used is inappropriate/wrong? (e.g. grammatical errors, wrong word, or maybe a better word can be used)

## **Interview questions for grandparent caregivers:**

Why do you think the parents asked you to take care of the grandchildren?  
您为什么认为您的儿女要您照顾他们的孩子？

Who has a greater say in teaching the grandchildren? You or the parents?  
在教育孙子时，谁掌握更多的权力？您，还是您的儿女？就算你和他们在一起的时间更长？

Do you feel that you need to listen to or follow the way the parents want you to take care of the children?

您觉得您须要按照您孩子的意思照顾孙子吗？就是说，你必须根据他们的教育方式来照顾孙子吗？

Do you think bilingualism is important for your grandchildren? Is being good at English enough, or is equal proficiency something you will emphasize?  
对你而言，双语教育对你的孙子有多重要呢？英语好就够了吗？英语华语都一样重要吗？

Would you correct the parents if they language they use is incorrect (e.g. grammatical mistakes, wrong words etc).

若孙子的父母（即您的儿女）语言使用上出现偏误时，您是否会纠正他们？

Do you feel that the parents respect your autonomy to take care of the grandchildren? Or are there instances where they cross the boundaries?

你觉得您的儿女会尊重您在照顾孙儿女上的自主权吗？

Will they correct you if they feel your language use is incorrect/wrong? How do you feel when they correct you?

您的儿女是否会纠正您在语言使用上的偏误？当他们纠正您的偏误时，您又有什么样的感受？

How would you describe how you and the parents take care of the children (e.g. are you collaborators? Or like serve a more instrumental role (Helping to provide physical care))

请讲述您与您的儿女在照料孙儿女时所扮演的角色，例：您们是否会共同教育孙儿女，抑或是仅仅担任看护的工作？

What methods/how do you expose your grandchildren to language?

您会使用什么方式来帮助您的孙子学习/习得语言？

## Appendix C: Interview Transcripts

The interviews were transcribed mainly for content and were conducted in both English and Mandarin as per the interviewee's preferences. When Mandarin was used, the corresponding English translations are provided in a separate column next to the original transcriptions. In addition, it should be noted that some Singlish particles were used during the interviews, and their representations can be found below.

The following transcription conventions have been used in all transcripts.

( )	Non-verbal sounds such as chuckling and laughing.
[ ]	Words inserted in transcription by the transcriber to facilitate understanding
[[ ]]	Overlapping speech
Res	Researcher
F	Father
M	Mother
GF	Grandfather
GM	Grandmother
lah	Singlish (Singapore Colloquial English) particle, often used at the end of a phrase or sentence to either emphasize or mark the phrase's end.
leh	Singlish (Singapore Colloquial English) particle, often used as a question statement or as a form of exclamation.
lor	Singlish (Singapore Colloquial English) particle, often used at the ends of sentences or at pauses to express affirmation.
ma	Singlish (Singapore Colloquial English) particle, often used by speakers at the end of a phrase or sentence as a question or to explain how something happened.

## Transcript 1: Interview with YZ's parents

Date of interview: 5 January 2017

Time: 8:30pm (2030hrs)

Line	Speaker	Transcription
1	Res	How important is it for your child to be bilingual?
2	F	I believe it is important for the child to be as multilingual as possible. Erm, but I, if you were to ask me to balance between that and overall studies, I think the child has to be fluent in at least one, capable of comprehending and writing in another then focus on the rest.
3	M	Well, I feel that it's important because you need to be understood by others...like people from China or who can only understand mandarin, then you have to speak to them in mandarin, you can't you know I mean if they really can't understand English then you're at a disadvantage.
4	Res	Okay, F, do you have an opinion when you mention one, what particular language?
5	F	Erm, it should be the language of commerce the language of trade, in that it should empower the person to correspond with the world. Erm, of course right now we know the two superpowers now are US and China, so English definitely and predominantly is being used as the language of choice even in legal documents and whatever. In future we may see the rise of Chinese taking over, so, so one of these.
6	Res	So then in that case what are your expectations for your child's language proficiency, if you were to rate it on a scale of 1 to 7, one being really bad, and 7, excellent
7	F	Oh so for the primary language I would expect the child to be a 7, or a 6 or 7, because he will have to be able to express himself in this language proficiently. He should be to express himself in a complete and holistic manner, and for that you need more than just the efficiency of words, you need to be able to package the entire prose together to create a story and things like that in a cohesive and coherent manner. And so you really need to be up there and write for different audiences, where you can look at what is required – whether you have to be succinct or you can have a long drawn kind of response to express yourself adequately.

8	M	Yeah 7, in all aspects, as in, in written, listening, comprehension, spoken language as well...7, it's very important.
9	Res	Okay, so, that's for English, or Mandarin? Or for Both?
10	F	Mmm, the ideal end state is for both lah. I have seen some people do it, and some go more than that 3, 4 languages, especially easier languages such as German, where they are errrr, much more straightforward. Errr, but as a bare minimum I would say as one. Either English or Chinese. Because you have to remember that they are able to express themselves well in one language, it would be a matter of finding a good translator who is able to capture and encapsulate these ideas and then translate these ideas into another language should the need arise. So coming from that perspective the bare minimum is one. Of course the best is, you know, with music, the author pens the original text in that language, because Chinese is extremely rich in itself as well, and as with other languages as well there are certain things you can't find in another language, certain words that describe a certain feeling or emotion that doesn't convey the same meaning in other languages.
11	M	Yeah my take is that...I mean it's equally important, but because it's language, you can't force it on them. The last thing you want is for them to lose their interest. So as much as Mandarin is important, erm, so long as they are able to understand comprehension and speak, I think it's good enough. Writing comes later, I think so long as you know hanyupinyin it's actually okay.
12	Res	So, M, if you were to rate it on a scale of 1-7?
13	M	I'd say 5.
14	Res	Then will you push your children to be 'excellently' proficient in both these languages since they are both examinable subjects.
15	F	I think the question really boils down to the total number of subjects and the passion he has. If he is a linguist and picks up languages really easily, I will push him for that, just so that he can really harness these languages to the full potential. But on the other hand if he has a whole myriad of other subjects that he has to cope with, then the emphasis will be on a single language, the examinable language, which in this case is English

		so that he can comprehend the questions and answer well. And focus really a lot more on that. Chinese would then take a backseat – of course if he has the capacity the best would be to push for both, but given limited resources and the fact that we... basically if you see English or Chinese as a means of communication, errr, as long as he has mastered the ability to communicate efficiently, then he should move on to the other aspects in life, for an all rounded kind of education.
16	Res	Do you consciously choose who will speak what language to speak to your child?
17	F	Yes, it is a conscious effort, not just for individuals... erm, okay between my wife and I my English is a little better than us, and her Chinese is leaps and bounds better than mine, just because grammatical structure, vocab wise she just has that proficiency.
18	M	Mmmm, I think we do like try it out but it isn't so much of a conscious effort, it's like if I remember I'll do it, if I don't. Like I'll just lapse back to English because it's easier.
19	F	But we do set aside time to speak purely mandarin, and it's a conscious effort not to mix English and Chinese, and we're very perstickly(?) about that.
20	Res	And so how often is that? The speaking in Mandarin part.
21	F	Erm, I would say it happens on a daily basis, although we don't have fixed timeslots, we will give a certain amount of exposure just as a kid would go to say er kindergarten or schools, erm, he would have certain periods catered for mandarin. Similarly we would have certain periods, and so the opportune time if you want to expose him to certain vocab erm, so for example today he was having lunch, and (my wife) was trying to teach him to be able to say what you know and what you do not know 会, 不会 <i>hui4buhui4</i> “know, don't know” kind of thing, in relation to him being able to eat by himself.
22	M	Yeah I will try to teach him vocabulary, so we'll talk mostly in Chinese over lunch, of course providing the required translations to English, just to get him to comprehend what she was talking about.
23	Res	Ooh, translations to English...like what?

24	M	<p>Like if you speak exclusively in Mandarin and he is not able to comprehend you, then really it's a failed attempt because you would be talking to a wall – he wouldn't understand anything. So if you were to construct a sentence and he gives you a really blur look you would, she would then break it down into specific words that she wants him to learn at this point. So today, I was trying 会不会, 会 <i>hui4buhui4</i> “know or don't know” being able to, and 不会 <i>buhui4</i> “don't know” being not able to, you know, the opposite. So with that translation, and the fact that he already knows some words, we can piece it together and so that he will learn some words.</p> <p>So for example the other day he was learning about lanterns – in a song there was lanterns, there was a 大灯笼 <i>da4deng1long2</i> “big lantern”. So the comparison was between 大 <i>da4</i> “big” and 灯笼 <i>deng1long2</i> “lantern” because he just learnt it as a compound word. But then 大 was then translated as big, and 灯笼 <i>deng1long2</i> as lantern. That took a while actually surprisingly, and then we swapped the 灯笼 <i>deng1long2</i> part with 青蛙 <i>qing1wa1</i>, frog, and he had trouble applying the 大 <i>da4</i> to the 青蛙 <i>qing1wa1</i>. Of course we did the opposites as well, you know 大 <i>da4</i> “small” and 小 <i>xiao3</i> “small”, so that he would know there is...but over that session of about 15 minutes to half an hour, he grasped and he can use 大 <i>da4</i> “small” and 小 <i>xiao3</i> “small” knowing that they are separate things.</p>
25	Res	Okay, so is there a main ‘language teacher’ at home? Like I mean between you and the grandparents or say you or your wife?
26	M	Yes, his nainai, his grandmother...and the dad.
27	F	Haha yes, I would be the grammar police, I would be the main one when it comes to English. I think when it comes to Mandarin, that would have to be my wife. I think because family upbringing is that we will bear the full responsibility of bringing up the child in the way of the lord, and erm, we bear that full burden and responsibility. And erm, mum and dad have graciously allowed us to you know, almost, sometimes correct them even if there's a slip of tongue or they code-switch or something.

28	Res	Okay, so you feel that your child's language is not good enough?
29	F	Mmm, I think for English yes not bad, but Chinese, don't even mention it
30	M	Hahaha, yeah English yes, Chinese no.
31	Res	Mmmm, then are there any kinds of interventions then?
32	F	At the moment, on top of the daily exposure, we enroll him in a kindergarten that does focus on Chinese as well, it has a good mix of the languages as well. The mandarin teacher there...I think the focus there is not just the vocabulary, but also the structure. And to bolster that, erm, starting in 6 days he's going for Chinese classes, Chinese exposure classes, not tuition. These Chinese exposure classes will be really to go play with the other children and to learn from the teachers through play.
33	M	Yeah we are sending him to this enrichment class, Berries 百丽果 <i>bai2li4guo3</i> , it will be once a week. But of course as an educator I do know language it doesn't stop just at the enrichment class, it has to be whenever there is an opportunity it has to be done whenever there is an opportunity to, so that class is just to...besides that he has Chinese in school too, but I'll take a look at the curriculum and see what else I can reinforce at home. And so we do make an effort to randomly ask him in Mandarin. Especially the things you know that he's quite confident with, especially with his colors, he knows his colors in Mandarin. So whenever we do things, I will just make it an effort to speak to him in Mandarin, and if he doesn't understand I'll try to add in English with Mandarin just to get him to understand what I'm saying. And because we do want to build or cultivate his interest, the grandmother does play mandarin Children's songs in the car on his way to school or whenever he's travelling from church. There's that too.
34	Res	So then in terms of the child's reading material or proportion of exposure, what is it like?
35	M	80% English, 20% mandarin.
36	Res	What are the reasons you chose these set of grandparents (paternal vs maternal) to take care of your children? Does their language use feature as a consideration? Was it a conscious choice?
37	F	Yes definitely. Err, we chose them for multiple reasons. When we focus

		on a linguistics perspective mum is a language teacher, and she also knows how to choose resources that are age appropriate, be it library books or audiobooks, she's quite adept at. Just because of her many years of experience. Maternal side is not so well educated, so in terms of the teaching and bringing up, we still chose the paternal side.
38	M	I think also practically, mainly because the grandparents are staying with us, and they are more highly educated compared to my parents. So the way that they can inculcate values and the language portion especially is much better than my parents, because my parents are not very educated and erm, they tend to do things rather haphazardly.
39	F	Mmmm mmm
40	Res	So do you encourage/discourage the grandparents from using any particular language with your children?
41	M	[[No]]
42	F	[[Not]] consciously. The only thing we do remind them is like when it comes to grammar or if there is a mixture of languages then we do state that they should not mix it, just to avoid confusion.
43	Res	So, what are the grandparents' roles and responsibilities as? Are they mainly the caregivers or educators? And is it a collaborative relationship, or erm, would you propose something and they try and follow it?
44	F	That's an interesting question. Erm, they, when we set up this arrangement, I think we won't run away from the fact that they spend a lot of time with YZ. In terms of caregiving, I think it would not be fair to say that we are the main caregivers, even though (my wife) does half-day. I think when you take the view of the educator, that's where you see who's the main caregiver in that sense. The arrangement was really spontaneous in that sense. I don't think either side ever sat down to decide that this is the way, we had a common purpose and goal that we need to bring him up well, be it linguistically, emotionally, physically, and spiritually – we know the end goal. They really went ahead and did what they did. There are times where we do see things that we aren't too happy with, such as like exposure to say certain Youtube videos and stuff like that, daddy has been really receptive. But then we will just vet and let

		him know and he'll be fine. In that sense it's an iterative process that we continue to refine, you know, as we go along. They of course have the benefit of bringing us as children up, so they are now more polished as well.
45	Res	Hmmm, okay, so M, how big a part do you think grandparent caregivers play in education, especially language education.
46	M	Very...a great great deal. Because they are with them most of the time because my kid goes to school from 8 to 12, it's just half a day, and the rest of the day is spent at home with the grandparents. So if the grandparents doesn't ahhh don't speak good English or mandarin, it will affect how the child speaks in the future. And school is just a small part, and I always believe that the parents or the main caregiver is the child's first teacher.
47	Res	So will you correct the grandparent if the language being used is inappropriate/wrong? (e.g. grammatical errors, wrong word, or maybe a better word can be used)
48	M	[[Yes, we do...]]
49	F	[[Yeah, yes,]] we would, to the best of our abilities. There are times where either side or both sides may be right as well, and we're quite open about it.

## Transcript 2: Interview with YZ's grandparents

Date of interview: 9 January 2017

Time: 6pm (1800hrs)

Line	Speaker	Transcription
1	Res	What role do you see yourself as playing, with your grandchildren?
2	GM	Well, I can impart values... I can also teach, I can also read to them, and have fun with them.
3	GF	But of course, the main thing is to educate them, give them the correct values, and at the same time, is helping the family members, the younger family members, the children, so that they have time to go to work. But the main thing is still, the main objective is still to be able to impart the correct values and our culture to them.
4	Res	So why do you think the parents ask you to help take care of their children?
5	GM	Well, they are at work, and there is no – well, there's the maid – but I guess we feel that perhaps it is useful to make sure that they speak properly and talk clearly, express themselves properly, in a language that they will be comfortable when they go to school, or when they are playing with other kids.
6	GF	Yes, mainly, because they have no ti-(time), they have to devote so much time in their work, so they have less time in taking care of the children, so we have to come in to help them.
7	Res	So, would you say that they trust you to teach the right things? So where do skills such as language come in? Do they choose you to do that?
8	GF	No, they leave it to me. They leave it to me. I, I think, English is still the main language here. So I speak to him in English.
9	Res	So who instituted that English is the main language here?
10	GF	Who instituted? I think its, er, is the whole family, actually is me and the whole family. We speak in English, so, very naturally, we will use that.
11	Res	So who do you think has a greater say in teaching the grandchildren? You or the parents?
12	GM	Well, it should be the parents, by right! But I think it depends on how

		much time they can have with the child, I mean, who has more time with the child. So, inevitably, the person who probably has more time with the child would have an advantage, in that sense.
13	Res	And how about you GF?
14	GF	Who has a greater say? In this case, er, I think I have the greatest say, they have no say. They just leave it to me. They trust that I will teach them the correct language. So I have the greatest say. They have less time to be in contact with their children, so they have to leave it to me. In fact, they are at my mercy (laughs).
15	Res	Do you think that bilingualism is important for the kid?
16	GM	In the Singapore context, yes. Because they are required to do it the very first year when they enter primary school. There's no running away from it, so the earlier you expose them to two languages, the better.
17	GF	Yah, and because they have to...they have to, survive in different environments. So, the first other language that they have to is their family language, which they can relate to their elder and also, relate to their relatives.
18	Res	So what family language?
19	GF	Family language, like their own – in this case it is Chinese. Instead of dialect, it is Chinese now, because – if you're trying to relate to, let's say, 大伯 <i>da4bo2</i> “eldest uncle”, or 三伯 <i>san1bo2</i> “third uncle”...my brother, he has to use mandarin. So I thought, that it is important for him to at least, get in touch with their culture and their family affairs.
20	Res	So do you feel that the parents and yourselves are doing enough to expose the children to two languages? Like for them to grow up bilingual?
21	GF	Apparently not. Because, unconsciously, we don't do it. So it's not enough. In fact, they should have not just one extra language, they should have more languages, so to, to adapt to the global world. They should have more than two languages.
22	Res	So since they are at your mercy, as you said just now, do you feel that you are doing enough?
23	GF	Obviously not (chuckles). So I have to consciously remind myself that I have to pump in some Chinese to him.

24	GM	Mmm, yah, but the parents, I think they try lah. They have enrolled him for some fun Chinese come January, and the mother also makes an effort to talk to him in Chinese as and when she has the time.
25	Res	Do you think you would correct the parents if they use language incorrectly? Like for example, if they make grammatical mistakes, or if they use the wrong words, et cetera.
26	GM	Erm, maybe in a more indirect way, I guess.
27	Res	Like for example?
28	GM	I mean I won't outwardly say that that's the wrong thing to say, or the wrong choice of words, but, I may repeat it using my terms. Rather than say, oh, that's wrong, or inaccurate.
29	Res	Mmmmm, okay, okay. How about you, GF?
30	GF	Mmmmm, yah, indirectly, but we will definitely advise them, just like they will also correct me if I'm wrong, If I'm using the sentence wrongly or poorly.
31	Res	How would you describe how you and the parents take care of the children?
32	GM	How would I describe, like in what way?
33	Res	In the sense that, how do you view yourself and the parents in taking care of the children? Are you collaborators, or are you a helper, or what is your role?
34	GM	Well I guess in one sense it's collaboration, in another sense it's helper, because it depends on – I mean if they are around, and I see my role as minimal, and interference. But when they are not around, I think I become the disciplinarian, and I guess, the one who establishes his routine. But come weekends, of if the parents are around, I just do my own thing and leave the kid to them. Of course sometimes I still do suggest or remind them that, yeah, maybe it's time for his fruit or he needs water, because yeah, Mondays to Fridays he's got into some kind of routine anyway. So, come weekends, there is a little bit more free play, but he kind of still sticks to the same routine, because I think the parents also don't want to disturb his routine too much. So basically, that's how it runs.
35	GF	I think, for me, it's collaborator, because we have to bring up the children

		in the way that this family want the child to be. So in this case, yah, it's collaborator, because the children and myself have to set what sort of values, and what sort of language we want to teach the child. It's a collaborator, yah.
36	Res	So if you had to put it on a scale of 100%, what kind of proportion of power or authority to make decisions for language do you think you have?
37	GF	Mmm, I think I have very little. I should, to me, I have about 30%? I will leave the 70% to them. Because they are the parents.
38	GM	Yeah, I guess, around there...
39	Res	Alright then, do you feel that the parents respect your autonomy to take care of the grandchildren? Or are there instances in which you feel that you have to do it their way, or a certain way?
40	GF	Right now, yes, yes, they give me the full autonomy, or full authority to take care of my grandson.
41	Res	And you, GM?
42	GM	I think generally they leave it very much to me. And I think they respect the fact that I have the experience, and so far, their kids seem to be in good hands, so I think they're quite comfortable with the arrangement.
43	Res	Then do you feel that the parents ever impose a certain way in which they want you to speak to the child, for example?
44	GM	They don't want us to mix our languages – English is English and Chinese is Chinese.
45	GF	Yes, they do. Er, they, of course, want me to speak in the correct form of grammatical correctness of the sentence, and also the pronunciations, they do, they always give me feedback and even corrected me sometimes.

### Transcript 3: Interview with JJ's parents

Date of interview: 17 December 2016

Time: 4pm (1600hrs)

Line	Speaker	Transcription
1	Res	Is it important for your child to be bilingual?
2	F	I think it's quite important because in Singapore you have to be, I mean, efficient(proficient) in your languages English and Chinese. I think it's important lah err for academics, of course lah, if they can I will more prefer them to pick up more language
3	Res	How about M? What are your thoughts about bilingualism? Is it important for your child or your children to be bilingual?
4	M	Mm, of course it is. Yah, because, although they can, I suppose, right now, all in school are about talking in English lah. They learn English more, so if at home we can start early with their Mandarin, will be better lor. Even though in childcare or in school, I supposed right now they are all English-speaking, so if it is okay to have both language to bilingual right, it will help them in their future, you know, to understand people or get to social with other people more. So, of course it is good for them.
5	Res	Then what are your aspirations for your children's language proficiency? Like how bilingual is enough?
6	M	How... Like at least they can communicate, with others? Ya, there's no problem communicating. Or if they can write good in essay or composition will be better for them also. It helps them to note down their thoughts, and also, er, because communicating right now, even though in e-mails right, or we do social media with other people through computers, so er, if they can... not even talk but write, also will be very good lor. But not until excel in very far, like but at least communication is not a problem to them.
7	F	Yes erm for English, I expect them to be moreeee...I mean better than their Chinese. Because for me I still think English is more important, but as for Chinese if they can give me a 80+ or 70+ range upon 100 I'm more than happy. Yah lah, for me last time I've been struggling in my

		English so is that's why now I'm more emphasize on English for them lah. Because for them Chinese I believe I can teach them and I'm quite efficient, erm quite good at it.
8	Res	Oh okay lah, so like speaking and listening lah, that kind of thing?
9	M	Ah, yes
10	Res	Mm okay. So if you were to need to rate your child's language proficiency on a scale of 1 to 7, like 1 being very very bad and 7 being very very good, like what expectations do you have for English?
11	M	For both of my kids?
12	Res	Uh, yeah.
13	F	Mmmm maybe 5 and 3...
14	M	Okay, for the elder one, right now he's 4 years old. So I will rate him around, like, 4? (laughs) Yeah, because, erm, my parents is communicating in Mandarin to them, Chinese, then, as parents, we did the English part lah, because, they're not so good in that. So, at least let them have a balance of like, both language. In terms of the elder one lah, I think he mastered it, so far so good, at his age. So I will rate him at 4. For the little one, erm, because she's erm, only 2, she can speak, right now she can speak well in Mandarin. She can put it in sentence, can communicate. But for, for English part she's not, erm, that far yet. So far she only can listen to, erm, simple instructions. She understand and listen to instructions but she can't express herself well in English yet. So probably I'll just rate her at 2?
15	Res	Ooh okay okay, so then Chinese eh? How would you rate their Chinese?
16	M	Okay, er, for their Chinese, for the elder one also will be around, 4? Or, around 4 to 5? Then for the little one, I'll rate her at erm, 3?
17	F	Mmmm mmmmm.
18	Res	Then do you expect them to, let's say, by the time they reach primary school or secondary school, do you expect them to be a 7 or something?
19	M	7 ah? (laughs) Must put in a lot of effort! (laughs) Yah, correct. If, in order to have 6 or 7, I suppose lah, as parents, must coach them ourselves also. Then er, put them through enrichment class, in order to

		get the level. So if they can it will be good but if they cannot it they learn along the way lor. And I think the most important part is to let them enjoy the language learning it's not to pressure or stress them. If they are not very language talented they will find it very difficult and grow up they may even hate the language you know. I think it's the fun part to let them learn and whatever they say we say "oh you're right", and there's many ways of expressing yourself.
20	F	Yeah, most important is they enjoy learning, expectations don't need so high for now.
21	Res	So then like that just now you were mentioning that guys will try to speak one language to them lah is it?
22	F	[[yes yes]]
23	M	[[Haha]] we try to
24	Res	So you will actively try to speak one language with your children?
25	F	[[Mmmmm]]
26	M	[[Err I]] will mix lah, sometimes it's mandarin. But for the elder one, because in childcare in school he speaks mostly English because his teachers are mostly Malays. So for him I suppose it's quite well balanced. So in the day time if my parents or his grandparents speak mandarin to him I'll just make it balanced by speaking English at night.
27	F	I speak to them English when I am at home, scold them also use English hahaha.
28	Res	Hahaha okay, so then is there a main 'language teacher' at home? Like I mean between you and the grandparents or say you your spouse?
29	M	Erm not really. So everyone helps a bit
30	F	I think it's equally divided because the grandparents, during day time we are not around. Most of the time, my elder one will be at a childcare, and the younger one at the grandparent's house so the grandparents they will try to teach the younger one new things. When I go back I can find that she can improve quite a bit she pick up new things. So I think it's quite helpful that you grandparents do teach them, and sometimes it's not just on the academic side, like sometimes when they do things from the things they do they try to teach them so I think it's quite helpful.

31	Res	Do you consciously choose who will speak what language to speak to your children?
32	M	No no no, initially we were quite conscious about that, but as time goes by 就 let it be lor, so if you're comfortable speaking to him in Mandarin, then go ahead lor...I won't say that eh 你一定要跟他讲英文 <i>ni3yi1ding4yao4jiang3yin1wen2</i> "you must speak English", errr, but he knows that if you once you speak English to them, they will reply back English to you, so if you speak Mandarin they will reply in mandarin. So they know it's a one way channel – so not necessary that 他看到 <i>ni3kan4dao4</i> "when you see" grandparents 就要讲华语 <i>jiu4yao4jiang3hua2yu3</i> "must speak in Mandarin" or parents 就是英语 <i>jiu4shi4yin1yu3</i> "must be in English" it's not like that lor, it depends on what language you speak to them.
33	F	Yah, but now I find that because the older one goes to childcare, I think 90% of the time communicate in English, and that's more than enough. So now sometimes I will switch to Chinese also, but but but because erm my in-laws (and) my parents is all communicate in Chinese so most of the time I still prefer English lah, to balance.
34	Res	Ooh, M, based on what you're saying, so the kid usually speaks in the language that the they are spoken to?
35	M	Ah yes. Which I find it quite good. It means that they are quite effective about the language, like there is not much barrier. That means that if you speak mandarin to the kids right, the kid will reply you in mandarin, freely, 不会想到说你 <i>bu4yao4xiang3dao4shuo1ni3</i> "don't think that if you" speak mandarin to me then I reject mandarin and I don't want to speak mandarin and I reply you in English. But I feel that a lot of kids now right very reluctant to speak mandarin, or it's just like the parents focus on English on too much and at home they don't speak mandarin to them also. So it's like when they reach primary school right they had this problem of accepting mandarin or be able to write them. So I think it's good lor, if like right now they don't know how to write, but they can speak well and communicate then that's good enough.

36	Res	What kind of media do you expose your children to?
37	M	Both of them, for cartoons right, we show them youtubes for English and mandarin also. To let them not only learn English songs, but Chinese songs also. Even er, in church service right, then I put my kids in the Chinese portion lor, for the Chinese part. So they will learn like Chinese songs, all the Christian Chinese songs lor. Then in school they will learn like mostly like mandarin or English songs also. So in youtube you find mostly English songs, and you hardly find any Chinese songs also. It's quite difficult for you to, unless you go and buy CDs or what lah.
38	F	Yah, and reading to the children we read English and Chinese books also.
39	Res	Okay okay, so how is the reading like? English one day, Chinese one day? Or more English than Chinese?
40	F	[[Mmm, no no]]...
41	M	[[Ooh no no]], it's balanced it's quite mixed lor. Like for my mum, like normally my mum reads books to them in Mandarin then I will just find English books to read to them.
42	Res	What about in the car? What do they listen to in the car?
43	F	Classical music, like say we play normal jazz, But we will also play Christian songs when they cannot appreciate
44	Res	So normally these songs are English or Chinese songs?
45	F	[[English, Eng...]]
46	M	[[English English]], it's quite difficult to find mandarin songs hahaha, but anyway they get to learn it in church
47	Res	What are the grandparent's roles in taking care of the children? Are they mainly the caregivers or educators?
48	F	I think got both lah, educator and caregiver...
49	M	Yah, taking care of the children they focus more on their basic needs lah, yah, correct, like bathe lah, then err basic hygiene, like mealtimes what they eat, what is good for them. All these I think it's quite naturally for the grandparents. Or go out take a walk, or play with them. For reading parts I'm quite blessed because my mother was a part time

		child care teacher, so she got a lot of the passed down materials. So she does make use of the materials to show them...ahhh. It's a pear, an apple, then you got to physically touch the fake ones lah. Then got the stories also, those cardboard, those flash cards, so quite good lor. But this is for my mother's role lah, for my father his part is to just assist lor, like because he's a retiree, so his part is to assist her, like while she is cooking meals he will assist her. Like play with them, talk to them...like ask him lor, what you learn in school today, what happened in school? Something like that lor. The main aim is to talk more and let them express themselves more.
50	Res	Ahhh, okay okay do you feel that you need to listen to what the grandparents say? Or follow their suggestions/ways of bringing up your child?
51	F	Erm, yes lah, they will suggest lor. Like what they observed him right then they say today he what what what, and then suggest in part like how to...we will take in their suggestion lah, and then we will see how lor.
52	M	Yeah, but because they take care Monday to Friday mah, so sometimes it's quite tiring, so like erm, whatever they do, I'm quite okay. So when we came back when they want to pass it over to us we have to like...轮流 <i>lun2liu2</i> "take turns" lah otherwise, very tiring.
53	Res	So do you encourage/discourage the grandparents from using any particular kind of language with your children?
54	M	随便 <i>sui2bian4</i> "anything" lor. If they want to speak dialect also better. If they can lah (haha) if they know how to, erm...because it's a good skill lah. Not like at my times, in my time, they only 多讲华语 <i>duo1jiang3hua2yu3</i> "speak more mandarin" right, in my time lah, so we lost the benefits of speaking or knowing like dialects. So if they can, they are able to learn, or get a chance to learn, I think it's good lah.
55	Res	So Will you openly correct the grandparent if the language being used is inappropriate/wrong? Like say, for grammatical errors, wrong word, or maybe a better word can be used?

56	M	Mmmmm, not so, because normally because they will speak to them in Mandarin, and they are quite strong, so I won't correct them, they (are) usually right.
57	Res	How about you, F? Do you feel that you need to listen to what the grandparents say? Or follow their suggestions/ways of bringing up your child? OR do you encourage/discourage the grandparents from using any particular language with your children? Or it's like up to them?
58	F	Normally I will discourage if some of the language they use is erm...not very ideal, when you pick up these kind of language it's easier but if you want them to correct it in future it will take times. Normally If I hear something that's not very suitable I will tell them to try and avoid using. Sometimes at times it's their habit, they will also try, because if they already try I also won't say anything, because I know they are trying not to say those things but it's a habit thing lah once in a while when they communicate they just naturally use.
59	Res	Ahh, okay, then will you openly correct the them if the language being used is inappropriate/wrong? Does it occur with M's parents or your own parents? Such as grammatical errors, wrong words, or maybe a better word can be used?
60	F	I think it's more towards my parents. I think M's parents are more educated – so once we told them they will just avoid, but for my parents side...yah...they just think it's normal, why you must restrict.

## Transcript 4: Interview with JJ's grandmother

Date of interview: 29 December 2016

Time: 10:30pm (2230hrs)

\*Note: Only JJ's grandmother was interviewed as JJ's grandfather spent very little time with his grandchildren (See Table 3 and 4), and preferred that his wife (JJ's grandmother) speak on his behalf.

Line	Speaker	Original Transcript	English Transcription
1	Res:	您为什么认为您的儿女要您照顾他们的孩子？	Why do you think your children asked you take care of their children?
2	GM:	哦， actually err 我是在 glory 幼稚园教幼稚班的，那个时候 (JJ's Mother)生那个老大，JR，她就一直在找保姆啦，然后我也就觉得我做了整四十年的幼稚园老师，我也是要休息了，那有一天我就说“你不要找了吧，我就帮你看”，她就很高兴啦，就这样开始啦。	Oh, actually, I was teaching at Glory Kindergarten. At that time, JJ's mother was expecting the older child, JR, and she was looking for a nanny. So, I felt that since I had been working at the kindergarten for a whole 14 years, it's time to tone down and take a break. So one day I said, "You can stop looking, I'll help you look after the child." So she was very happy, and that's how it started.
3	Res:	那这样讲，他们两三岁的时候，就是你全时间照顾 JR 和 JN 吗？	As you said, when they were 2 or 3 years old, you looked after JR and JN full-time?
4	GM:	对对对，尤其是 JR，他前面的两年日夜都是在我这里，然后一直到星期五晚上他才回去，然后礼拜天晚上来，然后是拜一拜二这样一直到到拜五晚上才	Yes, especially for JR, his first two years was spent with me, day and night, all the way till Friday nights, only which he would return home. On Sunday nights he would come back, and then he would stay through Monday, Tuesday, all the way till

		回去。	Friday night, then return home.
5	Res:	啊, 那在教育孙子时, 谁掌握更多的权力? 您, 还是您的儿女? 就算你和他们在一起的时间更长?	Ah okay, so in educating the grandchildren, who has more authority? You, or your children?
6	GM:	在这两三年, 都我在教他们。就是, 会话啦、讲话啊、发言啊。因为时间都是跟我在一起吗, 晚上他们回去就很快就要睡觉了 lor。那么隔天早上就来。所以, 时间—我跟他—小孩子相处的时间对比上就很长 lor。所以, 一切都是我在跟他们讲话。那, 我都是用华语跟他们讲。	These two to three years, I have always been teaching them. Be it conversational skills, speaking, and how to express themselves. Because they spend most of their time with me – when they return home at night, it is very close to bedtime. And early the next morning they come again. So, with them, the time I spend with the kids is comparatively much longer. So, it's always me talking to them. And, I always speak to them in Mandarin.
7	Res:	您觉得您须要按照您孩子的意思照顾孙子吗? 就是说, 你必须根据他们的教育方式来照顾孙子吗?	Do you feel that you need to adhere to your children's wishes in taking care of the children? Meaning, you need to go according to their method of educating the children?
8	GM:	没有限制, 没有限制! (他们) 完全没有限制, 就让我去教。反而是...反而是我有时告诉他们可以怎么做。例如说, 叫他做一件事情, 一定要他去做, 要养成一个习惯啊。啊, 然后, 好像收拾玩具啦, 要他本身去收拾, 这样 lor。不可以家长来做。	No restrictions, no restrictions! (Parents) don't restrict me whatsoever, it's up to me to teach. Instead..instead, sometimes, I am the one who tells them what they could do. For example, when I tell them(JJ) to do something, I mean it, because I want them to cultivate that habit. For example, things like keeping the toys, I want them to do it themselves; parents shouldn't help.

9	Res:	那，教育方式啊、什么，全部都就靠你自己去做啦？ 他们就交给你啊？	Then, is the method of education, and so on, all up to you to do it yourself? Do they leave it all to you?
10	GM:	对，是，是。他们很放心，他们很迟才回，就是越来越迟啊，哇，整八点才回到家，才来吃晚餐。小孩子都打理得七七八八了，就差刷牙一刷牙我就交给他们去刷。	Right, yes. They feel very assured. They come by very late, in fact, later, and later. Only at 8 o' clock at night they return home, and only then do they have their dinner. The kids would be more or less prepared for bed, just save for brushing their teeth. The brushing of their teeth, I leave it to the parents to do.
11	Res:	那你刚才说，你跟他们对话通常是用中文啊？	You said just now that you spoke to them mainly in Mandarin, is that right?
12	GM:	嗯嗯嗯。	Yes
13	Res:	对你而言，双语教育对你的孙子有多重要呢？英语好就够了吗？英语华语都一样重要吗？	In your opinion, how important is bilingualism for your grandchildren? Is a good command of English enough? Or are both languages equally important?
14	GM:	是非常重要，我觉得。也是要他们学习听了了 lor。 现在要开始给他们—尤其这个小的，那个大的因为去 childcare 也懂了英文也在听，也在讲了。小的就三月份就要去 childcare 了，就要学习听 lor。他的妈妈也有跟他讲一部分的英文，他也有在学习听啦。	I think it is extremely important. It's time they learn how to listen to spoken language. Now is the time to start – especially the younger one. The older one, since attending childcare, has also learnt to understand and speak English. The younger one will start attending childcare in 3 months' time, so she will need to start learning. Their mother does also speak to her in some English, and she is learning to understand.
15	Res:	那这样的话，你觉得英文中文也都大概很重要啦？	In that case, you think that English and Chinese are equally

			important, right?
16	GM:	都重要。	They're both important.
17	Res:	若孙子的父母（即您的儿女）语言使用上出现偏误时，您是否会纠正他们？	If the parents of the grandchildren (in other words, your children) make any mistakes in their language, will you correct them?
18	GM:	会会会会。	I will, I will, I will, I will.
19	Res:	在小孩子面前也会纠正他们啊？	Even in front of the kids?
20	GM:	er, 我会—我不是骂啦，就是说，“你这样跟他讲比较好啊。”	Er, I will – not reprimand, but just say, ‘It's better if you said it this way.’
21	Res:	他们就会听，会接受啦？	And they will listen and accept it?
22	GM:	对对对。	Right, right.
23	Res:	你觉得您的儿女会尊重您在照顾孙儿女上的自主权吗？	Do you think your children respect your freedom in taking care of their children?
24	GM:	ya, ya, 会会会。	Yes, they do, they do.
25	Res:	就真的很听你们，照你们要怎样教就教？	They really listen to you and do it according to your way?
26	GM:	对对对	Yes yes yes.
27	Res:	您的儿女是否会纠正您在语言使用上的偏误？当他们纠正您的偏误时，您又有什么样的感受？	Will your children correct you when you make any mistakes in your language? And when they do so, how do you feel?
28	GM:	er, 比较少。	Er, not so much.

29	Res:	因为？有什么原因吗？	Because? Is there any particular reason?
30	GM:	我就如一件事啦。好像说，JJ's father 啦。有时候他教导孩子比较凶一点啦。他会用手指指着那个孩子大声骂啦。我会阻止他。过后我会阻止他。我会跟 JJ's mother 讲，我说，你跟 JJ's father 讲，以后要骂他 hor，要好好跟他讲，不要用手指着他骂。如果你这样做 hor，改天他也用手指指着你骂。你那个时候你不要惊讶，他会跟着你学习的。这就是其中一个例子。	Let's take an example. So JJ's father, sometimes he is fiercer in disciplining the children. He would use his finger to point at the child and scold loudly. I would stop him. After that I would stop him. I would tell JJ's mother, I said, tell JJ's father that if you want to scold the child in future, tell him properly, there's no need to point fingers at the child and scold him. If you do that, one day he will also point his fingers at you and scold you. When that time comes, don't be surprised. He will learn from you. And this is one example.
31	Res:	那你就是没有直接跟他说啦？	So you didn't tell him directly?
32	GM:	我没有直接跟 JJ's father 讲，我跟 JJ's mother 讲，叫她跟他讲。我怕他一伤他的自尊心啊。	I didn't tell JJ's father directly. I told JJ's mother, and told her to tell him. I was afraid that I would hurt his pride.
33	Res:	就是要有和平？	So it's to maintain the harmony?
34	GM:	对, 是的	Yes, indeed
35	Res:	请讲述您与您的儿女在照料孙儿女时所扮演的角色，例：您们是否会共同教育孙儿女，抑或是仅仅担任看护的工作？	Can you tell me about the roles that you and the parents play in the upbringing of the grandchildren? For example, are you collaborators in educating the child, or do you just take care of the child as a carer?
36	GM:	都有啊，都有。因为平时他们工作嘛，这些事情他	I think we're both (Collaborators and caregivers). Because

		们就做不到啦。那么礼拜六和礼拜他们就自己带回去就照顾。我就不看 lor, 他们自己看。偶尔他们星期六会在这里半天啦，偶尔。	they're(parents) usually working, so they can't help in bringing up the children lah. So they only take full responsibility of caregiving on Saturday and Sunday. I don't help out, they are responsible. Sometimes, they'll come over for half a day on saturday though.
37	Res:	您会使用什么方式来帮助您的孙子学习/习得语言？	So what methods do you employ to teach your grandchildren language?
38	GM:	会唱歌，唱儿歌，会讲故事。然后，日常生活，出外，会告诉他，一些看到的东西。如果在家里，我煮食的时候，他会在我旁边，两个小孩子会在我旁边。所以他们很小的时候就懂得大葱啦，蒜头，这些东西。辣椒啊，这些，他们懂的。我在洗菜啊，他懂的。瓜啊，之类，他懂的。他们懂得这些，辣不辣啊，大小，一些对比，他们都知道。虽然他们不认得哪一个字啊，但就是讲话啦，会话啦	I will sing, sing childrens songs, and tell them stories. Also, during their daily outdoor exposure, I will describe what we see to them. When we are at home, when I am cooking, they will be nearby, both children will be by my side. So since they were young they knew what onions, garlic, and condiments like these were. Chili lah, all these, they know. When i'm washing vegetables, they know too. All the different kinds of gourds, they know them too. They have knowledge about concepts of spiciness, size, and certain comparisons. So even though they don't know how to write the words, when they know what we are talking about when we are speaking.

## Transcript 5: Interview with CR's parents

Date of interview: 14 January 2017

Time: 8pm (2000hrs)

Line	Speaker	Transcript
1	Res:	How important is it for your child to be bilingual?
2	F:	Mmm, very important because as you know uh, if you want to be good in compositions uh, your language must be good so you can express it. I feel lah, because I went through O levels and all this.
3	Res:	Mmmm, okay.
4	M:	Is there like a scale to rate or something?
5	Res:	Yeah, if you were to rate it on a scale of 1 to 7, one being really bad, and 7, excellent, how important is it for your child to be bilingual?
6	M:	Mmmm about 5 like that.
7	Res:	Since you rate 5, can you describe how important it is for you?
8	M:	Mmmm I feel it's quite important because for them to converse, English is everywhere, you can converse. But Chinese is also important, because it's like our roots lor.
9	Res:	How about for you, F?
10	F:	How bilingual is enough uh? Like how much?
11	Res:	Yeah
12	F:	Hmmm, hopefully for CR, 5-6 lah. For both English and Chinese lah
13	Res:	Okay, so do you actively try to speak only one particular language with your children?
14	F:	Actually I only speak to CR in English, then my wife and mum will speak to her in Chinese.
15	Res:	So it's like one person, one language?
16	F:	Yeah, correct correct
17	Res:	What's your reason for that?
18	F:	Mmmm, I want her to...so that she won't always answer my parents in Chinese, but when I ask her in English she will reply me in English. Because currently her Chinese is stronger than English lah, so I'm trying to let her think...think of what she has learnt, so to balance up.

19	Res:	So how about you, M?
20	M:	Mmmm I think mix. Last time I used to speak to her more in Chinese, but then like recently I realize I converse more in English.
21	Res:	Ooh, okay, then is there a main 'language teacher' at home? Like I mean between you and the grandparents or say you your spouse?
22	M:	Yeah, F focus more on English, then the rest will speak in Chinese
23	F:	Yah yah. We will read storybooks to her lah, and sometimes we will ask her to read along those bible verses.
24	Res:	Then do you consciously choose what language each person will speak to your children? Like do you state that the grandparents must use mandarin, or English or something to that effect?
25	M:	In dialect also, if they can lah. I mean my mum-in-law can speak simple English, so sometimes she will teach her in simple English, but mostly mandarin lah, but sometimes I also ask like my parents or parents-in-law, because they can now absorb more, to also teach her some dialect.
26	Res:	Why will you do that?
27	M:	Hmmm, like what I said don't want to lose lor. Like for me I cannot speak, so for my daughter if she can speak also quite good I mean, of course you know more language right, you can converse with more people right.
28	Res:	And for you, F?
29	F:	Yeah, I always ask my mum to speak to her in Hokkien, or like 客家话 <i>ke4jia1hua4</i> "Hakka language", maybe it's like difficult so she stopped after a while. I also wish to introduce it to her at a young age. Cos like during about 3 years old they can absorb more languages, that's what I think lah.
30	Res:	Ooh, did you actually read up about this as a technique or a methodology?
31	F:	Ooh, not really lah, I didn't do much research about it, it's actually like just my own observation lah. Maybe because when I was young I find that my English was weak because my parents always speak to me in English. So trying to get both her language to be strong lah.
32	Res:	Ahh, okay, then M, when you guys as parents are reading to CR, is it in English or mandarin or both?
33	M:	Both eh.

34	Res:	Then the proportion leh? Usually more English or Chinese?
35	M:	Actually 50-50 eh.
36	Res:	Then how about TV? Or Youtube? All those kind of programmes?
37	M:	More of English than Chinese.
38	F:	Yeah, she likes to watch those kind of 'Hi-5' or like discovery channel that kind. You know there's a toggle app to let her watch the local Okto shows.
39	Res:	So usually, she watches English shows lah?
40	F:	Yeah correct correct.
41	Res:	Then when you guys are travelling in the car, what do y'all let CR listen to?
42	F:	[[Christian Songs..]]
43	M:	[[Songs]] and praises, like children worship songs in English.
44	Res:	I understand that CR only recently started full day child care – like 3 months ago. Before that, most of the time it was the grandparents taking care right?
45	M:	Mmmm, my mum in-law yeah.
46	Res:	What are the reasons you chose these set of grandparents to take care of your children? Does their language use feature as a consideration?
47	M:	Because only my mum in-law not working, the rest all working.
48	Res:	What is the grandparent's roles in taking care of the children? Are they mainly the caregivers or educators?
49	F:	Mmm, because my mum knows how to cook lah, so then she will mostly take care of the nutrition and stuff...
50	M:	Mmmm, yeah, I think for my mum-in-law, because they are not really like the educated persons, so it's more like caregiver. But as in for life, and 人生经历 <i>ren2sheng1jin1yan4</i> "life experiences" it's more like they are the educator lah.
51	Res:	How about when it comes to language eh?
52	M:	I think my mum in law teaches my daughter some mandarin, and some books to write. You know teach her the hands, the legs...so before schools he knows all the hands, eyes, legs in mandarin. So she also got teach all the how to hold pencil that kind of thing.
53	Res:	If grandparents spend most time with the children, do you feel they have

		more ‘say’ than the parents?
54	M:	Errrrrr, you can say so lah. But sometimes, most of the time, we will, how to say...negotiate and come to a conclusion.
55	F:	Errrr, tsk, I feel there are certain...how to say, because now we are actually asking my mum to help, so in her view it's like, when I help, sometimes I must have her way, so some things when we feel like we want to intervene in some things sometimes she will say “then y'all take care of yourself”.
56	Res:	So sometimes need to 听她的 <i>ting1ta1de4</i> “listen to her” lah?
57	F:	Correct correct. We have to give in lah, give and take lah, because she is helping us a lot. But whatever we think is not right we will try and correct, maybe later lah, maybe let everything cool down first, then we try to discuss and talk again.
58	Res	So it's seems like it's important to maintain the peace at home?
59	F:	Yes, definitely, and also we are a bit like...indebted to them because they are helping.
60	Res:	Mmmm, okay, so M, do you find that your mum-in-law will also like 发表他们的意见 <i>fa1biao3ta1men2de4yi4jian4</i> “share their views” that kind of thing?
61	M:	Yeah, she will lah, I let her have a say because she spends most of the time with my daughter ma...so I cannot say...I let her take care then cannot like this or like that you know...cos she's the one who spends most of the time with my daughter. But if I feel that it's not right, I will of course just let her know lah.
62	Res:	So are there examples of things like she was strongly opinionated about things, then you felt that you and your husband had to give in, with regard to bringing up the children?
63	M:	Mmm there is lah, but I can't really recall the instance lah. Then she will be very angry [[lah]]
64	F:	[[Yeah]], she will say like “then you all take care lah”
65	Res:	So in that case, do you feel that you need to listen to what the grandparents say? Or follow their suggestions/ways of bringing up your child?
66	M:	Mmmmm, like partially. I mean I will still listen to them, but I will also get

		more and ask my friends and see if it's the right way before come to conclusion.
67	F:	Normally she wont' give me the suggestions lah, she will just do it, then I give the suggestions. So like normally she will teach it her own way and then I will add in. I will let her do her own way first then later try and suggest a bit lor.
68	Res:	So then now if we just talk about their language or education...was there any instance where you want them to learn more English or Mandarin, then the grandparents had a different point of view?
69	M:	Haha...there is lah..heh. Like for me I feel that actually they should speak to CR, we converse to her in, cos she keeps wanting me to converse more with CR in English, because she keeps seeing her other nephew he is very fluent in English, so maybe I can speak more in English with CR lah. But then I feel that, I think it's better that we speak to her in Mandarin, because next time in school she will definitely speak converse in English, because of the classmates most of them will speak in English ah, so I'm not worried about the English part, I'm more worried about the Mandarin. Because I feel that, tsk, Chinese is equally important lah.
70	F:	Mmmm mmmm. Equally lah.
71	Res:	So then, M, do you feel that you have to listen to her? Or you also give in and try?
72	M:	Mmm yah that's why recently I tell you recently I converse more with her in English lah. Initially I was like...uhhh, I feel that it's not necessary lah...but slowly slowly I give in and follow like that.
73	Res:	Will you guys openly correct the grandparent if the language being used is inappropriate/wrong? For example, like grammatical errors, wrong word, or maybe a better word can be used
74	M:	Mmm...for me I think I will straightaway say, because after that I will forget.
75	Res:	F, how about you?
76	F:	Mmm, usually I think elderly they don't like people to step in, so I will wait until she cools down then we will discuss it again.
77	Res:	Are you suggesting that the Chinese cultural values of like 敬老尊贤

		<i>jin4lao3zun1xian2</i> “respecting elders” is still very much a part of your household?
78	F:	Yes, yes, definitely lah.
79	Res:	Okay, M, just now F talked about maintaining harmony, so how would you were to rate the relationship between you and the in-laws, because there are a lot of things that they need to help with taking care of the child, do you find that the relationship is strained in any way?
80	M:	Mmm yeah, yeah, I will try to maintain the harmony. Because I feel that we need them lah haha..that's why...because most of the time they are the ones helping me mah, if not we cannot work, and anything I can still fall on them.

## Transcript 6: Interview with CR's grandmother

Date of interview: 30 January 2017

Time: 9pm (2100hrs)

\*Note: Only CR's grandmother was interviewed as CR's grandfather is still working full-time. As seen in CR's daily schedule (Table 5), her grandmother is the main caregiver.

Line	Speaker	Original Transcript	English Translation
1	Res:	您为什么认为您的儿女要您照顾他们的孩子？	Why do you think your children want you to take care of their children?
2	GM:	一方面因为我们比较亲 lah, 因为自己的孙自己照顾当然比较好啦。另外一方面也是因为我没有工作啦, 就试试看 lor。多一个孙就多开心一点 lor。又辛苦啦, 但是现在大了就挺开心的。	On one hand it's because we are close kin, it's better for your grandchildren to be taken care of by your own family members. On another hand, I don't work, so [I don't mind] trying it out. Another grandchild is more reason to be happy. It's also tough, but now that [she's] older it's quite satisfying.
3	Res:	所以大多数都是您在照顾啦？	So, you take care of the child most of the time, right?
4	GM:	啊！是啊，大多数都是跟我。有时还几乎 24 小时都跟我。	Ah, yes, most of the time [she is] with me. Sometimes, [she is] with me for almost 24 hours.
5	Res:	您觉得您必须要按照您孩子的意思照顾孙子吗？就是说，你必须根据他们的教育方式来照顾孙子吗？	Do you feel that you need to adhere to your children's way of taking care of the grandchildren? Meaning, you need to follow their way of educating the child?
6	GM:	Umm 我，有时候。。。也要配合啦。他们有时我觉得说，比较那种柔一点。我们的教法会比较，老土的	Sometimes, I think I also need to accommodate. Sometimes, I feel that they are too lenient. Our old-fashioned way of

		话久会比较凶！Ahh, 他【们】有时会比较凶, 不过, 因为不同吗, 因为她跟我在我身边, 跟我很亲密吗, 所以有时我“发火”的时候她就很好, 会讲“ok lah 奶奶, 你不要生气 lah”then 她会讲好像说“ok lah 奶奶我爱你 lah, ok 我不会 lah。”	educating is stricter. At times, they will be a bit fiercer, but, it's different because [CR] spends a lot of time with me, so we are closer. Hence, when I get angry, she will say "OK lah, grandma, don't be angry lah", then CR will say "OK lah, grandma I love you lah, ok, I won't do it [anymore] lah"
7	Res:	Wah okay okay。这样的话, 你的孩子啊, 就是孩子的家长, 有没有好像要你根据他们的教育方式来照顾孩子吗?	Wah, Okay okay, then, do your children, referring to the parents of the young children, seem to want you to follow their way of educating their child?
8	GM:	Oh hahaha, 我不懂为什么, 他们又很好喔! 反而是我要求他们多过, 他不是要求。他们每次讲, “er 不要紧, 你身为奶奶, 你要怎样教他你就教她。	Oh (laughs). I don't know why, but they are very good! On the contrary, I am the one who makes requests of them, not the other way around. They always say, "It's okay, don't worry, as the grandmother, you can teach her in any way you prefer".
9	Res:	Orh, okay okay.	Orh, okay okay.
10	GM:	啊, 他们是蛮让我 la, 他(们)每次说: “不用紧的, 用你的, 你要怎样教你就教”她在慢慢的成長中, 只是要我们注意到他, 怎样的成長 lor, 没有什么的话他们讲不用担心的。他们父母是有跟我这样讲过 la。“不要担心, 总之你看她, 大概就是说你基本上你怎样看, 就造你以前这样...就怎样看他这样 lor。	They give me quite a lot of freedom, they always say, "It's okay, use your way. However you want to teach, just go ahead." As she grows up, they just want me to keep an eye on her development. If there's nothing significant they won't be worried. Her parents did tell me before, "Don't worry, so long as you look after her well, no matter how you do it, just do it in the same way as you did before in the past."

11	Res:	他们就是尊重你	They respect your methods
12	GM:	很尊敬 la, 尊重我, 我的教法 la。有时我真的...有时他真的不对的时候, 我跟你讲我也是拿那个幽幽的藤条 hor, 我就是我就是说要打她的。then 她们也是让我 lor。	Very respectful, they respect my way of teaching. Sometimes when she's really in the wrong, I tell you, I take out the thin cane, and I say I will hit her. And they also let me.
13	Res:	okok, 这样对你而言, 双语教育对你的孙子你觉得有多重要呢?	Okay, then, in your opinion, how important is bilingual education for your grandchild?
14	GM:	我觉得...我觉得很重要 la, 她真的是要两。。两个语言都要会 lor	I feel... I feel that it's very important. She really needs to know both languages.
15	Res:	Ohh, 这样你觉得他的英文比较重要还是中文比较重要, 还是两个都一样重要?	ooh, so do you feel that English is more important than Mandarin, or are they equally important?
16	GM:	Err, 就是因为我们现在就是在讨论这个问题 lor, 我跟他讲, 现在这个孙子一直在跟我讲华语, 他以前完全话语有很多那些 er 好像你平时你在谈话, 在讲话有没有, 他都可以跟你讲出来了。可是我跟他讲在英文方面, 你...你们就很少跟他讲是吗? 我说变成...我就认为英文重要。可是 er 他的妈妈就有跟我讲:“我反而是觉得华语重要, 因为。。因为他在华文方面 huh, 他出到外面是很少讲话语的。”	Err, we are currently discussing this issue – I told her parents that my granddaughter and I always converse in Mandarin, and she already has the ability to use Mandarin for daily interactions. Yet when it comes to speaking English, I say “You guys [Parents] seldom use English with her, right?” Hence, I feel that English is important [for CR]. But her mother will say to me “To me, Mandarin is more important, because she [CR] will be exposed to very little Mandarin outside”.

17	Res:	是是	Yes, yes
18	GM:	就是他接触的人都是讲英语的。学校大多数也是讲，除非上华文课。所以她就跟我讲，他说：“你放心啦，让他去自然讲话语不要紧的。英文方面他们自然慢慢”，可是我跟他们讲：“你没有教他，他没有一个正确的英文 leh。我说他，等一下讲的英文是那种“rojak”- 不标准的英文 leh。Then 他们一直说：不担心啦...叫我不用担心...可是我会很担心啊。	So those people she will meet outside are English speakers. Apart from Chinese classes, English is always used in school. So she tells me that “Don’t worry lah, let nature take its course, don’t worry. She will acquire English slowly, naturally”. And I said “But if you don’t teach her proper English, she may speak a ‘rojak’, non-standard English”. But they will always say “don’t worry lah” and tell me not to worry...but I will be very worried ah.
19	GM:	我会很担心（哈哈）	I will be very worried (laughs).
20	Res:	ok, 所以你这样子劝他们，你是希望他们会多用英文 lah?	Okay, so you advised them, in the hopes they will use more English, is that right?
21	GM:	1啊，我觉得说我用英文，我讲了会讲错，所以我是有要求他们要讲英文的 lah。	Ah, I feel that if I use English, I will have speak it wrongly, and thus I will want them to speak more English [to CR] lah.
22	Res:	ok ok, 这样的话，你要求他们讲英文他们 er 会就听吗？还是 er 他们有自己的看法也是 la?	Okay, if that’s the case, did they listen to your advice to speak more English? Or do they have their own opinions?

23	GM:	er, 这个我有跟他们讲 la, then 他 er, 头, 头, er 他起初的时候他们都是一直跟她讲华文, 后来我跟他讲说“不可以 la, 你们最好是在家里也跟他们交流英文的 lor”。可是我也没有想到, 他们也是应为配合我们还是讲华语对不对, 因为我们跟。。好像跟爷爷奶奶都是讲华语 ma, 可是我没有想到她去了 childcare 之后 hor, 她真的是学很快 leh。她现在英文很多她慢慢都掌握得到 leh。	I did tell them before, then, at first, they kept speaking to her in Mandarin, after which I told them ‘That won’t do, it’s best if you (parents) also speak to him in proper English at home.’ But never did it occur to me that they speak Mandarin also to accommodate me, because when speaking to the grandparents it’s always in Mandarin. However, I never thought that after she started attending childcare, she really learnt very fast. There’s so much English but she is slowly getting the hang of it.
24	Res:	ah	Ah
25	GM:	我没有想到, 真的 leh, 不用, 不用去去那个 la。因为在外面的时候啊, 那些 malay 跟她对话 hor, 她会。。会跟他应英语, 所以我觉得说 eh 这方面。。当然她没有这样流利了 la, 可是她会听懂, 会怎样跟他谈 lor。	I never imagined, really, there’s no need to adopt that (suggestion to speak more English at home). Sometimes, when we are out, we meet some Malays who start speaking to her. And she will respond in English, so I think, in this aspect – of course she’s not so fluent, but she can understand, and knows how to respond in conversation.
26	Res:	Oh	Oh
27	GM:	她在英语方面真的是很快, 可能学校一直有谈, 或者她的同。。同学啊, 她的朋友啊。啊这样, 同学我看了, er 那些好像有些印度人啊, 马来人啊, 还有些 er 华人 lor 他们也是讲英语的, 他们就是不会	For English, her learning is really very fast. Perhaps the school focuses [on English], or her classmates, her friends – I’ve seen them, those Indians, Malays, and some Chinese, they also speak English, they just don’t speak Chinese. Except for those Chinese

		讲话语。啊。。除了中国。。中国的，还是 malaysian 的 hor, ah 会跟她交话语。	nationals, or Malaysians – they will speak Mandarin.
28	Res:	orh ok, 所以这样其实不错啦，她英语华语都慢慢一起掌握 la	Oh okay, so that's actually not bad, she will gradually pick up both English and Mandarin.
29	GM:	Er 她的英语因该是慢慢。。慢慢有一点了啊，以前有时人家问她，她看他。。不知道怎样回答。	Her English should be – it's slowly taking shape. In the past when people asked her [a question], she would look at them, and not know how to respond.
30	Res:	orh	orh
31	GM:	去了学校之后，真的，在学校她真的可以学到很多。	After starting to attend school, really, in school [she] can really learn a lot.
32	Res:	好，可以！这样 er 你觉得你的孩子会尊重你照顾 er 你孙子的这个自主权吗？	Yes, okay. Then do you feel that your children will respect your autonomy in taking care of the child?
33	GM:	Err...通常 er 他们都。。Err ok, 有时候是他们看情况啊，有时我好像会硬硬这样的话，好像比如谈话来讲，他有时觉得说我。。我这方面不可以的话他就会跟我讲。。你这个是不可以的 lah。then 有时我也会跟他提 la, 就是我们彼此都。。都会 lah	Usually, they – sometimes they see the situation. Sometimes I will insist on a certain way, for example in speaking, they sometimes think... that in this aspect I can't do it this way, then they will tell me, 'you can't do this,' then, sometimes I will also raise it (their mistakes) to them. So we do it both ways.
34	Res:	彼此都会 lah, okok。	So it's both ways, okay.
35	GM:	因为当然因为儿子方面我们比较容易谈对不对？	Of course because it's my son it's easier to talk about it, right.

36	Res:	Um, 对对对	Erm, yes
37	GM:	比如是因为她好像他给我看他都知道我都很辛苦了，所以有时他也很少一些 umm... 这方面他就很少提 la。就不会了，不会像（我的孩子）说：“er ok 妈咪你...你这方面错，他就会讲你...”讲我了 ma	For example, because she(CR's mother) knows that in asking me to take care of CR it's tough for me, so they will try to raise issues (areas of contention). She won't, unlike my son who will say things like "Okay, Mummy, you are wrong here," and tell me off.
38	Res:	Oh	Oh
39	GM:	啊。。。因为 er 这个是我老实跟你讲。。。then 通常 是媳妇是。。。虽然她是这样 but 她会尊重我们，她 通常是不会有意见 lah	Because, I'll tell you honestly, usually the daughter-in-law – even though she's like that but she will respect us, she usually won't impose her views so much.
40	Res:	对对对	Yes, yes.
41	GM:	可能她比较 um 好像 er... 好像尊敬啊... 哈哈哈。	Maybe she's more... respectful. (laughs)
42	Res:	尊敬啊...对...	Respectful, yes.
43	GM:	不像自己孩子直接这样就“喔！妈咪你哪里可以... 你 不可以这样啊！”啊，又不一样 lor	Not like one's own child directly going 'oh! Mummy, do this! But you shouldn't do that!' That's different.
44	Res:	所以你可以讲述一下您与您的儿子，在照顾孙女的 时候你觉得你扮演什么角色？是例如说：你是不是 你们跟他的父母一起共同教育孙子，还是多数是... 就是帮忙看头看尾这样？	So, can you describe how you and your children, in taking care of your grandchildren, what roles each of you play? For example, do you collaborate with your children to teach the child, or you just help out where needed?

45	GM:	Orh orh...你是说这的啊...这个哦...啊...因该是一起教 la!	Oh, that's what you mean... For this, it should be teaching together!
46	Res:	一起教 hor?	Teaching together?
47	GM:	啊, 一起...一起教的。	Yes, together, [we] teach together
48	Res:	一起教。	Teach together.
49	GM:	因为...因为我就是跟你讲 lor, 所以为什么奶奶看孙...因为我以前有...有看过 er 像我朋友他们顾孩子有没有, 她有跟我谈 - 她讲...她讲, 她讲我没有办法我每天要忙我的家...家务是吗。所以虽然我看别人孩子, 我都是这样 lor, 我大概看好他, 我就是好了, 就交给别人。可是我们身为奶奶又不一样有没有? 我们觉得说, 我们就是要有一个责任, 也是要帮忙在...一起教这样 lor	Because, let me tell you, so why Grandma is taking care of the grandchild. Because I had, sort of a friend who took care of kids, she told me – she said, "I have no choice, every day I need to settle the household chores. So even though I'm taking care of other people's kids, it's like this, I just watch them well, that's it. Then I hand them back." But as the [child's] grandmother, it's different, you know? I think, we need to have a sense of responsibility. We also need to help to educate the child together.
50	Res:	是是, 一起教 lah hor	Yes, teach together
51	GM:	啊...因为...顾...跟你自己身为奶奶又有不一样的 lah	Ah, because, being in the role of a grandmother is different.
52	Res:	您会使用什么方式来帮助您的孙子学习/习得语言?	What methods would you use to help your grandchild learn language?
53	GM:	Er 通常 er 我就是...就是读给她听 la. 我通常是我读,	Usually, I read to her. Most of the time I will read, and then want

我就要她，就学一句 lor。Um...好像我...我这个书里面比较简单的 la ok，我读我就要她读一句 lor，读给她...她读给我听 la。啊...then 那现在 hor，她翻得她 er...现在她大了对不对？大了她就假设她拿一本华文 la，她就“奶奶...er..你拿来读 ok？”我说“好，我们一起读 lor”啊，她就会懂。。有时 hor，我现在这方面是觉得（哈哈）她拿一本英文给我 hor，我就跟她讲，我说。。。我说：真的对不起 leh，奶奶英文不会！（哈哈）哎呀，很好笑！

her to learn line by line. So, let's say I have a rather simple book, I will read, then she will read a line. I read to her and she reads back to me. Then, now, instead – she's older now, right? She's older, so for instance, she picks up a Chinese book, and she says 'Grandma, you read it, okay?' I will say 'Okay, let's read it together.' Then she will know. Sometimes, I think... (laughs) she will hand me an English book, I will tell her, I say 'Really sorry, Grandma doesn't know English!' (laughs) It's so funny.

## Appendix D: Samples of field notes

Field notes were taken for casual conversations. They are not intended to be used as primary data as they were not taken periodically, instead, they exist to supplement the interviews and participant observation.

Field Notes	Description
Date: Nov 11, 2016	Before leaving after a recording session, I spoke to YZ's grandmother and thanked her for her time. I also noticed that she looked very fatigued hence, I asked her why, as a show of concern.
Time: 2115 hrs	YZ's grandmother related that "it was natural" to feel tired after taking care of him for the most part of the day. She then proceeded to share how in the past she thought voting would grant her the freedom to do things she liked (e.g. knitting and crocheting), however she doesn't have the time, autonomy, or energy to do so because she has to plan her time around YZ's schedule. When to feed him, send him to school, pick him up, put him to sleep etc. She says she probably only has a one or two hour window every day to do her own things, but during that window she also needs to do marketing and
Place: YZ's grandparent's place	
Autonomy — caring/household. less time to do what she wants	consequently, she can't go out as and when she wants, and this prevents a certain freedom for her. However, she notes that she has the support of her husband who tries to come home early to relieve her. She feels happy that the parents also acknowledge and appreciate her efforts put into nurturing the children, and hence is happy to try and help out as much as she can. She feels that the child is still her own "flesh and blood". Referring to the Chinese concept of 家 (Jia). Consequently, in spite of the reduced freedom, she is still willing to put in her best effort to help the family, because she calls to mind the notion that "家和则安" (Jia He Ze An), we are one family, we ought to bear each other's burdens.
- can't go out to shop when she wants	
- daily schedule - limited	
- work around YZ's time	
Feelings: - Burdened, but still okay	
- Happy to take care of children	
- own "flesh & blood"	
Do parents give breaks?	
- Try to come home earlier	
- Grandfather take over (share load)	
- They still can go on holidays.	
Tired, less freedom	
Views it as responsibility: Try to help out as much as possible	
If they are appreciative 3-TU ok	

Example 1. Sample of field notes taken on 11 November 2016 detailing the informal conversation between the researcher and YZ's grandmother.

Field Notes

Date: December, 9, 2016  
 Time: 2:00 hrs  
 Place: CR's grandmother's apartment

Looks tired out  $\Rightarrow$  Taking care of CR  
 - CR was naughty.

Journal - Journals everyday, ~~everyday~~  
 - Didn't keep for 3 years  $\rightarrow$  she started taking care of CR.  
 Tired, just want to sleep.  
 - CR sleeps late  
 - CR needs attention - 看着他 (DJ)  
 Journal as a way of remembering daily events.  
 - Maintain Chinese written proficiency.

Description:  
 I was leaving when I asked CR's GM in passing if she was alright as she looked a little under the weather. She responded that she was just tired after taking care of CR the whole day. She proceeded to share how she needs to "盯住" (lit. watch [CR] closely). She then proceeded to say how she doesn't really have time to do other things anymore, and needs to rest because CR was misbehaving that day. She lamented that she used to have time to even keep a diary of the days events - but nowadays she is just too busy and tired to continue. For her, maintaining a diary was a way of keeping up with her Chinese exposure, keep her writing fluent, even though she had not completed even primary school education in her younger days. She feels that keeping a diary helps her remember past events well.

Observations: CR takes up a lot of time  
 Caring for him is tiring & takes a toll on GP language

Example 2. Sample of field notes taken on 9 December 2016 detailing the informal conversation between the researcher and CR's grandmother