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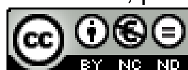

How to turn the tide: The policy implications emergent from comparing a 'Post-vernacular FLP' to a 'Pro-Gaelic FLP'

Cassie Smith-Christmas and Sìleas L. NicLeòid

Abstract

This paper compares the sociolinguistic trajectory of a 'latent' speaker mother to that of a 'new' speaker mother. Drawing on Shandler (2004), it introduces the term 'post-vernacular FLP' as a means to conceptualise the latent speaker mother's emblematic use of Gaelic with her child as a 'seed' from which language revitalisation can be cultivated, rather than a terminus. The paper discusses how the latent speaker mother's current ideological landscape in many ways encapsulates the tepidity of the older generation's ideologies. This contrasts to the new speaker mother, who has undergone the ideological transformation necessary to take an activist stance towards the language and implement a 'pro-Gaelic' FLP. The paper then considers the linguistic confidence barrier as described by both mothers, particularly in terms of using child-directed speech (CDS) in Gaelic, and shows how the new speaker mother overcame this particular barrier. The paper concludes by discussing the policy implications of this analysis, and poses the crucial question: what specific on-the-ground measures can be taken to transform post-vernacular FLPs to pro-Gaelic FLPs?

Keywords: family language policy; post-vernacular; new speakers; latent speakers; Scottish Gaelic

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Introduction

Recent years have seen a growing interest in the emergent field known as 'Family Language Policy' ('FLP'), defined here as 'explicit (Shohamy 2006) and overt (Schiffman 1996) planning in relation to language use within the home among family members' (King, Fogle, and Logan-Terry, 2008, p. 907). Parallel to work on language policy at the macro-level (see Spolsky, 2004), FLP has revealed the highly complex and often reflexive relationship between language ideologies and linguistic practices. Language ideologies—defined here as 'sets of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalisation or justification of perceived language structure or use' (Silverstein, 1979, p. 193)—are integral to understanding *how* and *why* caregivers enact their particular FLPs in the way they do (Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; Kirsch, 2012; Spolsky, 2012; King & Lanza, 2017). Like any ideology, language ideologies are mediated by broad social and historical forces as well the formative experiences which comprise any one individual's personal history (see Canagarajah 2008). Further, language ideologies are fluid across time and space, as well as entwined with other ideologies, such as for example those concerning personhood and parenthood (e.g. King & Fogle, 2006; Catedral & Djuraeva, 2018). Thus, although caregivers' ideologies which value the minority language often result in what Altman, Feldman, Yitzhaki, Lotem, and Walters (2014) term 'pro-minority language FLPs,' this is not necessarily always the case (Schwartz, 2008; Lanza, 2018). Ó hIfearnáin (2013) emphasises that any one FLP is comprised of a mosaic of language ideologies, both covert and overt. He draws on Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer (1998) in illustrating how these ideologies often are in competition with each

other. In Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer's analysis, overt support for the minority language is sometimes thwarted by less overt but no less potent 'ideologies of contempt' (Dorian, 1998), which denigrate the minority language and which historically have contributed to the language's shift. Ó hIfearnáin's discussion of the family language support programme *Tús Maith* in the Corca Dhuibhne Gaeltacht shows that even if these ideologies of contempt are overcome, significant intervention may also be needed in order to enact a change in the actual linguistic practices used by caregivers.

Recently, a vein of work within FLP research has centred specifically on families in which the parents are not 'native' speakers of the language that they are transmitting to their children (see Piller, 2001 for a thorough discussion of the term 'native' speaker). Some prominent examples of this work include Fogle's (2012) research on transnational adoptive families; King's work on native English-speaking mothers using Spanish with their children (Fogle and King, 2013); Nandi's (2016) analysis of 'new' speaker parents of Galician (i.e. parents who were not socialised in Galician in the home as children; see O' Rourke and Ramallo, 2015); Armstrong's (2013) discussion of parents learning Gaelic after enrolling their children in immersive Gaelic education in Scotland; and Ciriza's (2019) work on the impact of *Eman Giltza* ("Give Them the Key!"), a Basque initiative which encourages parents to use what Basque they have with their children. These studies also demonstrate the complex relationship between ideologies and practices: Nandi (2016, p. 153) for example shows how despite what could be considered purist orientations (in this case, correcting the child's use of Castilian Spanish '*cuchara*' to the Galician '*culler*,' meaning 'spoon'), the parents also appear to show tacit acceptance of the dominance of Castilian Spanish. Similarly, Armstrong (2013) shows how parents' efforts to negotiate the use of Gaelic in the home are sometimes pitted against ideologies that frame language management as unnatural and authoritarian, which is further complicated by the fact that a number of the parents have limited skills in the language. Ciriza's (2019) work also centres on parents with limited proficiency in the minority language and discusses the role that *Eman Giltza* plays in the management of parental *mudes*—that is, changes in linguistic practice that are often embedded in ideological shifts (Pujolar and Puigdevall, 2015).

This article will build on this growing body of research focused on diverse caregiver speaker profiles other than the 'native' caregiver speaker profiles which have dominated the field thus far. It will therefore look at the FLPs and the sociolinguistic trajectories of two mothers living in Stornoway, on the Isle of Lewis, Scotland, which is the main urban centre in what is considered the Gaelic-speaking heartlands of the Outer Hebrides. One of these mothers[1]—Jenny[2]—is a 'new' speaker of Scottish Gaelic, which for the purposes of this paper, is defined using McLeod and O' Rourke's (2015, p. 154) definition of Gaelic new speakers as speakers 'who did not acquire Gaelic in the home when growing up, but have nevertheless acquired a significant degree of competence in the language and are now making active use of the language in their lives.' As will be demonstrated in the paper, Jenny practices a 'pro-

[1] Both speakers were given code names.

[2] Jenny can also be considered a 'heritage speaker' as per Armstrong's (2013) definition of a heritage speaker as someone who has a direct familial connection to the language and who often had a level of exposure (albeit minimal) to the language in the home, but then undertook formal opportunities to learn and use the language. The choice to use 'new' speaker here is because we feel it better encapsulates the difference between the two speakers, especially since Jenny grew up in Glasgow and her Gaelic-speaking family members are from the Isle of Skye, not Lewis (see Smith-Christmas, 2018 a discussion of the importance of 'place' and new speakers of Gaelic).

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Gaelic' FLP and the article will centre on the ideological transformation and the change in practices which led to this pro-Gaelic FLP. Drawing on Bashram and Fatham (2008), we will use the term 'latent' speaker as a means to describe Shonagh, the other mother, and how although Shonagh reports low proficiency in Gaelic, her early socialisation in a family in which some members used Gaelic with her, as well as a community that was strongly Gaelic-speaking at the time, ostensibly endows her with certain advantages should she choose to re-activate her Gaelic use (see also Armstrong, 2013). The decision to use the term 'latent' in turn relates our characterisation of Shonagh's limited use of Gaelic with her child as a 'post-vernacular FLP,' which stems from Shandler's (2004) theoretical construct of 'post-vernacularity.' This concept has become increasingly utilised in research on autochthonous minority language communities (e.g. Sallabank, 2013; Costa, 2015; Hornsby, 2017), and as the name implies, post-vernacularity occurs when the language ceases to be used as a vernacular among interlocutors; in other words, language shift. What conceptually differentiates post-vernacularity from language shift is that post-vernacularity also entails the use of the language in a way that is emblematic and emotive. As Hornsby (2017) emphasises, post-vernacularity is the metaphorical fertile field in which revitalisation efforts are sown. Our motivation therefore in invoking the term 'post-vernacular FLP' to characterise Shonagh's language practices with her child is two-fold. First, as will be explained later in more detail, although on the surface Shonagh's language practices *look* like non-transmission, referring to them in this way ignores the emblematic, emotive Gaelic phrases she *does* use with her child (*cf*. Ciriza, 2019). Secondly, and most crucially for the policy implications of this paper, we wish to highlight that rather than conceptualising these practices as an end point, like the *Eman Giltza* initiative discussed in Ciriza (2019), this emblematic use of language can be conceptualised as the 'seed' from which Shonagh could potentially develop a more pro-Gaelic FLP, given effective support mechanisms. In order to identify these potential support mechanisms, we will compare and contrast Jenny and Shonagh's trajectories of speakerhood, and in doing so, will hopefully shed some light on what can be done to turn the tide of language shift on Lewis so that intergenerational Gaelic transmission can continue into the future.

Gaelic in Stornoway, Isle of Lewis

As of the most recent (2011) census, 57, 375 people in Scotland (1.1% of the population) have the ability to speak Gaelic (NRS, 2013). Parallel to other minority language situations, the decline of Gaelic can be attributed to sociohistorical and political realities that led to the disenfranchisement of its speakers and to their language becoming associated with backwardness and poverty (Withers, 1988; MacKinnon, 1991). The roots of this trajectory can be traced back to the late Middle Ages with the emergent divide between the fertile, more urbanised areas known as the 'Lowlands' and the less populous mountainous north and western areas known as the 'Highlands.' Over the intervening centuries, demographic decline of Gaelic speakers in the Highlands meant that Gaelic became largely confined to the islands[3] off the northwest coast of Scotland known as the Hebrides and in particular, to the westernmost of these islands, known as the Outer Hebrides. The longstanding Lowland/Highland divide accounts largely for the fact that unlike its Celtic language geographic neighbours Wales and Ireland, Gaelic has remained distant from a sense of Scottish identity for many people. Thus, despite wider policy measures such as the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 to reverse this decline, Gaelic occupies an ambiguous position

[3] Lewis is the largest (both in terms of population and landmass) as well as the northernmost of these islands.

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within the Scottish ideological landscape, perhaps best summarised by McLeod (2001, p. 27): "The position of Gaelic in Scottish public life and discourse is contradictory: a dominant softcore, romanticised support coexists with a residual contemptuousness that borders on racism."

Currently in the Outer Hebrides, 52% of the population (14, 066 speakers in total) have the ability to speak Gaelic (NRS, 2013). In Stornoway[4] specifically—the main centre for civic and commercial life in the Outer Hebrides—the percentage of speakers is even less (43.5%). In terms of current day-to-day Gaelic use in Stornoway, Birnie (2018) finds that interlocutors use Gaelic in less than 10% of their encounters with each other, a finding that is echoed in the earlier 2005 WILPP report (pp. 23-24), which discusses how even though speakers may know that they can use Gaelic in a particular public space or with a particular interlocutor, little than half actually do so. The precarious state of Gaelic in Lewis is further underscored in Munro, Armstrong, and Taylor's (2011) case study of Shawbost, a community on the west side of the island, where despite a relatively high proportion of fluent speakers (66%) and also despite what the authors characterise as a 'great goodwill' towards the language, the authors conclude (p. 4) that 'intergenerational transmission has all but ended in Shawbost' and that 'the language is falling apart and may be dead as a community language in Shawbost within one or perhaps two generations.'

Despite this decline, there have been areas of revitalisation as well. The inception and expansion of the immersive form of education known as Gaelic Medium Education (GME) is credited for instance with the slight increase in Gaelic speakers in the under-20 age bracket in the most recent Scottish census (Dunmore, 2018). GME follows from a long legacy of exclusion of Gaelic from education, enshrined in the 1872 Education Act and borne out in day-to-day practice, as reportedly until the 1930s in Lewis students were still punished for speaking the language in school (MacKinnon, 1974, p. 55). Enrolment in GME is based on parental choice and according to the most recent Scottish Pupil Census (2018), 4, 343 students nationally are enrolled in GME at the primary level. GME is available at both primary schools in Stornoway—Stornoway Primary and Laxdale Primary—the latter of which served a case study site in Stockdale, MacGregor and Munro's (2003) study of parental choice and GME. At Laxdale Primary, only 14% of the pupils were enrolled in the GME unit[5], despite 51% of Laxdale parents reporting some ability in Gaelic. Thus, it is clear that the majority of Gaelic-speaking parents whose children attend Laxdale Primary are choosing *not* to enrol their children in GME.

Methodology

The choice to take a comparative case study approach was borne out of the need for our analysis to be grounded in detailed knowledge about speakers' linguistic trajectories and how they impact on language use in the family. In first navigating the 'rich points' in the data (Hornberger, 2015) and using Nexus Analysis framework (see Scollon and Scollon, 2007; Hult, 2017) as a guiding point, we were able to see how certain themes emerged across the two speakers' experiences and how these resonated with wider discourses on Gaelic in Lewis and Scotland as a whole, and with other formative moments in each speaker's individual

[4] Population approximately 6,000.
[5] The word 'unit' is used here because with a few exceptions, GME exists only as 'units' within wider English-medium schools.

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trajectory (i.e. 'discourses in place' and 'historical body' in Nexus Analysis respectively). The analysis in this article therefore is drawn from semi-structured interviews with Shonagh and Jenny (both of which were transcribed and relevant parts translated by first author Cassie Smith-Christmas) and augmented by the authors' extensive ethnographic observations gleaned from living on Lewis for a combined total of over eight years. Shonagh's interview was part of a small-scale project on intergenerational transmission in the rural community where the second author, Sìleas L. Nic Leòid, resided at the time. This community is where Shonagh grew up and where three of her sisters still live. Although Shonagh's main residence is now in Stornoway, she was included in the study because it was clear from interviewing Shonagh's sisters that excluding Shonagh based on the fact that she lives in Stornoway would be taking a quite narrow (i.e. prototypical 'nuclear' family) view of FLP. The four sisters frequently share caregiving duties and Shonagh attends a weekly parent-toddler group in her home community. Cassie interviewed Shonagh in her home on December 9th, 2016, which is also the date that Cassie interviewed Jenny and her husband (both of whom Cassie had known in a personal capacity since 2012) later that evening for another study, an Irish Research Council-funded (IRC) project comparing FLPs on the Isles of Lewis and Harris with FLPs in the Corca Dhuibhne Gaeltacht in Ireland. This project also involved recording Jenny's family's spontaneous interactions in the home environment at various points from January-March 2017. Despite having more data about Jenny's FLP than Shonagh's, we still feel we are able to make fruitful comparisons of these two very different FLPs because the interviews of Shonagh's sisters helped form an in-depth picture of Shonagh's language socialisation when she was younger, as well as the contemporary language practices and ideologies within her extended family. As well, Sìleas' extensive ethnography of Shonagh's home community, including the weekly parent-child playgroup which Shonagh attended at the time of the research, further augmented our understanding of Shonagh's sociolinguistic experiences. After giving more detail about what each speaker's FLP looks at on the interactional level, we will describe the ideologies and practical challenges (in this case, the confidence barrier) underpinning these FLPs and then move onto the policy implications of our analysis.

'Pro-Gaelic FLP' versus a 'Post-Vernacular FLP'

In this section, we will give a more-detailed and contextualised explanation of what we mean by a 'pro-Gaelic FLP' versus a 'post-vernacular FLP,' beginning with Jenny's 'pro-Gaelic' FLP. Jenny primarily uses Gaelic with her children, despite their persistent use of English. In her previous work, Smith-Christmas (2016) terms this strategy the 'stand your ground approach to language choice' in order to encapsulate how, despite its relative neutrality compared to other language management strategies (see Lanza, 1997), this strategy is highly pro-active and resists what Gafaranga (2011) terms 'talking language shift into being,' whereby the adult switches to the child's choice of the majority code. Further, in her interview, Jenny herself comments on the intense effort it takes for her to speak Gaelic to the children when they answer in English: '*tha e cho doirbh bruidhinn ri clann sa Ghàidhlig aig amannan 's tha iad 'n-còmhnaidh freagairt sa Bheurla*' 'It's so difficult speaking to children in Gaelic sometimes, with them always answering in English'.

In contrast to Jenny's pro-Gaelic FLP, Shonagh uses English with her son (aged two and a half) except in specific circumstances, which she describes below:

> so, he's [her son] just got like some phrases like things that I say to him all the time

> like *'suidh sìos'* [‘sit down’] or when I'm putting him in the car seat, I'll say *'làmhan suas'* [‘hands up’] and *'sguir sin*' [‘stop that’], things that you’re saying all the time, that's more kind of what I speak to him

Here, we see the emblematic, ritualised use of the language, particularly in terms of Shonagh’s directives to her son. This type of use was also common among other mothers in the parent-toddler playgroup which Shonagh and second author Sìleas attend. For example, most of the mothers—although they never spoke Gaelic to each other or to Sìleas— would use the Gaelic word "*balach*" ('boy') when either talking to or about a boy, either in combination with other emblematic Gaelic phrases (e.g. "*trobhad*" 'come here') or in otherwise exclusively English conversations ("Did I hear a new *balach* had arrived" [someone talking about a newborn boy]).

This ritualistic use also extends to Gaelic when praying, which Shonagh describes below:

> like I'll always say grace in Gaelic and he can say it himself in Gaelic, like em but a lot of his wee friends don't have any [Gaelic] or their parents wouldn't even think to [use Gaelic with them] whereas it's kind of in the back of my mind, probably just from the way I was brought up […] a lot of them wouldn't even think to speak ANY Gaelic to them [their children] or would say 'oh, that's so nice, I wish I did that.'

In the introduction, we discussed that our motivation in characterising Shonagh’s language use with her son as a ‘post-vernacular FLP’ as opposed to ‘non-transmission’ lies in the ritualistic, emblematic use of Gaelic, such as seen here with the example of saying grace in Gaelic. This in turn relates to what we argue is the imperative for Scottish Gaelic policy and planning to see this type of language use as a ‘seed’ rather than a terminal point, much like the Basque initiative *Eman Giltza* views caregivers’ emblematic language as an important potential pathway to increased use of the minority language (Ciriza, 2019). Following this line of thought, we will look more deeply into the conditions we deem necessary for Shonagh to undergo a ‘parental *muda*’ similar to the mother who is the focal point of Ciriza’s (2019) study. To do this, we still begin by comparing and contrasting Shonagh and Jenny’s early socialisation experiences, and we will show how certain competing ideologies have filtered into the two speakers’ own ideological landscapes, i.e. their ‘residual’ ideologies. In doing so, we will therefore show how certain formative experiences within Jenny’s historical body have enabled her to overcome the ideologies of contempt inherited from her socialisation experiences, thus contributing to multiple *mudes* in terms of her acquisition and use of Gaelic over time. Shonagh on the other hand has not undergone such an ideological transformation and therefore remains static in her post-vernacular language practices.

The transformation versus stasis of residual language ideologies

For Jenny, the only occasions in which she heard Gaelic spoken as a child was in the car going to church each week, as her father conversed with his mother and his mother’s friend in Gaelic, but never to Jenny in Gaelic. As seen below, Jenny attributes this practice to her father’s ideologies of contempt winning out over his personal emotional attachment to the language:

> *bha e a' creidsinn, uill, tha mi cinnteach gu bheil gaol aige air Gàidhlig agus tha e brònach gu bheil Gàidhlig a’ crìonadh, ach air an làimh eile, chaidh a teagasg dha*

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chan eil feum ann an cànan agad, chan fhaigh thu adhart [..] chan fhaigh thu adhart ann am beatha mura h-eil Beurla agad
he believed, well, I'm sure that he had a love for Gaelic and that he is sad that Gaelic is declining but on the other hand it was taught to him, there's no use in your own language, you won't get ahead […] you won't get ahead if you don't speak English

In this excerpt, the competing ideologies are demarcated clearly, with the 'love for Gaelic' and sadness at seeing it at an end pitted against the idea that Gaelic is useless because it offers little or no economic rewards in comparison to English. In her interview, Jenny describes how she too struggled with these residual ideologies of contempt not only in terms of initially learning the language, but also in the naissance of her pro-Gaelic FLP. Here, Jenny details how this internal struggle was one of the main reasons her initial attempts to use Gaelic with her first-born child were thwarted[6]:

adhbhar eile a bha e a' fàs ro dhoirbh- bha mi a' strì leis na attitudes *dona agam nuair a bha mi òg an aghaidh na Gàidhlig* so *bha aon taobh- bha tòrr gaol agam tòrr gaol agam air Gàidhlig ach bha agam ri strì a-rithist nuair a thòisich mi Gàidhlig ionnsachadh*

another reason why it was growing too difficult, I was struggling with the bad attitudes I had when I was young against Gaelic so there was one side- I had a lot of love- a lot of love for Gaelic but I had to struggle again when I started learning Gaelic

As in the last excerpt, here Jenny also clearly describes competing ideologies, this time her own 'love for Gaelic,' pitted against the 'bad attitudes' of her younger years, i.e. the residual ideologies of contempt. Overcoming this struggle therefore is seen to be the result of an ideological transformation. The following is a synthesis of the critical moments in Jenny's historical body which led to her ideological transformation (see also Smith-Christmas, Bergroth, and Bezclioğlu-Gölktolga, 2019) and incorporates Cassie Smith-Christmas' English translations of Jenny's quotes into its synthesis.

Jenny frames the catalyst for her initial conscious decision to learn Gaelic as a highly emotive experience. She describes how 'the tears were streaming' in listening to a 'Teach Yourself Gaelic' tape, in that hearing Gaelic phonemes brought back memories of the way her grandmother and older relatives spoke. The reason for exploring the 'Teach Yourself Gaelic' book and tape in the first place stemmed from the fact that she was 'living in England at the time' and 'homesick for Scotland,' which underlines the emotional potency of this particular life event. This particular framing also is a way in which Jenny discursively links Gaelic to a sense of Scottish identity, which over the years has been further strengthened by Jenny's husband's[7] sense of Irish as his own language emanating from Irish's status as the official language of Ireland and the policies related to this status (e.g. compulsory Irish in education, which enabled him to become relatively proficient in the language). In this part of the interview, Jenny and her husband jointly narrate how they once stayed at a hostel in the Isle of Skye (Jenny's father's native island) with a sign that read 'Your mother doesn't live here, wash your own dishes' in a number of languages. Her husband wrote a version of the sign in Irish, and then encouraged Jenny to write it in Scottish Gaelic. Jenny expresses a feeling of shame at not being able to write the sign in Gaelic and having had no access to what she

[6] The other reason was the fact that the family was living in Switzerland at the time.
[7] Jenny's husband has been learning Gaelic and can participate to some extent in Jenny's pro-Gaelic FLP.

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positions as *her* language. The sentiment also comes across in Jenny's narration of the couple's experiences abroad, namely in the multilingual nation-state of Switzerland, where the couple lived for a number of years. Jenny recalls listening to people alternate fluidly between German and French and feeling shame not only that she could not do that with other languages, but also that she was not a fluent speaker of her *own* language (although she did have competency in Gaelic by the time she lived in Switzerland). In relating this experience, Jenny also discusses the daily enactment of language rights and the institutional and normalised multilingualism she witnessed in Switzerland; for instance, she specifically mentions that one could go into a shop and speak a language and expect a reply in that language.

Upon moving to Stornoway, Jenny had undergone the ideological transformation necessary for her to implement a pro-Gaelic FLP, which she subsequently implemented with her youngest child (who was born in Stornoway) and then with her older two children, whom she enrolled in GME upon moving to Stornoway. She also practiced activism on other fronts, such as working for a Gaelic organisation. In sum, in tracing Jenny's various experiences, we see that Jenny's very pro-Gaelic stance in both her personal and professional life is seen to be the manifestation of her strong familial and emotional connection to Gaelic evolving and eventually becoming entwined with wider understandings of language, identity, and what language rights *could* look like.

In contrast to Jenny, Shonagh does not appear to have undergone an ideological transformation. Rather, her ideologies appear to reflect the conflicting ideologies into which she was socialised in her younger years. These ideologies are encapsulated by the quotes below, which discuss her father's and her grandparents' use of Gaelic with her:

1	Cassie	And then your dad, did he speak Gaelic to you?
2	Shonagh	Yeah, he would like, em, not all the time but he would
3	Cassie	and was he home a lot or
4	Shonagh	Yeah, he was a [type of worker] so […] he would just go out to the garage and do his [type of work] in between and like come in for lunch you know, things like that so
5	Cassie	And was it important to him that you had Gaelic or..?
6	Shonagh	I think so I mean, he wasn't like really keen like he never really pushed it or anything and he'd never really teach us, like he would if you asked him things but he wasn't like super keen for us all to have Gaelic he liked the idea of it

1	Shonagh	…They [her grandparents] would speak to us in Gaelic and sometimes I would answer in English, sometimes I would answer in Gaelic but it just depended on the mood
2	Cassie	Do you think it was important to them that you had Gaelic?
3	Shonagh	Yeah, they would always try and speak in Gaelic, well my grandfather especially he would try to encourage it, but- they never forced it, but they liked the idea of it

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Although Jenny's description of her father's conflicting ideologies was much more vivid in its contrast—the 'love' pitted against the clear ideologies of contempt—it is argued that here too we see evidence of caregivers' conflicting ideologies. While the caregivers *are* speaking some Gaelic to Shonagh and her sisters, and, as Shonagh puts it, they 'like the idea of Gaelic,' their Gaelic use inconsistent ('not all the time' in the case of her father and 'sometimes' in the case of her grandparents). Further, her father was not 'super keen for us all to have Gaelic,' which Shonagh underscores by the comment that her father would 'never really teach us, like he would if you asked him things.' The result appears to be a net neutrality, so to speak, and means that while Gaelic speakers like Shonagh's father may 'like the idea of it,' they are not necessarily willing to do much about Gaelic language revitalisation aside from occasional use within the family, a finding strongly echoed in Munro, Taylor and Armstrong's study (2011) of Shawbost.

The tepidity encapsulated in Shonagh's descriptions of her father's and grandparents' language ideologies appear to have filtered into her own ideological landscape as the underlying roots of her post-vernacular FLP. Given Shonagh's earlier account of her occasional use of Gaelic with her son as stemming from 'the way I was brought up'—which we understand to index a positive orientation to the language in terms of familial continuity—the fact that she is not doing much to increase her Gaelic use leads us to conclude that Shonagh 'likes the idea of Gaelic' but is not 'really keen,' to echo her earlier description of her father. Further, Shonagh's word choice in framing her caregivers as they never 'pushed' or 'forced' Gaelic is also revealing. Invoking the word 'pushed' or 'forced' in terms of hypothetical language management strategies is in turn argued to be a reflex of, and in turn contributes to, a monolingual English ideology: that anything besides English requires a degree of coercion, i.e. 'forcing' or 'pushing' it (see Armstrong, 2014, p. 577; Dunmore, 2017, p. 733).

This tepid stance towards Gaelic is also evident in Shonagh's discussion of how she is unsure whether or not she will enrol her son in GME when he enters school (*cf*. Stockdale, Munro, and MacGregor's 2003 observation of the low percentage of parents sending their children to GME at Laxdale Primary in Stornoway). One reason why she thinks maybe she will decide against GME is her perception that her husband[8] would be unequipped to help their son with his homework. Here, however, she explains why she believes GME may be beneficial for her son:

> 'cause I just think, I'm not very good with languages and I think if he starts from a young age then um you know, for learning other languages and things and even jobs like to have a chance with- more of a variety of jobs would be good

In this excerpt, Shonagh frames the value of Gaelic in terms of learning other languages and its role in employment opportunities, which aligns both with observations of parents' motivations for enrolling their children in GME specifically (O'Hanlon, McLeod, and Patterson, 2010) and bilingual education more generally (King and Fogle 2006; Piller and Gerber, 2018; Ciriza, 2019). This framing also aligns with the discourses in place, in particular campaigns coordinated by *Bòrd na Gàidhlig* to encourage parents to enrol their children in GME (Dunmore, 2014). For instance, a poster visible in the Stornoway airport at

[8] Shonagh's husband was raised in Stornoway in an English-speaking household and Shonagh characterises her husband as 'easy-oasy' (i.e. he does not care either way) about whether their son acquires any Gaelic.

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the time the interviews were conducted features the English text 'Give your child a flying start—learn Gaelic. Having more than one language offers more career opportunities.' Notably absent both as the poster's framing as well as Shonagh's framing of the benefits of GME is any orientation to the value of *Gaelic as a language.* That is, the language is not valued in terms of culture and identity and its perceived instrumental value stems solely from the fact that Gaelic is *another* language, thereby enabling the child to become bilingual. This sentiment is echoed in Armstrong's (2018, p. 26) analysis of parents' struggle to establish a free-standing GME school: 'If strong language ideology and language policy are advanced in a Gaelic school, will this put off those parents who are more interested in GME as immersion education for bilingual advantage, those without much interest in the Gaelic revival *per se*?' Thus, here too, Shonagh shows a tepid orientation towards Gaelic: on some level, she thinks acquiring the language may be beneficial for her son, but this benefit does not relate to any qualities of the language itself.

As seen from this discussion, Shonagh does not appear to have undergone an ideological transformation that was argued to be the case for Jenny. Thus, although Shonagh does not explicitly cite any clear ideologies of contempt when speaking about her lack of Gaelic with her son, this stasis is seen to account in part for her low use. As seen with Jenny's story, after all, not only do any residual ideologies of contempt need to be overcome, but this ideological journey further needs to evolve in activist orientations towards the language in order to initiate a pro-Gaelic FLP. The following will examine the linguistic challenges that Shonagh may face in hypothetically instituting such an FLP, and will centre on the reason Shonagh herself cites for her low Gaelic use: her lack of confidence in speaking the language. It will then turn to examine how Jenny overcame this barrier—particularly in terms of gaining confidence in child-directed speech (CDS) in Gaelic—and will use this analysis in embarking on the policy implications to be discussed in the conclusion.

The Confidence Barrier and Child-Directed Speech (CDS)

The issue of confidence as an obstacle to using a particular minority language is well-established in studies involving Gaelic specifically (e.g. Munro, Taylor and Armstrong, 2011; Will, 2012) as well as other studies of new and heritage speakers of minority languages (e.g. Basham and Fatham, 2008; Jaffe, 2015) and also second language speakers more generally (Dörnyei, 2010). Indeed, in this paper we refer to Shonagh as a 'latent speaker' in that she positions herself as such in the interview. Given Shonagh's variable Gaelic input as a child, it is perhaps not surprising that Shonagh lacks confidence in Gaelic. Further, as we saw in the last section, Shonagh characterises herself at 'not very good with languages,' which also underscores her linguistic confidence issues. Similarly, Jenny's exposure to Gaelic as a child was virtually non-existent save for the weekly car trips to church and thus like other new speakers, she has struggled with confidence issues in her new speakerhood journey. These sentiments are encapsulated in the quotes below, drawn from Shonagh and Jenny's interviews respectively:

> Cassie: do you think if there was more support do you think that would be helpful for you as a parent?
> Shonagh: yeah, definitely yeah I think so I think like joint-learning because I want him to have it [Gaelic] but I'm not confident in it so if there was something like that that would just keep you kind of practicing

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Jenny: […] *uill cha robh mi uabhasach misneachail- mo chuid Ghàidhlig, an eagal orm gun cuireadh gun cuireadh e na clann ceàrr,* you know, *agus bha mi a' smaoineachadh nach robh e ceart o chionn 's nach robh mi- nach robh Gàidhlig agamsa bho thùs*

[…] well I wasn't very confident- my Gaelic- frightened it would put- put the children wrong, you know and I thinking I wasn't it wasn't right, because I wasn't- because I wasn't raised with Gaelic

It is clear to see from both these quotes that lack of confidence is a barrier to using Gaelic in the home. Jenny, however, managed eventually to overcome this barrier, despite her concern that not being socialised in Gaelic as a child might result in passing on certain grammatical aberrations to her own children. Although this concern was not explicitly mentioned in Shonagh's interview, in their collective eight-year ethnography of Lewis, the authors encountered a number of parents who expressed the fear that what they considered their 'imperfect' Gaelic (often positioned along the lines of 'my Gaelic is not as fluent as my parents' and/or my grandparents' Gaelic;' see also Mac an Tàilleir, Rothach and Armstrong, p. 155) would lead not only to their child's incomplete acquisition of the language, but may also impede their linguistic development *as a whole*. This belief, coupled with the tepid ideological orientations discussed in the last section, is seen to be the crux of the lack of intergenerational Gaelic transmission in Lewis. As seen from Jenny's quote, it is clear that Jenny did worry that being a new speaker might negatively impact her children's acquisition of Gaelic; however, she does not appear to worry that this could then impact their linguistic development *as a whole*. Part of the reason for this may lie in the fact that when the family lived in Switzerland, to some extent Jenny integrated her other 'new' language—German—into the home and saw that it impeded neither her children's German nor English acquisition. This advantage in terms of Jenny's linguistic awareness however was stymied by the fact that in Stornoway, Jenny lacked suitable models for parent-child use, as the gap in intergenerational transmission meant that Jenny did not often hear child-directed speech (CDS) in Gaelic:

cha robh na faclan gu lèir agam no abairtean geur so *bha i doirbh* you know *feumaidh mi oidhirp a dhèanamh, bha e nas fhasa dhomh ann an dòigh Gearmailtis a bhruidhinn ris na clann na Gàidhlig o chionn 's gun robh mi air mo chuairteachadh le Gearmailtis, bha mi a' cluinntinn pàrantan eile a' bruidhinn Gearmailtis […] ach an seo, cha chluinn thusa,* you know, *tha e doirbh doirbh doirbh mura h-eil,* you know, *o chionn 's nach robh mi Gàidhlig air chluinntinn nuair a bha mise òg, cha robh duine a' cleachdadh,* you know, *briathrachas seo ach am briathrachas a dh' ionnsaicheas tu ann an clas airson inbhich, chan eil e freagarrach airson bruidhinn ri clann, tha i rud beag-* you know, *chan eil thu ag ionnsachadh 'cur ort do bhrògan',* you know, *cha chanadh sinn,* you know, *ri inbhich eile- tha thu ag ionnsachadh dè an uair a tha am bus air falbh- am bus air falbh, ann an Inbhir Nis no rudeigin mar sin,* you know

I didn't have all the words or wee expressions so it was hard, you know, I have to make an effort. It was easier for me in a way to speak German to the children than Gaelic because I was surrounded by German and I was listening to other parents speaking German […] but here you won't hear-you know it's very, very difficult if-

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> you know because I didn't hear Gaelic when I was young, people weren't using the vocabulary- but the vocabulary you would learn in an adult class, it's not suitable for speaking to children, there's something- you know, you don't learn 'put on your shoes,' you know, we wouldn't say that you know to another adult- you're learning what time does the bus leave, the bus leave, in Inverness, nor something like that you know.

Here, Jenny contrasts the relative ease of integrating German into the home sphere while the family lived in Switzerland, where she heard other parents speaking German to their children, with her initial experiences in Stornoway, where she did not witness such parent-child interactions in Gaelic. As a new speaker of the language, and thus as someone who never heard these 'words and wee expressions' growing up, Jenny has to rely on her adult learning trajectory to provide her with the linguistic tools for child-directed speech. However, Jenny emphasises that her adult classes did not provide her with the vocabulary 'suitable' for CDS. As Jenny points out with the example of learning how to ask what time the bus leaves, adult Gaelic language pedagogy tends to follow foreign language models in its emphasis on vocabulary most useful for travel, for instance, instead of vocabulary centred specifically on Gaelic in a family/home context (Smith-Christmas and Armstrong, 2014). Jenny therefore not only had to overcome the confidence barrier in terms of her general acquisition, but also in terms of specifically acquiring and gaining practice in using CDS in Gaelic. Overcoming this barrier was achieved primarily through two means. At that time, Jenny was already participating in 'Homework Help,' a home assistance programme designed for parents with children in GME, as her two older children were enrolled in GME. Although Jenny reports that she found this programme helpful, the emphasis on written work (e.g. going through the children's assignments) meant that it did not necessarily help her acquire and gain confidence in using Gaelic CDS. She therefore specifically sought out an older native Gaelic-speaking female mentor to help her learn the vocabulary associated with CDS. This mentor then came to Jenny's home each week and helped Jenny acquire to day-to-day vocabulary suitable for using with children around the house. The mentor also encouraged Jenny to set up the parent-toddler group *Pàrant is Pàiste* group in Stornoway. Jenny then successfully petitioned *Bòrd na Gàidhlig* for funding to set up such a group in Stornoway and then attended the group with her youngest child, who was a toddler at the time.

As seen from Shonagh's interview, CDS in the form of short directives such as '*sguir sin'* ('stop that') form the core of what is termed Shonagh's 'post-vernacular FLP.' However, despite Shonagh's familiarity with this register, her interview also indicates that learning initiatives designed around CDS may go some way in addressing her own confidence issues. In the earlier excerpt, Shonagh indicated that she would like more 'joint-learning' (i.e. parent and child) opportunities. This is in reference to 'Bookbug', a national Scottish initiative in which children and their parents attend weekly half-hour sessions where they listen to a story and learn songs together. At the Stornoway Library, these are available alternately in Gaelic and English, and here Shonagh describes the role that the Bookbug has played in re-activating her latent language skills:

> [Bookbug] was good for me as well cause there's like the songs and that kind of helped me- brought back words and made it a little bit easier for me to speak-

In speaking of what she would like to see in such hypothetical joint-learning initiatives, Shonagh underscores the need for opportunities to help with 'everyday words and things like that,' which aligns with Jenny's description of her self-initiated mentoring programme

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described earlier. It is clear to see from both these interviews, therefore, that a programme designed specifically around the needs of parents could play a role in addressing the confidence issues expressed by both latent speakers and new speakers. This point will be discussed further in the following section.

Conclusion: Policy Implications

This paper has introduced the term 'post-vernacular FLP' as a means to explore how a caregiver's emblematic, sporadic use of Gaelic can be conceptualised as a 'seed' which can be 'grown' rather than a terminal point in intergenerational transmission of the language. We have used two case studies to illustrate how particular language ideologies, coupled with a lack of confidence and familiarity in using Gaelic in the home, form barriers to intergenerational language transmission. However, as Jenny's story has clearly shown, these barriers can be overcome. Our analysis therefore suggests the need for an initiative centred specifically on supporting Gaelic use in the home, a point also emphasised on Munro, Armstrong, and Taylor (2011) and Smith-Christmas and Armstrong (2014). This effort could draw on the strengths of existing initiatives such as, to echo Shonagh's words, the 'joint-learning' nature programmes such as Bookbug and *Pàrant is Pàiste*, as well as the play-centred nature of *Thig a Chluich* ('Come play'), the new initiative that Shonagh's sisters specifically mentioned in their interviews. The coordination of these and other initiatives to form a comprehensive support programme for families could take a similar form to *Tús Maith* ('A Good Start') in the Corca Dhuibhne Gaeltacht in Ireland. As described in Ó hIfearnáin (2013), *Tús Maith* started in direct response to the realisation that intergenerational transmission was nearing a tipping point. *Tús Maith* currently coordinates a range of schemes and activities that support families to use Irish in the home as well as foster children's positive emotional relationship with Irish as they mature through childhood. These activities are run entirely through the medium of Irish and include seasonal activities such as a visit from Santa, an Easter egg hunt, and games day on the beach for all ages; a weekly parent-toddler playgroup; a monthly Saturday family activity group; and a term-time drama programme for older children. *Tús Maith*'s flagship initiative however is the *Cuairteoirí Baile* ('Home Visitor') scheme, which essentially is a formalised version of what Jenny did when she invited a Gaelic speaker to her house to help her with the 'words and wee expressions' she felt she lacked. The mentors in the *Tús Maith* programme visit weekly with families who wish to integrate more Irish in the home, and through the use of games and activities, mentors support both the children's and adult's use of the language. Not only is the weekly visit a dedicated time for the family to use Irish, but the play-based nature of the visits help children foster a good relationship with the language. Further, the collaborative caregiver-child nature of these visits gives families a template to continue using the language in play-based and home-centred activities outside of official visit times. Additionally, the mentors specifically help build caregivers' linguistic confidence in general, both in terms of CDS as well as adult peer talk. The emphasis on play and collaborative learning echoes *Tús Maith*'s other activities mentioned previously, and thus across the programme, there is a coordinated approach to increase families' use of Irish and foster family members' positive relationship with the language.

It is this last aspect—fostering a positive relationship with the language—that can play a role in the other main challenge to integrating Gaelic in the home. As seen from the analysis in this article, not only do caregivers need practical support in using Gaelic into the home, but many of them need to undergo an ideological transformation to use more Gaelic. By implementing a *Tús Maith*-style approach and thereby enabling caregivers to build their

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own confidence in the language while engaging in enjoyable, affective activities with their children, caregivers become more likely to associate the language with bonding with their children than other potential negative associations. Further, opportunities for caregivers like Shonagh to interact with other caregivers who are participating in the coordinated efforts of a *Tús Maith*-style approach may also help bring about the recursive cycle of increased language use and ideological transformation attested to in Ciriza's (2019, p. 374-5) study of the Basque initiative *Eman Giltza*. Initially, the mother in Ciriza's study was very similar to Shonagh in that she only saw the value of Basque as a pathway to bilingualism; however, as she spent more time with other caregivers who were using what Basque they had with their children, she began to place more value on the language, which then led to the 'parental *muda*' in terms of linguistic practice. Were Shonagh to have increased and strategically coordinated opportunities to socialise with other caregivers, it is envisaged that she may also embark on the *muda* journey. This may also solidify her decision to send her child to GME, which could then offer further opportunities the reflexive nature of the language ideology and language practice to 'grow' from the post-vernacular seed which has been planted.

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