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Countering government's low-intensity language policies on the ground: family language policies in Castilian-Spanish dominated Galicia and Navarre

Anik Nandi ^a, Paula Kasares^b, and Ibon Manterola ^a

^aDepartment of Linguistics and Basque Studies, University of the Basque Country-UPV/EHU;

^bDepartment of Human Sciences and Education, The Public University of Navarre-UPNA

ABSTRACT

Current research on language policy underscores how top-down policymakers tend to endorse the interests of dominant social groups, marginalize minority languages, and attempt to perpetuate systems of socio-lingual inequity. In the Castilian-Spanish-dominated sociolinguistic terrains of Galicia and Navarre, this article examines the rise of grassroots level actors or agents in the form of parents who have decided to contest the government's low-intensity language policy models through various bottom-up efforts. The principal focus of this article is to examine how ideologies, language planning strategies, and practices of pro-Galician or Basque parents act as instruments of language 'governmentality' (Foucault 2000) leading to grassroots discourses of resistance. Through their individual as well as collective linguistic practices, as this article underscores, these parents have the potential to generate visible and invisible language policies on the ground, influencing their children's language ecology. Drawing from ethnographic research tools, including observations from field sites, individual interviews, and focus groups with parents from both geopolitical domains, we investigate how these parents exercise their agency and become policymakers in their homes and the community. The endeavor is also to reveal the key challenges they come across while implementing these policies.

KEYWORDS

Low-intensity language policy; Family language management; Governmentality; Galician; Basque

Introduction

Language policy (hence, LP) can be understood broadly as any conscious decision or choice made about language(s) by social actors such as the state, community, or individual based on certain criteria such as efficiency or symbolic value (Spolsky, 2021). Governmental macro-level LP is perceived as official legislation designed to influence 'people's linguistic lives' (Shohamy, 2006, p. 185). Contemporary research in the field underlines how governmental policymakers tend to endorse the interests of dominant social groups, marginalize minority languages, and attempt to perpetuate systems of socio-

CONTACT Anik Nandi  anik.nandi@ehu.eus; aniknandi@gmail.com  Department of Linguistics and Basque Studies, University of the Basque Country-UPV/EHU

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lingual inequity (see Tollefson & Pérez-Milans, 2019 for example). This is evident from various top-down practices such as institutional policymakers who only very rarely consult the minority language speakers directly while planning a language (Pennycook, 2010) or governmental policies that are frequently used as a resource to further the objectives of the ruling class (Block, 2019). Implementation of LP goals is frequently considered as the weakest link within policy processes (Tollefson, 2015). The state is initially responsible for creating and implementing top-down policies. It is also accountable for instilling it into the public domain through various Ideological State Apparatuses (Althusser, 1971), such as the school, religion, and mass media. Although these apparatuses are not necessarily under the state's control, they can be used to perpetuate governmental ideologies connecting the politicized decisions about languages and their usage in education and society more broadly. In this regard, educational policies often serve as the key instrument for manipulating and imposing language conduct as every child is expected to attend school in a welfare society.

To make the top-down policy work on the ground, policymakers need to contemplate a range of additional factors. These involve a comprehensive knowledge of the geopolitical settings where the policy will be implemented, e.g., cultural norms of the community and the symbolic dominance of the majority languages (Spolsky, 2009), adequate financial resources (Grin, 2006), appropriate plans for completion, assessment, and trained personnel who can execute these actions. Above all, the policy goals must be realistic and achievable; if policies are too ambitious, they may fall short in their execution (Schiffman, 2013). There are also situations where the authorities may retain some 'hidden agendas' (Shohamy, 2006) and want the policies to be implemented partly or have planned it in a way that it will never be executed, thus ensuring a negligible impact on the actual language practices at the grassroots. This article conceives and locates these governmental decisions and practices with hidden agendas where the policymakers' intention is little or no implementation as examples of 'low-intensity' LP (Nandi, 2017a, p. 30). They are normally introduced with an intention to maintain the status quo of non-conflictive co-existence between the dominant and minority language(s) in the society (also see Nandi, 2018, 2023; cf. Lorenzo, 2005).

Although not categorized as 'low-intensity' LPs, similar practices around the world have been richly documented by critical language policy (hence, CLP) researchers.¹ Stroud and Kerfoot (2020), for instance, argue that top-down lukewarm policies often work in favor of the majority population. In somewhat similar lines, Yohannes (2021) introduces the term 'No Policy, Policy' to refer to unwritten LPs in Tigray Regional State (Nigeria) where if something 'is not explicitly forbidden, is permitted or what is not explicitly permitted is forbidden' (p. 15). While researching institutional LPs in higher education contexts in Sweden, Karlsson and Karlsson (2020, pp. 81–83) note

how a monolingual Swedish-only policy in meetings of decision-making bodies is being negotiated through permissive practices to accommodate non-Swedish-speaking colleagues. Nearly three decades ago, Bamgbose (1991) in his attempt to understand the reasons for the failure of mother-tongue instruction policies in Africa found issues of ‘avoidance, vagueness, arbitrariness, fluctuation and declaration without implementation’ (p. 111) in institutional policy documents. Kvietok-Dueñas’ (2015) research on the indigenous LP initiatives in Peru further unveils the implicit mechanisms in the form of policy measures that are used systematically by the policymakers to dictate the literacy practices of the marginalized aboriginal population. Another interesting example of low-intensity policy could be India’s *Three Language Formula*. The policy was first introduced in 1968 by the Government of India to resolve primarily the ‘conflicts’ between the Hindi and non-Hindi speaking states providing space for Hindi, English, and a modern Indian language (preferably one of the Dravidian languages) in the Hindi-speaking states and Hindi, English, and the regional mother tongues in the non-Hindi speaking states. However, in practice, only the dominant state languages are used and promoted in the name of mother tongue education, treating the minority languages as an outcast in education. With weak ‘top-down’ support, intergenerational transmission of these peripheral languages in the Indian sociolinguistic scenario largely depends on various ‘bottom-up’ interventions from social workers, NGOs, interested teachers, parents, and other grassroots community endeavors (Devy, 2014). These cases bring into focus the multi-layered and multi-sited nature of LP dynamics when it comes to decisions about language learning and use, not only at the institutional level but also in their relationship with the society at large. Therefore, for a more comprehensive understanding of ideological and implementational spaces within LP discourses, it is crucial to investigate the intrinsic features of ‘low intensity policies’. The concept will be elucidated further with more contextualized examples in the following sections.

Until recently, much of the attention in policy research was offered to the policy as a structured top-down phenomenon, and the role of the actors including policymakers, parents, students, teachers, and other members of civil society for whom the policy is purportedly designed remains largely understudied. These actors, if disillusioned with top-down policies, may create their own language agenda and resist bottom-up (McCarty, 2011). This may sometimes be enacted within the family. While research on multilingual families is now a well-established domain of inquiry, family language policy (henceforth, FLP) emerged as an independent field only in the last decade featuring ‘the overt decisions parents make about language use and language learning as well as implicit processes that legitimize certain language practices over others in the home’ (Fogle, 2013, p. 83). In the Castilian-dominated sociolinguistic landscapes of Galicia and Navarre, the principal focus of this

article is to examine how ideologies, visible/invisible language planning strategies and practices of pro-Galician and Basque parents act as instruments of language ‘governmentality’ (Foucault, 2000) leading to discourses of resistance on the ground. While some research results on Galicia have been partly reported elsewhere (see Nandi, 2018; Nandi et al., 2022, 2023), the current article retains a comparative focus and aims to unveil the key ideological, strategic, and practical challenges these parents come across in their respective regions at the time exercising pro-minority FLPs. As such, the article commences with a discussion on the role of parental agency in developing bottom-up FLPs from a critical perspective. It is followed by a discussion on top-down low-intensity language policies in Galicia and Navarre to contextualize our article. The next section offers an account of the research methodology and finally culminates with a thematic analysis of the collected data.

Family members as policy intermediaries: power, agency, and negotiations

Family language policy as a named field started with King, Fogle, and Logan-Terry’s (2008) seminal article published under the same title in the *Language and Linguistics Compass* journal where the concept was first used and defined. Drawing on the Spolskyian model (2004) that understands language policy as an intersection between language ideologies, management, and practices, this line of research has now successfully established a solid connection between parental language planning strategies and practices with children’s multilingual outcomes (Romanoski, 2021). This triplet framework offers a detailed overview of what family members think about language(s) (ideology), what they plan to do with language(s) (management), and what they actually do (practice) (Fogle & King, 2013, p. 1). Although parents, as primary caregivers, are often seen as *in-situ* language planners, they are also individual entities. As such, they may as well deviate in their ‘impact beliefs’ – the level to which the parents find them as equipped to apply their agency and find themselves responsible for shaping their children’s language conduct (King et al., 2008, p. 910). In addition to parents, the children are also apt, resourceful, and active agents; while socializing, they develop their own agency and contribute to the family’s language dynamics (Luykx, 2022). Therefore, when there is a perennial transference of majoritarian influences, state policy, and media messages from the public sphere into the school and home spaces can become intersected (Nandi & Devasundaram, 2017).

Language ideologies that include beliefs, attitudes, and norms that designate the value of a language and how it should be used in everyday contexts are often manifested through the family member’s language choices (Spolsky, 2021). Language practices underline the linguistic behaviors that establish the family members’ *de facto* language use for diverse purposes (Fogle &

King, 2013). Language management, on the other hand, refers to the conscious and explicit efforts made by actors who maintain or intend to exert control over the subjects in a specific context to modify their language behavior (Spolsky, 2019). A family's language management can be understood as the choices, strategies, and attempts that the caregivers make to achieve their desired linguistic goals (Nandi et al., 2022). It involves a wide range of formal as well as informal activities including joint book reading, explicit teaching or seeking external professional help through private tuitions, choosing language-specific schools or childcare support, and in some situations, even selecting peers to accomplish a desired linguistic outcome from the children (see Guardado, 2018). However, the separation between language management and practice in the family is not always transparent as parents or adult family members frequently intervene to correct children's everyday language conducts (Curd-Christiansen & Lanza, 2018). These monitoring techniques evoke discourses of language 'governmentality' and 'biopower' (Foucault, 2007). Language governmentality is an extension of Foucault's (1978) notion of 'governmentality'.

Governmentality or 'the art of government' (Gordon, 1991, p. 7) can be understood as an 'analytical toolbox' (Rose et al., 2006, p. 18) that evaluates the societal power dynamics in terms of actions intending to shape, direct, influence, or in some cases, regulate the conduct of a person or a population to create the desired civilian (Foucault, 1980). In the Foucauldian use of the term, the act of governance is a complex form of power that by no means is restricted to the compasses of the state or within its policies, instead it is ubiquitous whenever people or particular groups intend to 'shape their own conduct or the conduct of others (e.g., within families, workplaces, schools etc.)' (Walters, 2012, p. 11). Foucault interprets power in terms of 'strategies' that are produced through the nexus of the power relations, in part through a diverse range of discursive practices originating from different institutions, social relationships, and forms of interaction which decide certain ways of speaking, being, and acting 'normal'. Language plays a key role in transmitting governmentality by dominating the words people use, shaping the way they are spoken and influence them in such a manner that they 'regulate and transform their communicative behaviors for the purpose of improving their political, economic, cultural and affective relationships' (Walter-Greene & Hicks, 2005, p. 101). Therefore, parental language management strategies and practices can also be analyzed as one form of language governmentality. Parents being the primary hegemony in the FLP environment also relate to the discourses of 'bio-politics' or 'biopower'. Governmentality absorbs biopower. Foucault defines it as 'the set of mechanisms through which the basic biological features of the human species became the object of a political strategy, of a general strategy of power ...' (Foucault, 2007, p. 1). Consequently, bio-politics is a technology of power that fosters on the basis of disciplinary power. Whereas

discipline is about governing individual bodies, bio-politics is about controlling entire populations (Foucault, 1991). Inside the family, biopower is often reproduced through parental agency and various control mechanisms used by them as progenitors. Thus, parents, as principal caregivers, often assume the role of custodians over their children's everyday language conduct, considering this 'ownership' as a 'parental right' (Nandi, 2018; p. 208; cf., Blommaert, 2019).

It has been argued that where there is power, there is resistance, 'and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power' (Foucault, 1978, p. 95). Resistance is inherent in power. In the family domain, even though children are often analyzed as subjects for whom the FLP is designed, if dissatisfied with parental language governance, they may develop alternative discourses of power and resist caregivers' decisions (Tsushima & Guardado, 2019). FLP case studies around the world underline that there are a wide range of issues influencing children's resistance to the FLP including clash over cultural beliefs and norms with caregivers (Bezioglu-Goktolga & Yagmur, 2022), higher social status of a school language (Wilson, 2020), and peer influence in early adolescence (Said & Zhu, 2019). Therefore, parental assumptions about creating home as a secure place for bilingualism and minority language maintenance may be disturbed as children develop and exercise their own agency. A detailed analysis of how pro-minority language FLPs are being planned, negotiated, and practiced in contemporary Galicia and Navarre will be explored later in this article. The following section outlines the sociolinguistic situations in Galicia and Navarre.

Low-intensity language policies toward Galician (Galicia) and Basque (Navarre)

Franco's dictatorship (1939–1975) made the use of Castilian as the sole language for administration, education, and media, marking an era of repression and discrimination for minority languages such as Galician, Catalan, and Basque. During this period, they were mostly restricted to the family domain and informal conversations. The dictatorial regime and hegemonic policies confronted a resistance in the Basque territories as early as in the 60s when a group of pro-Basque demographics created a chain of Basque-medium clandestine schools, the so-called *ikastolak* to protect the community's indigenous language and culture.² These schools were often maintained by a collective of language activists including teachers, parents, and members of civil society, many of which were driven by a strong nationalist sentiment toward Basque. The creation and expansion of *ikastolak* constitutes a fundamental collective phenomenon of the Basque society in the past six decades (Euskaltzaindia, 2011). This bottom-up mobilization not only contributed to establishing networks among pro-Basque activists, but the

‘movement of *ikastolak*’ and ‘the *ikastolak* conscience’ were also extended throughout the Basque territories (Urla, 2012). Notably, the expansion of *ikastolak* needs to be placed in the general environment against the Francoist regime and its sociolinguistic, cultural, and political discrimination. Democracy returned to Spain after Franco’s demise and the Spanish Constitution (1978) was written. This new constitutional right conferred a diverse degree of co-officiality to Galician and Basque alongside Castilian within what became the Autonomous Community of Galicia and the Chartered Community of Navarre, respectively. The co-official status of Galician or Basque with the traditionally hegemonic language, Castilian, marked the beginning of a new era of marginalization for the minority languages in their respective territories.

Galician in Galicia

Galician became a subordinate language to Castilian at the end of the 15th century when Galicia became a part of the Kingdom of Castile. In the following centuries, Castilian became the language of the intellectuals and social elites in Galicia, while the use of Galician was limited among the uneducated lower strata of society. Later, during the mid-20th century, the strong centralist-nationalist propaganda of the Francoist regime considered speaking Galician as unpatriotic, rustic, and often treated it as a dialect of Castilian aggravating further the pressure on Galician speakers to switch to Castilian. Many parents of the era formed a pro-Castilian FLP and stopped speaking Galician altogether to their children, interrupting the chain of family language transmission in the urban settings (Nandi, 2019). Since Spain’s transition to democracy, top-down language policy models were put in place in line with the *Lei de Normalización Lingüística* (Law of Linguistic Normalization, hence LNL) in 1983 and provisions were made for the inclusion of Galician in key institutional contexts including the education. Galician language planners borrowed the idea of Linguistic Normalization (broadly speaking language planning) from Catalan sociolinguistics and adjusted it to the local context (Lynch, 2011). However, while doing so, they ignored to a large extent the differences between socio-historical and socio-political development of each language leaving a longstanding negative effect on the prestige planning of Galician (Nandi, 2017b). For instance, Catalan was already the language of the bourgeoisies, a language of culture, and was restored officially as a medium of instruction in schools during each period of democracy and autonomy (Vila et al., 2016). Hence, it always retained a greater degree of social, symbolic, and cultural value compared to Galician.

The institutional language policy discourses in Galicia focus mainly on the medium of instruction in compulsory education supporting progressive incorporation of Galician in the school curricula in the form of bilingual programs.

The policy goal has always been to achieve equal competence in both languages (Núñez-Singala, 2009). However, the policymakers of the conservative centralist party, which had been in the government almost successively since the beginning of the Autonomy (1982–1986, 1989–2005, and 2009–present), took very little interest in implementing the policy initiatives on the ground. They were seen to be more concerned with preserving the *status quo* and not upsetting a certain Castilian-speaking urban middle class of Galician society (Nandi & Vázquez-Fernández, *in press*). Although the legal stipulation was that a minimum of 50% of subjects should be taught in Galician, in practice, many urban schools where Castilian was already the predominant language interpreted it as a maximum 50% and others, especially those linked to the private or charter sector fully ignored the policy. This top-down permissive strategy left the language planning of Galician in the hands of individual schools, and in some situations, it depended entirely on classroom teachers' decisions (Monteagudo, 2021).

In 2010, the incumbent conservative government further introduced changes to the policy in which one-third of the curriculum would be taught through the medium of Galician with the remaining two-thirds in Castilian and English, respectively. In addition to reducing hours for Galician, there is another significant element in this decree. In the context of kindergarten, the policy ensures that the medium of instruction to be that of the children's home language. Since Castilian remains the most widely spoken language in urban Galicia, many urban children tend to be brought up speaking Castilian by Castilian-speaking parents. As such, Castilian automatically becomes the *de facto* medium of instruction in most urban schools (O'Rourke and Nandi, 2019). Centuries of repression followed by consecutive low-intensity policies failed to offer Galician the necessary social and symbolic capital at the community level (cf. Bourdieu 1984). This is evident in various macro-level sociolinguistic data. For instance, the number of adolescents who never speak Galician has increased by 17% in 2018 (Monteagudo et al., 2020) and 35% of Castilian-speaking students finish their obligatory schooling with unsatisfactory competence in the minority language (Monteagudo et al., 2021).

Basque in Navarre

In the sociolinguistic context of Navarre, prestige is afforded to Castilian, the only official language in the whole territory. Following the 1986 *Euskararen Legea/Ley del Euskera* (The Law of Basque), the official status of Basque is limited only to the northern part of Navarre. Whereas Basque is partly recognized as the official language in the central region, it is not at all acknowledged as official in southern Navarre. It is also important to note here that the most populated urban zones of Navarre including the capital city of Navarre, Pamplona/Iruña are situated in the central and southern regions.

In this geopolitical context, the division of the legal status in terms of geographical zones has influenced to a large extent the presence and use of Basque in the educational sphere. For instance, in northern Navarre, Basque is not only taught as a compulsory subject, but the parents also have the right to opt for a Basque-medium education for their children. Notably, Castilian-medium education is also offered as an option. In the central and southern regions, a legal modification made in 2015 guarantees the right for Basque-medium education, although the teaching of Basque as a subject is not compulsory. It thus follows that over the past four decades, educational language policies in these two areas remained mainly anodyne and, on some occasions, were even against the promotion of Basque (Kasares, 2014). This is clearly in contrast with the LP in the Basque Autonomous Community (BAC), where Castilian and Basque retain an equal legal status. As such, the educational system has been and still is a key domain to foster the revitalization of Basque (Manterola, 2019). BAC and Navarre also differ in terms of the promotion of Basque beyond the educational system. For instance, the spread of the Basque public media created by the BAC government to the Navarrese territories was historically impeded by its government. A range of grassroots initiatives was developed in various social domains of Navarre including education, media, and local councils to contest these top-down agendas. These bottom-up initiatives not only promoted the use of Basque in domains where it was previously absent, but also played a significant role in regaining its symbolic status in the community (Kasares, 2017).

However, the contemporary demo-linguistic data reflect that the situation of Basque in overall Navarre remains extremely weak. Even though 25.8% of the inhabitants who are aged between 16 and 24 claim to be competent in Basque (Basque Government, 2019), the day-to-day use of Basque measured in the conversations that took place in the streets of Navarre in 2016 was 6.6% (Soziolinguistika Klusterra, 2017). Moreover, in the city of Pamplona/Iruña, where data for this article were collected, the percentage was 3% (ibid) underlining the fact that being proficient in a minority language does not necessarily lead to its active use (Flors-Mas & Manterola, 2021). It is important to note that 40 years of intensive pro-Basque educational policy in the BAC could not contest satisfactorily the supremacy of Castilian, which has led both governmental actors and pro-Basque social advocates to describe the current period of language policy as one of 'active crisis' and at a 'crossroads' (Amonarriz & Martinez de Lagos, 2017). Balancing the status of Basque and Castilian seems to be even more challenging in the context of Navarre due to its decades long top-down low-intensity policies. Discontent with institutional low-intensity language policies in their respective regions has in many ways rattled the mood of an urban pro-Galician/Basque demographic. This profile refers to a group of highly dedicated individuals comprising parents who are committed to the cause of Galician or Basque language revival bottom-up. In the following

sections, we will explore how these parents coming from two very socio-historically different policy contexts engage in this reflective process.

Decentralization policies in post-Franco Spain represent a unique scene for its regional minority languages not only in terms of policy formation and linguistic rights but also for their implementational issues. Whereas LPs concerning Basque in BAC and Catalan in Catalonia are extensively documented by researchers (see, for example, Urla, 2012; Woolard, 2016), diminished attention has been offered to Galicia and Navarre, especially in the field of family language planning research. Moreover, the lack of original socio-linguistic research comparing and contrasting parental language practices in these bilingual regions has created a knowledge gap. Therefore, the results of this study will (1) allow us to evaluate how these parents create visible or invisible language policies to reverse the language shift in geopolitical domains where Castilian is the linguistic custodian; (2) understand the kind of language management strategies these parents use individually and/or collectively to contest the institutional low-intensity policies; (3) examine whether (or not) grass-roots level mobilizations initiated by a group of activist parents serve to promote the use of a minoritized language. The following section offers a methodological outline of this research.

Methodology: data sampling and analysis

Our study adopts a qualitative-ethnographic research design for data collection. In policy research, ethnographic tools (e.g., observations, interviews, and focus groups) are considered useful to understand the everyday situated language practices of various policy actors and how their language practices interact with macro-level policies (McCarty, 2011). The primary data include (I) field notes from overt non-participant observations from the research sites, (II) in-depth semi-structured interviews with individual parents, and (III) focus-group discussions. The parents interviewed are from urban/semi-urban backgrounds between the age group of 30–55 years old and from various occupations. A series of open-ended questions were prepared ahead of the interviews and focus-group discussions and were drawn upon to stimulate conversation. Participants were explained that the researchers were interested in finding out about their lived experiences as parents who were bringing up their children in Galician or Basque in their respective settings.

At the outset, both the researchers in their respective contexts approached the local primary schools to facilitate access to parents. It is also worth mentioning here that Paula Kasares is a Navarre-based local researcher who made her engagement with the field somewhat long term. She gathered the ethnographic data from a public Basque-medium school in the city of Pamplona/Iruña from September 2011 to June 2012 through non-participant observations in the school and 10 in-depth interviews involving both parents.

Six interviews representing four families will be used in this article. In two families, parents address the children in Basque, whereas the remaining two families use Castilian as the primary language. As such, the interviews were conducted in both Basque and Castilian depending on the interviewee's preference.

Anik Nandi's connection with Galicia, on the other hand, started as a postgraduate exchange student at the University of Santiago de Compostela between 2008 and 2012. The amount of time spent in the community and knowledge of both Galician and Castilian not only facilitated him an access to the community, but also helped him to develop a rapport with the participants. His data were also drawn from ethnographic non-participant observations, 18 in-depth semi-structured interviews, and two focus group discussions conducted between November 2013 and January 2015 in five urban/semi-urban contexts of Galicia. During this period, the researcher visited Galicia thrice and, on each occasion, he spent two consecutive months in the field (Nov–Dec 2013, May–June 2014, and Dec–Jan 2015). Once the non-participant observation part was over by June 2014, Nandi conducted individual semi-structured interviews with both parents. Since focus-groups in policy research are normally used 'to evaluate policy choices and alternatives and public perceptions of policy matters' (Littosseliti, 2007, p. 8), here they were carried out at the final phase to consolidate the individual interview and observational data. This article draws on one focus group discussion based in Santiago de Compostela involving four families where both parents speak Galician and participate actively in grassroots-level language mobilizations. It also involves individual interviews with one father and one mother representing two families from Bertamiráns, a dormitory town close to Santiago. Families from Bertamiráns have opted for public mainstream education where Galician is a compulsory subject, but Castilian is a vehicular language among most of the pupils and educators alike. Parents residing in Santiago have enrolled their children to two cooperative funded schools offering a full immersion program in Galician. Both individual interviews and focus groups were conducted exclusively in Galician.

Thematic analysis was deployed as the medium of data interpretation; themes are patterns across data that are relevant to the description of a phenomenon and are associated with a specific research question (Clarke & Braun, 2017). This type of analysis offers useful explanations of the multiple personal-experience narratives as they offer first-person insights into linguistic ideologies, management, and practices of an individual. First, the transcribed data from both settings were read repeatedly. The fieldnotes were also studied at this stage to expand on the interview data leading to the formulation of initial codes. These initial codes were then revisited to avoid redundancies. Modified codes that were relevant to the research questions discussed earlier were

merged into different categories. Finally, these categories were grouped under three major themes (see following Section). While searching the prominent themes, we were particularly interested in understanding how these parents perceived their agentic role as language planners on the ground and what collective bottom-up narrative they were constructing (if any) as policy intermediaries. Therefore, while preparing the dataset, we particularly looked at the parent profiles who were committed to support a minority-language upbringing for their children and thus, participate in the language revitalization processes bottom-up. In the following section, we present excerpts from the interview data.

Findings

When institutional low-intensity policies influence family's language practices

Interview data from parents in both contexts suggest that most parents from urban and semi-urban domains retain a clear awareness of the deceptive nature of the top-down policy. Regarding educational language policy (hence, ELP) in Galicia, a large majority prefer exclusively or mainly Galician as the language of instruction at school. For instance, in the context of Bertamiráns, the public primary school follows a trilingual model where the student population and educators speak predominantly Castilian. While discussing their preferred medium of instruction, Fernando, a new speaker father, and his Castilian-speaking spouse, Marisa underscored that they would prefer a Galician-centric ELP as their children do not receive sufficient input in Galician at home. Although Fernando speaks mostly Galician with the children, Marisa and the children speak only Castilian making it the *de facto* language at home. Both parents were educated in Galicia in the late 80s, therefore, experienced the incumbent government's earlier language policy. The couple also indicated their very often futile attempts to use Galician at home. Therefore, they intend to recompense this through various literacy practices such as introducing the minority language through children's rhymes and bedtime stories. Fernando highlights in the following extract the role that school can play in building competence in Galician for families where one or both parents do not speak Galician – a consequence of historical disjuncture in the intergenerational transmission:

A lingua de ensino ten que ser solo galego. Porque, como non o mamanan na casa o suficiente, e o resto do entorno é tan castelanzante, gustaríame que o aprenderan no colexio. Entónces, para os que queren que os seus fillos falen galego, é importante que na escola se fale galego. (In Galician)

The language of instruction in schools has to be only Galician. Because the children do not get immersed in the language at home and the rest of the environment is very Castilianized, I would like them to acquire the language at school. Therefore, for people who want their children to speak in Galician, it is important that Galician should be spoken in school.

Fernando's firm declaration that the medium of instruction in schools 'has to be only Galician' in a 'very Castilianized' environment denotes his awareness of the government's current low-intensity language policy leading to inadequate exposure to Galician in public schools. In addition to institutional support, children's bilingual outcome depends to a large extent on the language practices to which they are exposed (Lanza, 2007). As such, Fernando compares the family transmission of Galician with *mamar* (literally, to be breastfed). The metaphor alludes to the couple's discrepancies in terms of 'impact beliefs' (De Houwer, 1999) manifested through their language choices in interaction with the children. Fernando believes that a strong Galician-centered approach in the school can reverse the language shift in the family and in turn can create a new generation of speakers.

As opposed to Galicia where a low-intensity ELP was the primary concern among the caregivers, pro-Basque parents from Pamplona (Navarre) were concerned about the apparent lack of 'breathing spaces' (Fishman, 2001) for Basque language socialization beyond *ikastola* in a highly Castilianized city. For instance, Mikel and Arantza, a couple who are although competent in Basque, normally use Castilian between themselves since it is their first language. The couple speak mostly Basque at home with the children and enrolled them to an *ikastola*. However, Mikel feels that raising children in Basque in Pamplona is 'difficult':

Niri gustatuko litzaidake euskara haien lehenbiziko hizkuntza iza[tea]. Baina hori oso zaila da, azkenean, Iruñea batean. (...) Baina etxean euskaraz egiten dugu. Gero antzeman da, adibidez, telebista, ez dago euskaraz telebistarik. (...) Orain [haurrek] ez dute erreferentziarik. Erreferentzia dute lagunak erdaraz eta, gainera, telebista, marrazki bizidunak erdaraz. Nik uste dut horrek mina egin duela; bueno, mina zentzu horretan (In Basque)

I would like Basque to be their first language. But it is very difficult in a city like Pamplona. (...) At home, we speak in Basque, but then we notice that, for example, there is no Basque-medium television (...) Now the children have no (Basque-speaking) ideal to follow. Their models are their friends who are mostly Castilian speaking and, in addition, the TV, cartoons everything is in Castilian. I think that hampered (the intergenerational transmission process); well, harmed, in that sense.

Although Basque has been partially introduced in the education and public administration of Navarre in the late 80s facilitating its greater social presence, Castilian remains the unstated linguistic norm for socialization in most urban/semi-urban spheres. In these domains, speaking Basque is often seen as breaking long-established social norms due to the government's low-intensity language policies (cf.

Kasares, 2014). Mikel here focuses on the state's failure to provide adequate audio-visual implementations and other learning support mechanisms to augment the status and prestige planning of Basque. For instance, there is no public television in Basque in Navarre. *Euskal Irrati Telebista* (EITB), the public television of the BAC, has children's channel in Basque known as ETB3. Although broadcast digitally, the Government of Navarre did not facilitate its reception censuring the government's non-attainment of its own language planning goals.³ As a result, the children do not have any Basque-speaking ideal to follow. The paucity of resources in Basque, according to Mikel, compels the children from pro-Basque households to adjust and adapt to their Castilian-speaking counterparts during socialization. Similarly, media consumption paves the way for the use of Spanish at home, which is interpreted by parents in terms of 'harm' in relation to their Basque-based socialization strategies.

The above scenarios exemplify the caregivers' ideological stand to continue intergenerational transmission of Galician or Basque by bridging the disjuncture and discrepancy in minority language use between the exterior and interior spheres. However, the parents' articulations of fidelity to Galician or Basque and their hope for its extension to the family domain seem to be challenged by their continuous lapses to Castilian. This inconsistency indicates Castilian's practical and ideological dominance in the urban domains of Galicia and Navarre. This situation is primarily linked to the historical development of Castilian in these regions, which is further reinforced by top-down pro-Castilian governmentality through low-intensity policies for decades.

Language management in the home: agency, negotiation, and practices

Claimed language practices from individual parents in both settings seem to confirm that each parent exercises their individual agency through a wide range of monitoring techniques to achieve their desired linguistic goals from the children. For instance, Claudia and Martin, a Galician-speaking couple, have three daughters studying in the primary school at Bertamiráns. Prior to this, they attended a Galician-medium kindergarten. Claudia states that the girls shifted to Castilian while studying there and their middle daughter Alicia now openly renounces Galician:

Falábamos en galego, e as nosas fillas tamén. Pero, resulta que cambiaron de idioma incluso estando na liña de galego (. . .) Alicia ten once anos e ten un certo rexeitamento cara ao galego que non sei onde o percibiu, pero na casa non. O outro día xa me dixo “este ano quero facer as invitacións para o meu cumple eu porque sempre, hasta agora as fixen en galego, porque tu quixeches, as invitacións que lle dou aos amigos falan en castelán. Este ano quero facer eu no idioma que eu quero e quero que sexa o castelán”. (In Galician)

We spoke Galician, and our daughters too. However, they shifted to Castilian even while studying in a Galician-medium kindergarten (. . .) Alicia is eleven years old and has a sort of denial towards Galician and I don't know where she would perceive it, but surely not at home. The other day she told me “This year I want to prepare the invitations for my birthday myself. Until now the invitations were in Galician because you wanted them to be so. But I give the invitations to my friends who speak Castilian. This year I want them in a language I prefer, and I want to do them to be in Castilian.”

Reported language practices in the above case demonstrate how the Castilian-dominated exterior infiltrates the interior family space. This is evident from the above experiences described by the mother. As traditional speakers of Galician, Claudia and Martin created a Galician-speaking ecology at home where everyone spoke in Galician – ‘We spoke Galician, and our daughters too’. This situation took a dramatic turn as soon as the daughters started kindergarten, the primary context of socialization for children outside the family. Since Castilian plays the dominant role in socialization among children in Bertamiráns, Alicia, and her younger sisters quickly became monolinguals in Castilian despite their parents’ pro-Galician language management. The couple’s decision to enroll their children in a Galician-medium kindergarten and Claudia’s simple act of writing the birthday invitations in Galician, ignoring entirely the fact that their daughters’ main language of socialization is Castilian underline how she applies her parental biopower to contest Castilian’s linguistic monopoly bottom-up. Although Claudia assumes the role of a custodian over her daughters’ habitual linguistic practices, as the above situation denotes, Alicia resists applying her own agency. Alicia complains that until now she prepared her birthday invitations in Galician because Claudia made her do so. Since her peers speak only Castilian, she will write the invitations in the language of her preference, which is Castilian. This situation emphasizes the afore-discussed connection between the technologies of power and resistance (cf. Foucault, 1991).

In the sociolinguistic scene of Navarre, the claimed language practices of many new speaker parents seem to confirm that they are expanding the domain of Basque through conscious personal decisions and various self-regulatory measures regarding daily language use. This is for instance the case of Amelia, a mother from Pamplona who has Castilian as her L1, but had learnt Basque in *ikastola*, stated that she is now ‘recovering’ the language with her daughter:

<p>Ahora, yo también estoy recuperando el euskera con ella: pues yo cuando hablo con las <i>andereños</i> [maestras], me dirijo en euskera. Y digo ‘me voy a esforzar’ (. . .) Pues si le ayudas a estudiar un poco, igual palabras que no te acuerdas pues enseguida las saco por el contexto o voy al diccionario y las miro. [In Castilian]</p>	<p>Now, I’m also recovering Basque with her: well, when I talk to the <i>andereños</i> [teachers], I address them in Basque. I tell myself that “I’ll make an effort” (. . .) While helping my daughter doing homework, sometimes there are words that I don’t remember, I immediately relate them to the context to get the meaning or I search them in the dictionary.</p>
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Amelia’s conscious personal decision to reinstate Basque in her repertoire is crucially instantiated by its deployment as language management at the individual level. Spolsky interprets ‘the individual self-correction in discourse’ Spolsky (2009, p. 12) as one form of self-management. As such, Amelia’s firm resolution, ‘I tell myself that I’ll make an effort [to speak Basque]’ and other reported practices such as speaking Basque to the *ikastola* teachers or helping her daughter with school assignments demonstrate the rigorous self-regulatory measures she has been applying to revive Basque at the individual level.

Adur and his brother learnt Basque as adults. Although both are proficient users of the language, they never spoke it between themselves and only very rarely used it with their children since they were born. Ever since their children started *ikastola*, the siblings consciously decided to speak ‘mostly in Basque’ not only with the children but between themselves:

<p>Orain, txikitoekin gero eta gehiago euskaraz [egiten dugu anaiak eta biok], baina normalean egiten genuen erdaraz, baina gaur egun igual. . . (. . .) gure artean normalean hasten garenean jarraitzen dugu euskaraz egiten. (In Basque)</p>	<p>Now, with our [my brother and I] children, we speak mostly in Basque. Normally, we used to communicate in Castilian between us (. . .) and now once we start in Basque, we continue in Basque.</p>
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The above scenario represents another example of self-management and parental agency where Adur not only changes his own language behavior toward his children, but also convinces his Castilian-speaking brother to speak in Basque between themselves and while addressing their children. Adur’s declaration that ‘now once we start in Basque, we continue in Basque’ further underlines how the siblings assume the role of stakeholders and claim authority over each other’s linguistic habits. While elaborating on their decision, the siblings draw on their individual agency to address the fluctuating field that constitutes the exteriority of the Castilian/Basque sociolinguistic terrain in the urban society of Navarre. It could also be argued that his brother’s habitus (Bourdieu, 1984), which is his individual psychic structure essentially shaped by external social stimuli, is itself in arbitration with his eventual individual decision to adhere to Basque. His brother’s internal dialogue is interlocked in negotiation with multiple factors in the extraneous sphere, such as Adur’s influence and the ideological impact of Basque language revitalization discourse. The above excerpts nonetheless underscore the

parental biopower exerted by these Galician/Basque parents, such as Claudia, Amelia, Adur, and his brother to deliberately resist and challenge the domination of Castilian at the grassroots, mainly within the family, and increasingly, as we shall see in the following section, beyond its confines.

Extended family language policy: creating safe spaces for the minority languages

In addition to various individual language management efforts discussed above, parental biopower may also assume a wider social role on the ground through collective mobilizations as it occurred in the context of our research. For instance, since there are currently no public schools offering immersion programs in Galician, a pro-Galician collective including parents who want their children to be educated and socialized in Galician, formed cooperatives to fund Galician-medium schools. One such school is *Escolas de Ensino Galego Semente* (Semente Galician Education Schools, henceforth Semente) that started in 2011 as an urgent response to the government's low-intensity policy, 'The Decree of Plurilingualism.' Mercedes, a mother who was the President of Semente Parents Association at the time of the study, explains why the school has been established:

<p>Nós estamos en Semente desde que naceu o proxecto. É un proxecto de autoxestión da cooperativa. Cando nace Semente, nace dunha mobilización social, desde un colectivo que detecta que os nenos galegofalantes cando chegan ao ensino público pois en poucos meses se castelanzan os seus actos lingüísticos. (In Galician)</p>	<p>We are in Semente since the initiation of the project. It is managed by the members of the co-operative. Semente was born from a social mobilisation, from a collective that detects that the Galician-speaking children when start the public education system, change their language practices and shift to Castilian in a few months.</p>
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The above scenario reveals how these concerned parents consciously have been extending their pro-Galician FLP to the education system since public schools are transforming de-galicianisation spaces for the children from Galician-speaking households. In addition to forming co-operatives to create schools, it was also noted that three of the five families from Santiago that took part in the study also belong to parents' collective, *Tribo* (literally, the tribe). Started in the summer of 2013 as a WhatsApp group, *Tribo* currently has around 50 families who meet frequently to socialize their children in Galician. The members of this group usually communicate among themselves through WhatsApp and meet in parks, cafeterias, and libraries around Santiago to participate in various extra-curricular or cultural activities involving the children's interaction in Galician. Adam, a father and an active member of the group, shares his experience:

<p>Nos estamos xuntando, pois no tempo libre para que haxa espazos de socialización en galego para os nosos cativos. Reunímonos para que eles vexan que falar en galego é como algo natural estando con outros nenos que falan galego. (In Galician)</p>	<p>We are getting together in our free time to create socialization spaces in Galician for our children. We meet up so that they can see that speaking in Galician is something natural with other children who speak the language.</p>
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Adam's explicit reference to speaking in Galician as 'something natural' links it to the ideology of linguistic naturalism (Woolard, 2016), an ideology where language is seen as 'a natural object and where the authentic speaker is understood as someone who uses language unselfconsciously, who uses language in an apparently natural way' (Armstrong, 2014, p. 576). The above extracts also demonstrate how the ideologies circulate between different domains, from home to school to other language socialization contexts (i.e., playground or extracurricular activities) through these like-minded parents. They collectively take up the role of language managers to create safe spaces and conditions for their children so that they can socialize 'naturally' in Galician. This counter-hegemonic strategy can also be considered as another stylized form of resistance.

Although not identical, something similar is taking place in Navarre where a group of parents from a pre-school classroom at a Pamplona-based *ikastola* created a WhatsApp group so that the children can socialize in Basque outside the school compound. Although Susana and her partner learnt Basque as adults, the couple speak Castilian at home so as their twins. Susana decided to resume learning Basque when the children started *ikastola*. Ever since the couple take part in various Basque-language related activities proposed in the group:

<p>(...) procuramos juntarnos y hacer alguna actividad de vez en cuando para juntarlos (a los niños). [In Castilian]</p>	<p>(...) we try to meet up and do some activities from time to time to get them together (the children).</p>
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Ethnographic fieldwork with the group reveals that they organize a range of activities around Basque such as collective celebration of children's birthdays, getaways and camping in the mountains during weekends, excursions to Basque-speaking villages, or traditional celebrations such as carnival in Basque to mention a few. Regarding the language use of the children in these activities, the observational field notes from 19/02/2012 state the following:

<p>Jarduera horietan egindako behaketa parte-hartzaileak erakutsi zuen guraso euskaldunek euskaraz egiten ohi zutela eta haurrak ere euskaraz aritzen zirela, ez beti ordea. [In Basque]</p>	<p>The participant observations that have been made in those situations showed that the Basque-speaking parents spoke Basque to the children, and they also used it, however, not systematically.</p>
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Significantly, the above activities organized by this collective where they intend to control children's early language socialization by selecting peers or

space can be interpreted as providing an organizational basis for bottom-up language management. However, it is still to be determined whether these parents can effectively restore Basque by monitoring their children's contexts. The data indicates that the use of Basque among the children was not 'systematic' due to their intermittent shift to Castilian due to its anonymous presence in the broader society. Although parents often intervene with an intention to determine their children's linguistic practices, as contemporary FLP studies suggest, their attempts may fail as soon as the children reach adolescence (see Luykx, 2022; Tsushima & Guardado, 2019). Nevertheless, the contexts discussed in this section evoke the discourses of parental biopower, where Susana, Mercedes, Adam, and like-minded parents as progenitors take up the role of policy stakeholders and attempt to create a safe communication space and conditions for their children to use minority languages in their respective settings.

Conclusion

Many recent FLP studies (see Guardado, 2018; Wilson, 2020) argued that language choices and practices inside the family are influenced by the family members' understanding of the macro-social structures. Hence, breaching the binary between 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' policies, our interest in this article has been to comprehend how discourses circulate around and within the language policy circle. Revealing the intricacies of the connections among language policies at different interpersonal layers, we investigated the rise of grassroots-level policy agents in the form of parents in two Castilian-Spanish-dominated bilingual settings who decided to contest the low-intensity language policy models of the government through various grassroots-level strategies. Drawing on their claimed personal as well as collective linguistic practices, this article establishes a tangible connection between grassroots parental practices with macro-level policy decisions while expanding on the family's language decisions as 'a private family matter' (Spolsky, 2004) to a broader theoretical conceptualization.

Castilian with its Franco-era historiography continues to control the indigenous sociolinguistic contexts of Galicia and Navarre, also exerting influence over the regions' political mechanism. The advent of democracy in Spain in the 80s offered greater visibility to its minority languages such as Galician or Basque in social domains such as education and media. This reterritorialization of the hitherto Castilian-dominated sociolinguistic space led to increased levels of literacy and linguistic competence in these minority languages creating a generation of parents such as Adur, Adam, Mercedes, and Susana. Influenced by a strong ideological attachment to Galician and Basque, these parents have started challenging the Castilian master narrative and its power over

the government policies. Moreover, in the sociolinguistic scene of Navarre, parental language management strategies, as described in this article, influence the development of children's agency and identity. As the socializing environment creates breathing spaces for language use and promotes children's positive attitudes toward Basque, children bring home experiences, learning, and motivations (Nandi et al., 2023). Therefore, the symbolic capital, evident in the privileging of Castilian as the primary language of communication in the urban landscapes, is to some degree offset by these parents on the ground.

Inside the home, each parent exercises his/her individual agency to prepare the children to face the hegemony of Castilian in the broader society, equipping their progeny with the necessary psychological-emotional strength and linguistic skills to face the dominant discourse. These parents exhibit a resilience toward the deliberation between the home language (Galician or Basque) and Castilian. The overlapping of two linguistic discourses is subject to daily alterations and interventions mediating the minority language-speaking families' lived experiences. The habitus of individual family members in these arbitrations creates a diverse and shifting topography. A range of regulating vectors such as the mass media, implicit social codes, education, peer-pressure, and language practices that are linked to top-down governmentality and biopower play a significant role in this process. The latter two, as this article argues, can stem not only from the government but also from parental language management at the grassroots (cf. Nandi, 2018, 2019, 2023). This is evident from a range of very conscious and explicit efforts made by some concerned parents to exert control over their children's language behaviors, which include some exclusionary minority language-centered socialization measures to the outside sphere.

In their role as *in situ* language managers, these parents, whether in Galicia or Navarre, took accountability for their children's competence in the minority language which they believed was impossible to attain through the institutional low-intensity policies, and thus opted for an alternative model in which Galician or Basque played an exclusive or a more prominent role. In essence, their individual language planning and practices, when take the form of collective mobilizations (e.g., *Ikastolak* and *Semente*), may influence the immediate society's language compartment. The above inter-relationship between various layers of language governance in Galicia or Navarre cultivates a coaxial network of power relations ranging from the parental dominions in the interior family space to the jurisdictions of governmental policy-making echelons that could be analyzed through the prism of low-intensity policies. Such an interdisciplinary research domain, enriched with a cross-context perspective, bears scope for further scholarly exploration.

Notes

1. See Johnson (2013) for an extensive account on the CLP research paradigm.
2. Although the first references of *Ikastolak* can be traced in the early 20th century, their language activism received prominence in the 1960s (see Arrien, 1983 for a detailed historical account).
3. Since 2015, ETB3 has been available in Navarre. The data was collected before this policy change.

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ORCID

Anik Nandi  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8254-6637>

Ibon Manterola  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8368-3318>

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