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Abstract

A number of studies have been carried out on parental attitudes to bilingualism and parental strategies for developing bilingual children's language skills in the mother tongue and the second language. However, few studies have focused on both parental attitudes and strategies for all language skills, including reading, listening, speaking, and writing. This thesis intended to investigate parental attitudes to bilingualism and parental strategies for developing first and second language skills in bilingual children. The participants under study were families who had bilingual children and were living and attending elementary schools in the Stavanger area of Norway. A qualitative approach for data collection was used in order to achieve the objectives of the present study. Among qualitative data collection methods, a semi-structured interview was used. The interviewees were ten parents who volunteered to take part in this study. This study would guide parents who are raising bilingual children and are living in a country other than their own country on the kinds of strategies they could use for different language skills in the home.

The main findings of the study were that all the interviewees, especially mothers, were very much involved in reading comprehension and writing with their children, and motivated their children by buying or borrowing books. As for the speaking skill, all families had dinner-time discussions, which were favored among other speaking activities. In addition, the interviewees asserted that their children liked listening to songs and stories parents sang and read. The interviewees strongly believed that they should use their mother tongue in the home in order to teach and maintain it in addition to Norwegian. All parents used similar error-correction strategies for productive skills. Moreover, there was no distinction between fathers' and mothers' error correction techniques. Parental attitudes to bilingualism were another aspect of focus in the present study. The results of the study indicated that all the interviewees had positive attitudes to bilingualism. They believed that bilingualism would assist the educational progress of their children. Moreover, the interviewees believed that bilingualism had a positive effect on the educational progress of their children, although not all parents put effort to keep the mother tongue and Norwegian simultaneously regarding the four language skills. In the following chapters, all the aforementioned findings and discussions about parental strategies for the language skills in the home and their attitudes to bilingualism will be presented in detail.

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Table of contents:

1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	1
1.2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND AIMS	1
1.3. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS AND PREVIOUS RESEARCH	2
1.4. METHOD	3
1.5. THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN NORWAY	4
1.5.1. <i>Primary education</i>	4
1.5.2. <i>English Curriculum</i>	4
1.5.3. <i>Norwegian Curriculum</i>	5
1.6. CONTRIBUTION	5
1.7. OUTLINE OF THE THESIS	6
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	7
2.1. SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND LEARNING	7
2.2. DEFINITIONS OF BILINGUALISM	9
2.3. TYPES, DIMENSIONS, AND COGNITIVE ADVANTAGES OF BILINGUALISM	12
2.3.1. <i>Types of bilingualism</i>	12
2.3.2. <i>Dimensions of bilingualism</i>	14
2.3.3. <i>Cognitive advantages of bilingualism</i>	15
2.3.4. <i>Previous research on bilingualism</i>	16
2.4. DEFINITION OF ATTITUDE	19
2.4.1. <i>Attitude and language attitude</i>	19
2.4.2. <i>Components of attitude</i>	21
2.4.3. <i>Previous research on parental attitudes</i>	22
2.5. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	24
2.5.1. <i>Previous research on parental involvement</i>	27
2.6. PARENTAL STRATEGIES.....	28
2.6.1. <i>Previous research on parental strategies</i>	32
3. METHODOLOGY	35
3.1. RESEARCH TYPES	35
3.1.1. <i>Qualitative and quantitative research</i>	35
3.1.2. <i>Qualitative data collection techniques</i>	37
3.2. DATA COLLECTION, PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS	38
3.2.1. <i>Participants</i>	38
3.2.2. <i>Data collection instrument</i>	39

3.2.3. Interview piloting and conduction	40
3.2.4. Interview analysis	41
3.3. METHODOLOGICAL CONCERNS	41
3.3.1. Reliability and validity.....	41
3.4. ETHICAL ASPECTS	43
3.5. SUMMARY	43
4. FINDINGS.....	44
4.1. INTRODUCTION	44
4.2. INTERVIEWEE 1	44
4.3. INTERVIEWEE 2	47
4.4. INTERVIEWEE 3	49
4.5. INTERVIEWEE 4	51
4.6. INTERVIEWEE 5	54
4.7. INTERVIEWEE 6	57
4.8. INTERVIEWEE 7	59
4.9. INTERVIEWEE 8	61
4.10. INTERVIEWEE 9	63
4.11. INTERVIEWEE 10	65
4.12. SUMMARY	67
5. DISCUSSION.....	68
5.1. PARENTAL STRATEGIES FOR LANGUAGE SKILLS.....	68
5.1.1. Reading.....	68
5.1.2. Speaking	72
5.1.3. Listening.....	73
5.1.4. Writing.....	75
5.2. PARENTAL ATTITUDES TO BILINGUALISM	78
5.3. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	82
5.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.....	83
5.5. SUMMARY	83
6. CONCLUSION	84
REFERENCES	87
APPENDIX I.....	95

1. Introduction

The present thesis was an attempt to explore parental roles and strategies for first and second language (or L1 and L2) learning in the home environment. The main aim of this research was to highlight parental roles in supporting language skill development. The families in this study had children, who were in the elementary school (grades one and four). It should be noted that parents had the same as well as different mother tongues. This study focused on parental attitudes towards bilingualism. In order to carry out this research, a qualitative approach for data collection was used. More specifically, a semi-structured interview was chosen. This chapter presents a statement of the problem, research questions and aims of the study, definitions of terms and a brief overview of the previous research, methodology used to carry out the research, contribution and limitations of the study, and finally the outline of the thesis.

1.1. Statement of the problem

Despite the fact that many studies have been done in relation to parental strategies and attitude towards bilingualism, very few have focused on the children at the elementary level, parents with various mother tongues, and all four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

This study aimed to find out how families assist children in the home in order to develop the mother tongue and Norwegian as a second or a third language. In other words, how families support the two or three languages when practicing reading, listening, speaking and writing with their children. In addition, this study also focused on the attitudes of parents with regards to bilingualism. It intended to find out, for example, whether families have positive or negative attitudes towards bilingualism.

1.2. Research questions and aims

The aim of this study was to explore parental strategies and roles for developing Norwegian and the mother tongue in the home environment. To achieve this end, interviews were used to learn if and how parents were involved in their children's language development. In order to reach the objective, the study addressed the following research questions:

1. What strategies do families use to support first and second language development of the children?
2. What are the parental attitudes to developing bilingualism?

In addition to the aims that have been mentioned earlier in this chapter, by conducting the interviews it is hoped to find out useful information about families with different cultural backgrounds, their educational level, ages and other issues.

1.3. Definitions of terms and previous research

There exists quite a large body of research on defining what bilingualism and attitude mean. Therefore, many definitions and characteristics have been proposed for each. In addition, various studies have been carried out in relation to parental attitude and involvement in supporting the language learning skills of their children. In this section, brief definitions and explanations of the terms and previous research will be provided.

Second language learning is getting more and more spread around the world because of the mobility of people for different reasons such as occupational, educational or immigration purposes. Therefore, the number of bilinguals is increasing. Researchers in the past decades have been trying to provide an appropriate definition. Butler and Hakuta (2004:115) define bilinguals as ‘individuals or groups of people, who obtain communicative skills, with various degrees of proficiency, in oral and/or written forms, in order to interact with speakers of one or more languages in a given society’. This definition was chosen among other definitions because it suits best to the purpose of this study. According to Vaughan and Hogg (2005:150) and Cooper and Fishman (1974) attitude is defined as feelings, beliefs and behaviors that parents hold towards objects or groups or events that will influence their reaction in positive or negative ways. There are various proposals for types, dimensions, and cognitive effect of bilingualism, which will be presented in detail in chapter two.

In addition, there are many researches on parental involvement and attitude with respect to bilingualism and raising bilingual children in different countries. For example, Tavi (2009) did a research on parental attitude for kindergarten children in Turkey, through conducting a questionnaire for parents, he found out that parents have positive attitudes to bilingualism and support with respect to the immersion of their kids into English at kindergartens and eventually

parents' attitudes affected the children's success in language learning. Based on a study on Korean parents' attitudes and home literacy practices, parents favor the holistic view of bilingualism with the focus on a person's ability to be able to communicate in two languages without any problem (Jang 2012). In another study two sets of questionnaires were given to parents and children in order to find out attitudes and behaviors of children and parents towards bilingualism. The results indicated that parents have different attitudes when raising their children with respect to learning Chinese and English. However, parents had a strong feeling about keeping their mother tongue as a heritage (Wu 2005:2392-3).

In yet another study which was conducted in England to see the parents' involvement in children's education, it was found out that parents do support their children in the home especially in reading comprehension (Kawashima and Konteh:2008:113). In a research carried out in Norway on Norwegian-English bilingual children's language development (Charboneu, 2008), a two-year longitudinal case study was done with four Norwegian-English bilingual families. The results of the study indicated that the family's language strategy was a key factor in children's language development, which needed to be observed in relation to other factors, such as language, context, motivation, and exposure to the languages.

1.4. Method

A qualitative approach was selected to conduct the study. The small number of participants and the interview as a tool were chosen as a result of the researcher's choice of the qualitative paradigm. In addition, among data collection methods in the qualitative approach, a semi-structured interview was devised and used for data collection. The reason why a semi-structured interview was selected was due to the fact that semi-structured interviews tend to elicit more detailed responses and explanations from the interviewees. In addition, the interviews were carried out with one parent in each family, who had bilingual children going to Norwegian primary schools. The participants were families, who were living in Norway for various reasons.

The interviews were carried out at the participant's preferred place upon mutual agreement. The focus of the interview was on background of the families, parental attitudes to bilingualism, and on the strategies families use to support language skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing) development. The language skill questions were about Norwegian and

English languages. In addition, voices were recorded and notes were taken during the interview and the result were transcribed and analyzed at later stages.

1.5. The educational system in Norway

1.5.1. Primary education

According to the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (2010), compulsory primary and lower secondary schooling in Norway lasts for ten years and children start school the year they become six. Primary and lower secondary education is founded on the principle of equity and adapted education for all pupils in a school system based on the same National Curriculum. All children and young people are to share a common foundation of knowledge, culture and values.

Johannes Learning Center (2013) is an organization which provides training ‘in accordance with laws and regulations to newly arrived refugees and immigrants (children and adults), who need primary school education, as well as other purposes that it has’. This center also, has two departments for the multilingual teachers teaching in mother tongue and bilingual education in Stavanger School. The training is based on the current curriculum in language and the Knowledge general. ‘The teaching of the mother tongue need not be directly linked to the theme or project pupil at his local school. The course meets the objectives of the "curriculum for mother tongue of minorities" (the Knowledge)’.

1.5.2. English Curriculum

English is a language which is now widely used throughout the world. Norway is a country in which the English language has its own place, mostly for educational and professional purposes. According to the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (2010), ‘the English language provides the opportunity for people to participate in various personal and social events. The English course covers all listening, speaking, reading and writing skills’. English learning begins when children begin their schooling, from the first grade, when they are six years old. The main objectives for grades one and two are language learning in order to get familiar with a new language and to explore the relationship between English and Norwegian; oral communication, which is understanding and using the English language by using communication strategies;

written communication, which means being able to read and write the English language, and finally, familiarity with the English language culture, literature and society. It should be noted that the Johannes learning center's English curriculum objectives, as well as other subject areas, are in accordance with the objectives of the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research.

1.5.3. Norwegian Curriculum

The Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research (2010) states that one of the main aims of learning Norwegian in a period of thirteen years at schools in Norway is for students 'to get linguistic confidence, to develop an identity, to respect other cultures, to have active social participation and to have lifelong learning. 'The Norwegian subject curriculum establishes itself in the field of tension between the historical and the contemporary, and the national and the global'. In addition, Norwegian curriculum deals with spoken, written and composite texts in a variety of subjects to expose pupils to different options to choose in the future. Moreover, there are some basic skills that the students are supposed to achieve after finishing school which are 'being able to express oneself orally and in writing, being able to read in Norwegian, numeracy, and digital literacy.

Johannes Learning Centre (2013) is a centre that has Norwegian as the main language in the school. One of its objectives is for the students to be able to learn Norwegian. It also assists the students who do not have a large Norwegian vocabulary to learn various skills. Therefore, the school has bilingual teachers who 'provide guidance and support on the student's native language in the subjects that the student needs help in. It is not the bilingual teacher's responsibility to teach students subjects, but he / she will help the learner to acquire the new subject matter'.

1.6. Contribution

Doing a research on parental strategies and support in the home environment in Norway, in particular in Stavanger, is interesting because few studies have been carried out on language minority families who raise bilingual children. The city of Stavanger has been attracting people in the last few decades. Every year, many families move to Norway for occupational or other purposes. According to Statistisk Sentralbyrå of Norway (2013), in the past few years immigration to Norway has been very high. The majority of the people immigrated because of working opportunities. After labor, immigration because of education, family reunifications are

mostly observed among non-Nordic citizens. As a result, the children of many of these families either are born in Norway or attend schools at different levels.

Therefore, the researcher was eager to find out the kind of strategies that parents use in order to support the language development of their children. With conducting this study, it is hoped to find out valuable information with respect to bilingualism and parental attitudes in Norway. There is a quite a large body of research around the world that has been done on childrens' language development, but very few studies have focused on parent's attitudes and strategies to support the language learning of their children in the home, especially in Norway. Moreover, it is interesting to find out that what goes on in the home environment when parents engage in children's language skill development.

1.7. Outline of the thesis

Chapter 1 presents an introduction to the whole thesis, stating the aims and research questions of the study. Chapter 2 presents the definitions, types and dimensions of bilingualism. As well as, some definitions of attitudes and attitudes to bilingualism, parental involvement and strategies, and a few case studies on bilingualism and parental strategies and attitudes are presented.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology including the presentation of research participants and the methods for data collection, in this case the interview. It also describes how the data was processed and presented. Moreover, ethical considerations as well as validity and reliability are covered in chapter 3.

Chapter 4 focuses on the presentation of the results. A summary of transcription of each interview is provided separately and the method used for the analysis of data is provided. Chapter 5 presents the discussions of parental strategies for language learning skills including reading, speaking, listening, writing; the parental attitudes to bilingualism; further suggestions for future research and limitations of the study. The final chapter of the thesis presents the conclusions which will focus on the general outcome of the research.

2. Review of literature

In this chapter, concepts related to the focus of this research will be presented. First, some definitions of bilingualism and its types will be introduced. Second, parental attitudes to bilingualism and parental strategies in the home environment with respect to having bilingual children will be presented. Third, the role of parents in children language development is addressed. And finally, a few examples of case studies on bilingualism and parental roles and strategies are presented.

2.1. Second Language acquisition and learning

Second language acquisition and learning has been the topic of interest for many years. More and more people are becoming bilinguals for various purposes such as personal, academic or economic reasons. Therefore, in order to initiate and maintain communication with other people, there is a need to learn a second language. Ellis (1997) refers to the second language as any other language which is learnt in addition to the mother tongue. Second language learning can occur in the classroom through instruction or naturally by living in another country. In order to understand what and how learners do and act in order to learn a second language, one have to collect the sample of learners' language use in speaking or writing. The sample will provide ample information about how learners have learnt and are trying to learn about the second language. However, Gass and Selinker (2008, p. 94) believe that learning a second language is influenced by the habits formed during the learning of the first language. According to this theory, the input is necessary for learning. Moreover, they state that the input must be as accurate as possible, and errors must be avoided. In addition to the input, the concept of transfer is also important. Positive transfer results in learning something correct, whereas negative transfer results in learning something incorrect.

There are differences between acquisition and learning. Krashen (1982) distinguishes second language acquisition from second language learning. He highlights the issue that several factors are involved in second language acquisition. Factors such as the amount of exposure and proficiency, length of residence in the second language environment and age of learning the second language affect the second language acquisition. According to him, acquisition is similar to the way the children learn languages. He believes that:

Language acquisition is a subconscious process; language acquirers are not usually aware of the fact that they are acquiring language, but are only aware of the fact that they are using the language for communication. Other ways of describing acquisition include implicit learning, informal learning, and natural learning. In non-technical language, acquisition is "picking-up" a language. The second way to develop competence in a second language is by language learning. The term "learning" henceforth refers to conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules, being aware of them, and being able to talk about them. In non-technical terms, learning is knowing about a language, known to most people as grammar, or rules. Some synonyms include formal knowledge of a language, or explicit learning.

The families in this study have children who are in the elementary school. The children of the families are learning or learnt their second or third language at later stages of their lives. Therefore, they could be regarded as learning the second or third language not acquiring.

According to the Language Research Center of the University of Calgary (2006), second language learning brings some advantages to the person such as cognitive advantages and broadening the mind because of being in contact with other peoples and cultures, which will enhance cultural awareness. However, one should keep in mind that second language will have some effects on the first language, such as enhancing the complexity of the first language syntax, enhancing the language skill use, and enhancing non-linguistic skills. Moreover, learning a second language will not impede the ability to access the knowledge of the first language.

Bhela (1999), highlights that second language learning is all that learners see and hear in the second language environment. However, one of the learner's goals could be the mastery of the target language eventually. However, managing the structure of the second language into a coherent structure is not an easy task because of the interference on vocabulary, grammar or sentence structure of the first language. According to Cook (2012), when learners are learning a second language they will develop an inter language which relies on what they already know from the first language. However, the inter-language has its own characteristics and it is not a deficient form of the second language but rather second language learners use the language in a different way, have an awareness of language itself, and have different knowledge and greater

awareness of their first language. Selinker (1972) views inter-language as ‘separate linguistic system resulting from learner’s attempted production of the target language norm. According to Selinker ‘inter-language is the product of five central cognitive processes involved in the second language learning including language transfer from the first language, transfer of training, strategies of second language learning, strategies of second language communication, and overgeneralization of the target language linguistic material’.

Moreover, Baker (2011: 117-120) believes that there are always reasons for second or third language learning that can be societal and individual. One of the aims of second language learning could be assimilation to the society, especially for the children which need to go to school. However, ‘children are sometimes taught minority language in order to preserve or restore a language that is being or has been lost’. Another societal reason for second language learning would be to be in harmony with other groups in the society or to be economically active and to have trading with other people in the society or across continents. On the contrary, there are individual reasons for bilingualism. One reason is for cultural awareness which is to break down the national, ethnic stereotypes. Another individual reason would be the cognitive development by, for example educating and gaining an academic value. Another reason for individual language learning is to learn a language for social, emotional, self-awareness, and self-confidence. The next reason for second language learning is to learn and to use a language for career or employment.

2.2. Definitions of bilingualism

Various definitions of bilingualism have been proposed. A few will be provided in order to have a clearer idea it. Butler and Hakuta (2004:115) define bilinguals as:

Individuals or groups of people who obtain communicative skills, with various degrees of proficiency, in oral and/or written forms, in order to interact with speakers of one or more languages in a given society. Bilingualism can be defined as psychological and social states of individuals or groups of people that result from interactions via language in which two or more linguistic codes (including dialects) are used for communication.

In Webster's Dictionary (1961) and Bloomfield (1935:56) definition bilingual is defined as a person who is able to speak two languages fluently like a native speaker which is contrary to the definition of Macnamara (1967a) who believes that bilingualism means to have minimum level of competence in listening, speaking, reading or writing (cited in Hamers & Blanc, 2000:6). According to Hamers & Blanc (2000:7) it is difficult to classify and operationalize bilingualism in the aforementioned definitions because sometimes there exist non-linguistic factors which affect the whole situation. Skutnabb-Kangas (1984a:90) defines a bilingual speaker as:

A bilingual speaker is someone who is able to function in two (or more) languages, either in monolingual or bilingual communities, in accordance with the sociocultural demands made of an individual's communicative and cognitive competence by these communities or by the individual herself, at the same level as native speakers, and who is able positively to identify with both (or all) language groups (and cultures) or parts of them.

As the definition above suggests, Skutnabb-Kangas (1984a:91) believes that in order to define the concept of bilingualism one should consider factors such as the origins of two languages, which means the places a person has learnt and used the two languages from the beginning, competence, level of proficiency, function i.e., being able to use the two languages according to the demand of a community, attitudes of one self and other to bilingualism (cited in Hoffmann 1991:27).

Generally speaking, bilingualism refers to having the knowledge of more than one language. Keeping a balance in bilingualism is not an easy task to achieve. Rosenberg (1996) believes that:

The reasons for choosing to raise kids with two or more languages are as varied as the families themselves. Even the word "bilingualism" has different meanings for different families. For some families, having the ability to listen in two languages but speak in just one may constitute bilingualism, while other parents expect their kids not only to be bilingual, but also literate in both languages. Whatever the goals for developing bilingualism in each family may be, success appears to depend on whether a "language plan" has been worked out in advance. Families, who take the time to consider how their kids will develop two languages and who make the necessary commitments to bilingual language development, tend to be more successful in raising bilingual children.

Bilingualism can be referred to as the immersion and submersion -situations where the child is required to use in school a language that is different from that used in the home. Cummins and Swain (1978 c) believe that immersion occurs when the children from the same or different linguistic and cultural background who have had no prior contact with the second language are put together in a classroom setting in which the second language is used as the medium of instruction. Submersion on the other hand is a situation encountered by some children wherein they must make a home-school language switch, while others can already function in the school language. Reyes (2008:1) highlights that bilingualism should be viewed as a continuum in which the language ability would change with respect to factors such as social, educational background, etc.

Bialystok (2001:2) believes that it is impossible to be and remain completely monolingual because there are always 'intrusions' from other languages. Sometimes children can be bilingual because their parents, each, choose to speak in one's own language in the home environment. In addition, sometimes the language of a community is different from a child's language at home, which forces the child to speak two languages in order to be able to communicate both at home and in the community.

It is now clear that there is a very broad spectrum of what bilingualism is and how it is defined. It always has been difficult to reach one solid definition of a bilingual person because researchers tend to view bilingualism as having many aspects. These aspects include native like fluency in both languages as Webster (1961) and Bloomfield (1935:56) believe; having competence in language skills which was highlighted by Rosenberg (1996); being able to function in the society according to the demand of the situation; being able to communicate oral or written, and communicate and interact with other people in the society using two or more linguistic codes (Skutnabb-Kangas 1984a:90; Butler and Hakuta 2004:115).

The last definition presented by Butler and Hakuta (2004:115) is more relevant to the idea behind this study because families who participated in the study were from different social, cultural background who have moved to Norway. The children of these families do not have the same fluency and accuracy, oral or written, in the two languages but are still able to communicate both in their mother tongue and the language of the society, which is Norwegian in this case.

2.3. Types, dimensions, and cognitive advantages of bilingualism

2.3.1. Types of bilingualism

Researchers classify bilingualism into various types. Portes and Hao (1998:2387) view bilingualism as having two types of additive and subtractive. The former refers to the time when a child has fluency in the second language while keeping the first language. The latter refers to the situation when a child only speaks the second language while disregarding the first language. According to Romaine (1995:3), there are six patterns of home language bilingualism. Type one is one person one language the parents have different mother tongues and one is the language of the community. In this type, each parent speaks his or her own mother tongue to the child from birth. Type two is one language one environment or non-dominant home language which is the same as type one but both parents speak the non-dominant language to the child. Type three is non-dominant home language and without community support, which parents have the same native language that is not the dominant language in the community. In this type, parents speak their native language to their child. Type four is double non-dominant/support of home language, which parents have different native languages and neither of the languages are the dominant language of the community. Type five is non-native parents, which the parents have the same native language that is the dominant language of the society, and finally type six, mixed languages which parents are bilinguals and some sectors of their community may be bilingual. (cited in Bialystok 2001:3).

Baker (2011:8-10) classifies bilingualism as balanced bilinguals who are fluent in two languages and monolingual bilinguals who are two monolinguals in one person. Moreover, He makes a distinction between simultaneous and sequential bilingualism in the childhood period. Simultaneous bilingualism refers to the child acquiring two languages at the same time and from childhood which is also called infant bilingualism. Pre-schools children learn the second language without a formal instruction and the attention would be on meaning and understanding. However, sequential bilingual acquisition refers to when a child or an adult learns the second language at later stages of his/her life. Second language learning in the class room or in the adulthood involves more formal language learning. Bhatia and Ritchie (2012:32) address the differences between social and individual bilingualism. They believe that individual bilingualism

which is having two monolinguals in one person is less permanent while social bilingualism endures quality which may change in different contexts.

In another idea of the types of bilingualism, Reyes (2008:1-2) distinguishes between two types of bilingualism which are fractional and holistic. He defines fractional bilinguals as being two monolinguals in one person. This perspective views people as having equal competence in the two languages. The holistic view to bilingualism assumes that an individual integrates the two languages in which the result is functionally higher than the holistic view to bilingualism. However, it is ideal for one person to have a balance between the two types of bilingualism which is very difficult to achieve because of the changes in individual, social, and educational contexts.

Ferguson et al. (1997) proposes some examples of bilingual education such as assimilation of individuals or groups into the mainstream of society and in the community, unification of multilingual society, enabling people to communicate with the outside world, providing language skills which would assist the employment and status, preserving ethnic and religious identity, mediating between different linguistic and political communities, spreading the use of colonial language, strengthening and preserving the elite's group privilege in a society, giving equal status in law to language of unequal status in daily life, and finally, deepening the understanding of language and culture (cited in Baker 2011, 208).

The latter definition of Reyes (2008:1-2) which is the holistic view of bilingualism has common features to the participants in this study which focuses on bilinguals who integrate the two languages and try to keep a balance between the two whenever possible. In this research, the participants are families who have bilingual children which the parents would try to keep the balance between their mother tongue and the Norwegian language. However, according to him and based on the types of participants in this study, one should consider factors such as individual, social and educational as well when defining and classifying bilingualism. As it is stated in the finding chapter, the interviewees had different working status and educational backgrounds which may influence their strategies and attitudes regarding having bilingual children. Baker (2011:8-10) classifies bilingualism into simultaneous and sequential. The participants in the present study had sequential bilingual children which have learnt or are

learning the second or the third language sequentially and not at the same time as they learnt their mother tongue.

2.3.2. Dimensions of bilingualism

In order to have a better understanding of bilingualism issues such as dimensions of bilingualism should be considered. Hamers and Blanc (2000:6-7) believe that when talking about the dimensions of bilingualism, one should consider non-linguistic dimensions as well as level of proficiency in the two languages. According to Baker (2011:3-4), bilingualism is analyzable into various dimensions such as receptive or productive bilingual ability, the use or domain of the languages acquired, balance between the two languages and age of the children when learning the languages. He also believes that dimensions such as being bicultural or multicultural and the context in which bilinguals live are important as well. Hence, it is difficult to distinguish who is bilingual and who is not. Moreover, Hamers and Blanc (2000:25) enumerate some other dimensions to bilingualism. These dimensions are relative competence, cognitive organization, age of acquisition, erogeneity, social cultural status and cultural identity.

Skutnabb-Kangas (1984a) believes that one should take into account dimensions such as pressure to become bilingual, prerequisites for bilingualism, ways in which a person has become a bilingual and consequences for not becoming a bilingual when trying to classify bilingualism. According to Cummins (2001:16), one dimension of bilingualism is that it 'has positive effects on children's linguistic and educational development'. He believes that children will have more understanding and control over the two languages when they learn them in primary years of schooling. Therefore, the children will be able to compare and contrast the two languages when needed.

From the abovementioned dimensions of bilingualism, it is understandable that when one should consider several factors when talking about bilingualism and issues such as non-linguistic factors as well as linguistic factors, receptive and productive language skills, age of acquisition, social and cultural settings, etc., need to be considered. In addition, factors such as family and linguistic backgrounds are worth noting among various factors which seem to be an effect of bilingualism. In the present study, focus has been on family background, attitudes to bilingualism and kinds of effort which families put into language learning of their children.

2.3.3. Cognitive advantages of bilingualism

There has always been a controversy over whether bilingualism has a positive or negative effect on the mind. However, nowadays researchers have reached agreement on the fact that bilingualism could have more advantages than being only a monolingual. For example, Cummins and Swain's (1986) threshold model for bilingual proficiency, suggested that the subjects whose proficiency in the language or languages they know is low would have the risk of cognitive deficit. According to them, people who have average proficiency in one or more languages are average cognitively; however, people with cognitive advantages will achieve a higher level of proficiency in two or more languages.

According to Bialystok (2001), bilinguals perform better on metalinguistic tasks, which means that they perform better on the task which need a high level of control and perform worse on tasks which need a 'high level of analysis of representational structures'. She adds that bilinguals can transfer skills between the first and second language. Kimbrough and Eilers (2002) found that bilinguals have the advantage over monolinguals in cognitive and metalinguistic abilities. According to them, bilinguals perform better in 'literacy and narrative abstract elements' and have more linguistic memory in their minds. With all the mentioned factors, however, one should not forget that the kind of input being received and context in which the two languages are learnt will affect the degree of learning and acquisition in both first and the second language. Oller and Cobo-Lewis (2002) conducted an experiment on bilingual and monolingual children with respect to phonological translation. The results indicated that bilingual children have the awareness and ability to find out the relationship between phonemic and syllabic form in both the first and the second language.

Based on the views about the cognition of bilinguals, it can be inferred that bilingual children have cognitive advantages over monolingual children which would assist them in performing different tasks better. The bilingual children have 'more linguistic memory in their mind' as Bialystok (2001) highlighted. As it is observed from the discussions over bilingualism, it would be convenient to briefly review what other researchers have done regarding bilingualism.

2.3.4. Previous research on bilingualism

This part contains a literature review of case studies of bilingual children. The case studies presented are both simultaneous and successive bilingual acquisition which seem to be relevant to the focus of this study. Although, there are relatively few case studies of family strategies on four language skills and attitudes to bilingualism.

Lauchlan et al. (2012) studied bilingualism in Sardinia and Scotland. They tended to explore the cognitive benefits of speaking a minority language. In order to carry out the research one hundred and twenty one children, both bilinguals and monolinguals were chosen to undertake a series of standardized cognitive ability tests. There were no significant differences in the gender of the children involved in the research. Bilingual children in the study were younger than monolingual. However, there was a significant difference between the ages of the participants. The test was in four areas of cognitive control, problem-solving ability, metalinguistic awareness and working memory. The results highlighted that bilingual children score higher than monolingual children in the four cognitive ability sub-tests. The results also indicated the cognitive advantages of bilingualism and reinforced previous research that has outlined the potential cognitive benefits of speaking two languages. Moreover, even in some cases where the threshold of equal proficiency was not achieved, the development of the two languages, including the situations where one was the minority language, was not a disadvantage with respect to the cognitive development of the children.

As for the cognitive development of bilingual children, Shank (2008) did a research about cognitive flexibility in preschool children. In other words she aims to find out whether bilingualism has an impact on executive functions. In the study, the performances of preschool children who were regularly exposed to two or more languages, with children who were only exposed to one language, on tasks that place demands on vocabulary, reasoning, response inhibition, flexible rule use, and visual working memory span. The aim of the study was to find out how knowing two or more languages was related to cognitive development. It was assumed that bilingual children would have an advantage in cognitive flexibility than monolingual children. In order to carry out the research 38 children between ages three and a half and six years old with various degrees of exposure to more than one language were chosen. The results of the quantitative approach for data collection and analysis indicated that the monolinguals and bilinguals performed similarly with regards to age, intelligence and vocabulary; however, there was a difference between boys

and girls. The results showed that bilingual children did not have advantage over monolingual children regarding cognitive flexibility. Moreover, there were no differences between the language groups related to response inhibition or visual working memory span.

Barrena and Almgren (2012) studied the object-verb and verb-object word order in Basque and Spanish bilingual and monolinguals, simultaneous bilinguals and successive bilinguals. In order to carry out the research, the production of object and object in relation to verb in oral story telling was investigated. The longitudinal study showed that bilingual children, who were exposed to Basque and Spanish simultaneously from birth produced object predominantly in the post-verbal position (verb-object) in Spanish in the same way as the monolingual girls analyzed, in declarative and imperative sentences as well as in yes-no questions.

Janssen et al. (2013) focused on phoneme awareness, vocabulary and word decoding in monolingual and bilingual Dutch children. Their aim of study was to find out whether to bilingually raising children in the Netherlands who receive literacy instruction in their second language only, show an advantage on Dutch phoneme-awareness tasks compared with monolingual Dutch speaking children. All the children selected to participate in the study were from low income and language minority families. For this purpose, forty seven immigrant children in the first grade who had different cultural background were selected. All the participants were tested in three areas of Dutch phoneme awareness, vocabulary and word decoding. The results of the study showed that bilingual children did not outperform the monolingual children with respect to phoneme-awareness. Moreover, Turkish-Dutch children obtained a higher score on the Dutch than on the Turkish vocabulary test. After all, the researchers generalized that the children who participated in their study, did not profit or suffer from knowing two languages in relation to phoneme-awareness. As for the vocabulary, they asserted that 'the Dutch vocabulary of the Turkish-Dutch group was poorer than that of the native Dutch speakers, their language proficiency in their adopted language was better than in their native language Turkish'.

MacLeod et al. (2012) studied the simultaneous bilingual language acquisition. In their study focused has been made on the role of parental input on receptive vocabulary development. The goal of the study was to understand how language exposure influences the receptive vocabulary development of simultaneous bilingual children. To carry out the research eleven

simultaneous children were selected who learned German and English at the same time. For the measurement of the study, a questionnaire, a vocabulary test, and parent interview were used. The results of the study indicated that there was homogeneity across the children with regards to exposure to the majority and minority languages. Moreover, there was strong receptive vocabulary ability for the children in French and less for German. A key finding was that all the children performed within normal limits in French and German with regards to receptive vocabulary. Therefore, there was no evidence that bilingual children had a slower pace of development. However, the results indicated that there was a slower development of German language though the children were exposed to this language in early stages of their language development.

Charboneau (2008) carried out a longitudinal simultaneous case study of Norwegian-English bilingual children's language development. In her study she focused on four bilingual Norwegian-English families to find out how the families approach bilingualism and biliteracy and what factors affect the two terms and what kind of strategies families use. Another aim of the study was to describe features such as code-switching and emergent writing in the children. Therefore, a qualitative approach for data collection was chosen to carry out the research. In addition, a questionnaire was devised to find families appropriate for the study. Among the qualitative techniques, an observation and an interview were selected to confirm the continuation of the language strategy, language exposure, family interaction, parents' motivation, and information about children's language and literacy development. The result showed that all the families used different approaches for bilingualism development because they had different goals to achieve. Moreover, each family used a different language strategy in the home. However, their choice of strategy did not influence the language exposure, language context and motivation for using the language. With regards to motivation and willingness to use the languages which were important factors for families, each family adopted a specific strategy which fitted best to the goals of the family to active bilingualism development.

Similarly to Charboneau (2008) study on active bilingual children's language development, Arnberg (1981) did a research about the language development of four two-year old Swedish-English bilingual children who were living in Sweden for one year. The mothers in the study were native English speakers and the fathers were Swedish native speakers. A qualitative approach was used for data collection which included an audio-recording of the

children's language use. The study intended to find out the degree of bilingualism in each family; the amount of interference in structure, semantic, phonetic and lexicon; the used of languages at home and the learning environment. The results of the study indicated that the children under investigation showed lower in English and normal language development in Swedish with some degrees of interference from English, especially in vocabulary and pronunciation.

Feng et al. (2014) focused on family learning environment and early literacy. For doing so, a comparison was made between bilingual and monolingual children. The study examined the differences among family learning environments such as book availability, and family learning activities including reading books, telling stories, and singing songs of bilingual and monolingual children from nine months of age to the kindergarten. The tool to carry out their research was Birth Cohorts which is designed for early childhood longitudinal studies and the early reading assessment. The participants were both bilingual and monolingual families. The analysis of the data showed that bilingual children had fewer numbers of books available to them in comparison with the monolingual children from the ages of two to the kindergarten level. In addition, bilingual children did not read as much as monolingual children. Moreover, the differences between groups did not change over time although the literacy level of both groups increased over time. Therefore, they suggested that book reading is an activity which should be regarded as a serious activity because it would determine the amount of emergent literacy and language development in spite of having control over parental education, income and socioeconomic status.

2.4. Definition of attitude

2.4.1. Attitude and language attitude

The concept of attitude is complex and many authors have been trying to propose a proper definition for it. Generally, attitude is referred to issues such as personality, believes, behaviors, values, motivations, etc. Bohner and Dickel (2011:392-397) define attitude as 'evaluation of an object of thought'. Therefore, attitude is anything which a person can have in his or her own mind such as thoughts and ideas. However, this is just a core and solid definition of attitude. According to them, attitudes can be seen in a continuum of 'memory-based summary evaluations that are easily retrieved to evaluative judgments that are constructed from currently accessible information'. Gardner (1985:9) defines attitude as an evaluation of a response to some sort of

referent which is understood based on one's opinion or belief. Allport (1954:45) defines attitude as 'a mental or neutral state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response towards all subjects and situations with which it is related'. As it is shown in the definitions presented, both Gardner's and Allport's definitions focus on the responses which are towards a situation or subject.

Moreover, Vaughan & Hogg (2005:150) defined attitude as, 'A relatively enduring organization of beliefs, feelings and behavioral tendencies towards socially significant objects, groups, events or symbols or a general feeling or evaluation (positive/ negative) about some person, object or issue. However, there are difficulties in studying attitudes'. Schwarz and Bohner (2001:2-4) believe that attitudes are created by researcher in order to explain phenomena under study. Moreover, attitudes are not directly observable but rather are inferred by behaviors or self-report. However, one should keep in mind that measurement of attitude is not as easy as it looks because it is context dependent.

As for language attitudes, Cooper and Fishman (1974) highlight that two approaches to the definition of language attitudes are available. The first approach consists of defining the concept in terms of its referent, thereby stressing the independency of the concept as a phenomenon in its own right. In this approach language attitudes are attitudes towards languages, language varieties, language variants and language behavior. The second approach is to define language attitudes in terms of their effects or consequences, i.e. those attitudes which influence behavior towards language. In another definition by Chambers (1999:27) focus is made on the context of language learning and factors such as cultural, educational, and social. (cited in Bartram 2010:35-37).

Researchers view languages attitudes differently. In general, language attitudes are those which are about language. Richards et al. (1992:199) propose that language attitude is 'the attitudes which speakers of different languages or language varieties have towards each other's languages or to their own language. Expressions of positive or negative feelings towards a language may reflect impressions of linguistic difficulty or simplicity, ease or difficulty of learning, degree of importance, elegance, social status, etc.'

Appel and Muysken (1987: 16) believe that there are two theoretical approaches for studying language attitudes. According to them:

Generally, two theoretical approaches are distinguished to the study of language attitudes. The first one is the behaviorist view, according to which attitudes must be studied by observing the responses to certain languages, i.e. their use in actual interactions. The mentalist view considers attitudes as an internal, mental state, which may give rise to certain forms of behavior. It can be described as 'an intervening variable between a stimulus affecting a person and that person's response' (Cited in Fasold, 1984:147).

Based on the definitions presented in this section, the definition presented by Vaughan and Hogg (2005:150) is more fitted to the general purpose of this study. In other words, feelings, beliefs and behaviors that parents hold towards objects or groups or events will influence their attitude in positive or negative ways. The attitudes that one can hold towards a language can vary based on factors such as social status or difficulties in learning, for example.

2.4.2. Components of attitude

In the previous section it was seen that attitude is a complex phenomena which is difficult to define. In addition, researchers assign various components to attitude, which makes it even more difficult to comprehend. According to Ladegaard (2000:216), attitudes are comprised of three parts. These parts are knowledge, emotion, and behavior. Each component has different recognizable features to elicit expected attitude results. Attitudes, according to Ager (2001:183), are one significant component to understand motives, such as the objectives and goals of language groups in child education planning and types of language behavior of parents. Ager suggested that attitudes consist of three components of knowledge of language, emotion towards language, and desire to take action. Knowledge indicates the human being's thoughts and knowledge in language use. Emotion consists of positive or negative feelings toward the things.

Fazio and Olson (2003:141) and Baker (1992) assign three components to attitudes which are cognition, affect, and readiness for action. First is the cognition which includes thoughts and beliefs of a person towards an object or another person. Second is affect which is related to feelings or emotions for the object, such as love or hate, and passion for language learning and use. Cognition and affect are not always consistent. That is to say, although a person might have a favorable attitude toward English language learning, he or she may have negative feelings about

the instruction. Third, readiness for action indicates a tendency of language behavior in relation to a person or object in a specific context.

Based on the definitions presented by the researchers it can be inferred that attitude mainly consists of three parts of cognition or knowledge, affect or emotion, and behavior or action. All these components will affect the attitude of a person, in the case of present study, towards language learning of their children. In other words, the emotions of parents or the knowledge they have or how they act will all affect the way they intend to assist language learning.

2.4.3. Previous research on parental attitudes

This part contains a literature review of case studies on parental attitudes and bilingualism. The case studies mostly focus on parental attitudes and motivation with respect to language learning and bilingualism. There were a few studies which were similar in focus to the present research.

Wu (2005:2385-2394) studied the attitude and behavior of parents and children towards bilingualism in China. He focused on Chinese parents and their children who were living in the United States. In other words, his intention was to see how families maintain their mother tongue, which in this case was Chinese, and English, which was the language of the society. For this purpose, he chose fifteen Chinese families who volunteered to take part in the study. The parents' age range was between 30-40 years and all had higher educations. A qualitative approach for data collection was used including interviews and observations. Two semi-structured interviews were used: one fifteen question interview for parents, which focused on family immigration background, attitudes towards bilingualism and children's Chinese learning experiences, and the second interview devised for children with ten simple statements. All the gathered data was transcribed and analyzed through coding. Finally, the findings of his study suggested that parents shared a positive attitude towards maintaining their mother tongue as well as English. Therefore, both languages were regarded important for later academic progresses. However, it was difficult to keep the balance between the two languages because one was prevalent.

Tavil's (2009:331-340) research of parental attitudes towards English education for kindergarten students in Turkey showed that parents have a positive attitude towards bilingualism. The main method for data collection method was a questionnaire. Participants were

forty six parents who were randomly selected and classified based on their ages and occupations. The results of the study showed that positive parental attitude towards bilingualism increased children's motivation and success in second language learning. The result also indicated that all the parents were aware of the importance of knowing another language for the future career of their children. In addition, parents believed that being bilingual increased their children's self-confidence and communicative skills.

In another research on Korean parents' attitudes, focus was made on motivations and home literacy practices to bilingualism. Jang (2012) studied the parental attitudes and motivations for English and Korean languages. According to him, success in foreign language learning is influenced by positive or negative attitude, motivation and the kinds of practices at home. Parents of the children who were in the elementary school in Korea were asked to answer a questionnaire which consisted of three parts: attitudes, motivation, and home literacy practices. The results of the study showed that participants had a highly favorable attitude towards bilingualism, a positive attitude towards motivation and home literacy practices. All the cases under the study were measured based on factors such as gender, age, socio-economic status of the families.

Shang et al.'s (2007) research described the Taiwanese parental perceptions towards English language learning in a bilingual kindergarten. The purpose of the study was to investigate the Taiwanese parents' opinions and reasons for sending their children to bilingual English-Taiwanese kindergarten. For conducting the study, the researchers chose eleven parents whose children were attending such a kindergarten. The methodology used in the study was a semi-structured interview, which was carried out with the mothers of the families and lasted at most 45 minutes. The results indicated that parents strongly support the bilingual kindergarten because it provides more job opportunities for their children in addition to providing the chance to learn communication skills.

Park and Sarker (2007) in their study explored Korean immigrant parents' attitudes toward heritage language maintenance for their children and their efforts to help their children maintain Korean as their heritage language in Montreal. The participants in the study were nine Korean immigrant families whose children were between ages 6 and 18. The methodologies used in the study were an interview and a questionnaire. In the interview, questions like the parental

attitudes toward mother tongue language and maintenance, Korean community and churches, and the parental effort to keep the mother tongue were asked. The questionnaire consisted of questions asking about participants' personal background, level of education and immigration status. The results of the study indicated that parents had a positive attitude towards maintenance of their mother tongue. In addition, parents showed high expectations for the high level of proficiency of their children's mother tongue because, in their view, keeping a proper level of the mother tongue would help the children to keep their identity, to ensure economic opportunities, and to communicate with family and friends.

Guardado (2002) researched the parental attitudes to the loss and maintenance of first language skills. For doing so, he carried out case studies of Hispanic families in Vancouver. The focus of the study was on whether parents want their children to maintain bilingual or to maintain monolingual. Four families who had children of at least 6 years of age were chosen. A semi-structured interview was used as a data collection method. The interviews took at most one hour each. In addition, field notes were taken to make sure that no information was missed. The results showed that parents had a very positive attitude to keep their mother tongue not only for communication in the target country but also knowing the songs, stories and history etc.. In addition, parents showed a positive attitude because they wanted the children to keep the first language cultural heritage, identity and family relationships.

2.5. Parental involvement

There is a body of research about what parental involvement is and what factors affect it. Parental positive or negative attitude will influence a child's education and learning at schools or at later stages. Various studies have shown that parents have an important role in maintaining children's language ability in the home and at school. Epstein (1995:706) assigns some roles for parents to be more involved in their children's education. She suggests parents to have a better understanding of their parenting and challenges to encounter, to have awareness and monitoring over their children's progress, to know how to support and help, to be in contact with school and community and so on. According to (Baker 2011: 312), parents in addition to schools can interact with the literacy that is offered and practiced. For example, some language minority parents view literacy as memorization and transmission of life stories which would show their heritage, values and morality. In one culture one parent may focus on reading a book loudly, while in another

culture it is one in expected to read with his/her child. Older sibling may also be expected to assist the development of language skills in their younger brothers or sisters.

Parental involvement can be defined as “as a set of groups defining actions, beliefs, and attitudes that serve as an operational factor in defining categorical differences among children from different racial ethnic and economic backgrounds” (Desimone, 1999, p.11). Smit et al. (2007) define parental involvement as ‘the involvement of parents in the upbringing and education of their own child both at home and at school’. According to him, when parents are involved in children’s education, they are somehow participating in the educational progress of their children. Therefore, he defines parental participation as ‘the active contribution of parents in school activities’.

Desforges and Abouchaar (2003:4) highlight that family involvement can take many forms, such as good parenting at home, providing a rich environment, having constant contact with schools and teacher. In addition, they point out that parental involvement is influenced by factors such as social class, level of education, ethnicity, marital status, and child’s level of attainment which is closely related to level of parental attainment. However, Desforges and Abouchaar claim that parental involvement diminishes as the child grows older. Hornby and Lafaele (2011:37-52) proposed a model for parent involvement. The model includes factors that affect parental involvement. The first factor that influences parental involvement is individual parent and family factors, such as current life contexts, class, ethnicity, gender, etc. Second, are child factors which are age, learning difficulties, gifts, talents, etc. Third, is the parent-teacher factor, which includes differing goals and agendas, differing attitudes and differing language use. And finally, there are societal factors, which can be historical, demographic, political and economic. According to Hornby and Lafaele (2011), all these factors affect the extent to which parents have involvement.

There is another model proposed by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995:326). In the model it was suggested that:

Parents become involved in their children’s education as a function of the parent’s role construction, the parent’s sense of efficacy for helping his or her children succeed in school, and the general opportunities and demands for involvement presented by children and their school. If they choose to become involved, parents

select specific involvement forms based primarily on the combination of (1) parents' specific skills and knowledge, (2) the mix of total demands (employment and family) on their time and energy, and (3) the specific demands and invitations for involvement they receive from their children and their children's schools. Parental involvement works to influence children's educational outcomes primarily through the mechanisms for modeling, reinforcement, and instruction.

Epstein (1995:704-706) defines parental involvement as both families and communities to take an active role in creating a proper educational environment. Moreover, she proposes six types of involvement, which are parenting, communicating with school staff, volunteering their time in the schools, learning at home, taking an active role in decision making, and collaborating with the community. As for parenting, for example, suggestions were made for home conditions that support learning at each grade level such as information for families on skills required for each student, information on how to monitor and interact with children at home with respect to school work, etc. However, there are some challenges to satisfy all types of involvement.

Family involvement according to Harvard Family Research Project (2006) can have a number of processes which interact to create an outcome for young children which all should be taken into account when one intends to find more about family involvement. Therefore, factors such as the child-parent relationship and participation in child-centered activities; home-school relationship that is the communication and participation between home and school; responsibility for learning outcomes which is the parent-child conversation and reading at home, are all in contact with each other and interacting one another to create an outcome for children. The outcomes for children can be social competence, cognitive development, communication skill, literacy development, and comprehension skill.

With respect to social and economic class of families, Quagliata (2008:19) highlights that there is a positive relationship between socioeconomic status of parents and academic achievement of children. Students from higher status families have parents who are more eager to read for and talk to children. Therefore, these children get more information about the world around them. According to Nicoladis and Genesee (1997), bilingualism may have no effect of children's language development; however, it may have influence on cognitive development of the children. Among advantages of bilingualism, metalinguistic awareness and the ability to

explicitly focus on the structure of the language other than focusing on meaning can be mentioned. They add that advantages of bilingualism would most probably apply for school-aged children.

Bialystok (2001) emphasizes ‘those children who encounter another language experience different kinds of interactions with each language, interact in different types of social situations with each, encounter different opportunities for formal study, may also develop different kinds of attitudes to each language, and may have different processes for language development other than mono-lingual children’.

2.5.1. Previous research on parental involvement

Parental involvement is a topic which has attracted many researchers’ attention because it is in various ways related to children. Nowadays parents are more involved in their children’s education and academic progress than before. In the United States, for example, there are huge numbers of immigrant, who travel there to work or live for a long period of time. Most of the children of such families have no other way but to attend regular schools in which English is spoken as the main language. However, there are families in which one or both parents do not have enough English background knowledge to assist their children in the home and the school activities. In a study carried out in Chicago on parents’ role in their children language learning and development focus was made on how immigrant parents help their children at home to learn English and also maintain their mother tongue. The results indicated that several factors were involved in parental involvement such as parents’ attitude to language in general, parents’ interest in English and their mother tongue in general, parent-child joint activities, etc (Mushi 2002).

There is also another way of looking at parental involvement. One is to look at parental reports instead of focusing solely on their children’s achievement. Stacer and Perrucci (2012) did a research on parental involvement with children at school, home and community. The results of their study indicated that parents, who had higher educational background were more involved in the children’s school activities. The results also show that parents were more involved in the home with girls than boys in earlier grades. The level of parental involvement in the community was higher for parents with children with the higher grades.

Erlendsdóttir (2010) focus was on the effect of parental involvement in education. The goal of the study was to find out to what extent parental involvement affect the academic achievement of the children. Therefore, a qualitative study was chosen to collect the data through interviews with parents. The results of the study showed that parents were highly involved in their children's education by means of having good relationship with the children and having a proper control over that children do inside and outside school. The other finding of the research was that parental involvement had an impact on academic achievement of their children irrespective of age, socio-economic, racial and ethnic background.

In a similar study carried out by Erdogan (2011) the relationship between parental involvement, socio-economic factors and students' achievement was investigated. In order to carry out the research a quantitative approach was used for data collection and analysis. The data were gathered through a questionnaire for both parents and students who were in the 8th grade. The result of the study indicated that students' academic achievement is positively correlated with parental involvement and educational level. The results also showed that both fathers and mothers were involved.

According to Baker (1992) parent's attitude towards language learning will ultimately influence their children's language learning as well because parents have more engagement and motivation to support their children at home environment.

2.6. Parental strategies

Parents have a crucial role in the home in order to assist their children in the learning and development of languages. The amount of effort they put in their children's development of different language skills, for example, will influence their children's learning development. However, few studies have focused purely on what parents do in the home in order to assist all the language skill of reading, listening, speaking and writing. It appears that more focus was made on reading comprehension and writing activities in the home.

According to Hall (1994), there are similarities between acquiring and understanding oral and written languages. As for parents, Hall believes that parents mostly have a respondent and participant role in educating their children which means that parents do not instruct their children by having specific teaching objectives in mind and devising strategies to achieve the objective.

He adds that focus is not always on linguistic skills themselves, rather, linguistic exercises are embedded within other activities, such as game playing. Hall (1994) add that many parents engage themselves in literacy activities by buying alphabet or instructional books but most of the times it is the children themselves who initiate the 'printed-focused event' such as reading a variety types of books by asking many questions. Book reading to the children appears to be most popular among researchers to focus on because they are clear and easy instruments for literacy development.

Moreover, Hoffman (1991) categorizes bilinguals into four types. The first type is parents who have different native languages who speak each speak his/her own native language to the children. The language of one parent is the same as the language of the country they are living. The second type, are the parents who speak their own mother tongues to their children and neither of the languages are the language of the country they are living. The third type, are the parents who have the same native language which is not the language of the country. And finally the last type, which both parents have the same mother tongue which is the language of the country.

Chastain (1988) views reading as a complex activity which takes place as one of the functions of the brain. Reading comprehension has been approached differently over the past century. Early works assumed rather passive and static view of reading which was rejected over recent years. However, present research generally views reading as an active and dynamic process and maintains that meaning is the product of the reader's interacting with the text. In addition, parents can guide and support their children in reading in a variety of ways. Partridge (2004) suggests strategies that parents could use to support their children while reading. These strategies include: establishing a routine, making reading enjoyable, reading often, rereading favorite books, bridging the language between the child and the book, paying attention to the cues the child is giving, talking about the print, reading various types of books, and encouraging books-related plays. Using any of these strategies, according to Partridge, makes the reading experience more enjoyable and meaningful to the young children.

Darling (2005) highlights that parents can influence their children's fluency in reading by reading aloud, letting the children choose the books they want to read or to have read, making the reading process fun and pleasurable, acting out a books or story, talking about the new words and

their meanings, and using the library. Moreover, parents can influence vocabulary development by reading aloud a variety of genres, talking about daily events and books, searching the new words in the dictionary, and helping the children to learn the new vocabulary based on hobbies and interests. According to Mullis et al (2003), parents can enrich the home environment for reading by regular engagement in reading activities, speaking in the home, allocating more time for reading to the children and the attitudes that both parents and children have towards reading (cited in Hay and Barnsley (2007)).

Reading a text fluently, as Piper (2010) points out, includes a couple of stages such as accuracy, speed, expression and comprehension. Parents can influence reading fluency by reading and re-reading easy books to the children daily, poetry and nursery books also help fluency in reading. Reading every day, according to Piper, would help most in improving fluency and accuracy in reading texts and books. Dickinson and Beal (2004) believe that story book readings, dinner time discussions and bedtime stories are three activities among others to support the literacy development. Through these activities, parent and child can exchange much information while doing the activities, children's accuracy and fluency develops, and vocabulary expands to a great extent.

In a study carried out by Stoltz and Fischel (2003), different parent-child strategies while reading was studied. In order to carry out the research forty-two children in the first grade were selected to read to their parents. Parent-child pairs were observed in a laboratory setting. The results of the study indicated that parents provided instructional feedback while listening to their children reading. Parents were divided into three groups: learner-centered who used a variety of feedback while reading, inactive parents, who did not correct their children, and direct parents, who used miscued words. The last group appeared to be more successful by encouraging the child to try the word again without providing any further help.

Speaking is viewed as an important language skill that every child in a social context begins to acquire at a very early stage of growing and development. According to Halliday (1973:24), learning one's mother tongue is learning the use of language and the meaning; therefore, learning a language is 'learning how to mean'. In addition, he believes that that children perceive the world around them by making sense of it. In other words, language is a medium used for interaction in addition to other objectives. Halliday summarized some

conditions for oral language to emerge, including the role of children themselves in constructing their knowledge, involvement of children in non-linguistic tasks for comprehension and creation of meaning and ultimately social interaction. Parents are viewed as facilitators of the whole process (cited in Hall 1994:23-24).

As Dickinson and Beals (2004) point out, the interaction between adults and their children has a clear consequence in children's language development. In addition, every day conversations assist children with acquire basic language skills. Moreover, meal-time discussions are valuable sources of language development. Through speaking at dinner time, parents and children can have 'naturalistic' and 'free-flowing exchanges' of information (Dickinson and Beal, 2004: 36). Meal times contain narratives about the experiences of family members during the day and explanations of events, actions and emotions. Family dinner talks assist the children in developing greater skills when talking about the language which most of the time would result in stronger story comprehension skills. In addition, these kinds of talks would support vocabulary development.

Writing is a skill which can be done for a variety of purposes. Writing a shopping list, writing one's own name, writing an essay or an academic writing all can be regarded as different forms of writing with different levels of formality and difficulty. However, writing in the first and second languages has differences which need to be taken into account. According to Grabe and Kaplan (1996), second language writers have their own needs and uses of writing.

Nigel (1994) believes that exposing children to printed materials will influence their literacy development in writing. Activities such as sending and receiving letters and notes, looking at TV guides, glancing at comic magazines and filling out forms, and every day family activities, for example, have a literacy input. However, sometimes families directly focus on the nature of the writing. For example, parents would buy alphabet books or other instructional books for the children and the children would themselves 'initiate print-focused events, for instance when asking, 'what does that say?'. Teale (1986:174) believes that reading and writing should not be kept separated. Therefore, reading and writing are products of 'adult-child or sibling-child interactions, which involves literacy; the child's independent explorations of written language and observations of others using written language'.

2.6.1. Previous research on parental strategies

In order to find out the roles of fathers and mothers in assisting the writing development of their children, Aram (2010) carried out a research about parental and maternal guidance in which she compared the fathers and mothers with respect to writing with their young children. For doing so, she selected mothers and fathers of 51 kindergarteners in the Israel who were videotaped separately in the home while writing words with their child. The results of the study indicated that both parents helped their children in completing the writing task; however, mothers cooperated and guided their children more in the completion of tasks and the children were more attentive to the suggestions their mothers provided. In addition, both parents tended to show common qualities of writing guidance and families seemed to have their own guidance style.

In another study which was carried out by Skibbe et al. (2013) on a longitudinal relation between parental writing support and preschoolers' language and literacy skills, parental support in writing was studied in a long period of time in order to examine the children's language and literacy skills. For this purpose, seventy-seven parents were selected to participate in the study. Parents and their children were video-taped in writing an invitation letter together two times in a period of one year. For the data analysis, parental writing was coded at the level of letter, letter formation and demand for precision. The results of the study indicated that parents mostly relied on 'couple print (i.e., parent writing the letter alone) and graphophonemic (i.e., saying the word as a whole, dictating letters as children write) strategies'.

Neumann et al. (2010) carried out a research on parental strategies to scaffold emergent writing skills in the pre-school children within the home environment. The purpose of their study was to observe the parent-child joint writing activities in order to enhance the literacy skills in young children. Therefore, the strategies used by mothers to scaffold their daughter's alphabet letter shaping, word and story writing in the years before formal schooling was focused. These strategies included identifying alphabet letters in environmental print and books, tracing letter shapes with fingers while using directional language, and using whole-arm movements to form letter shapes in the air. The results of the study indicated that the use of letter names and shape may be effective strategies for parents to use in early childhood in order to assist the development of literacy.

Parents can also be engaged with their children in the home with regards to speaking. However, very few case studies have been carried out in this regards, as far as the researcher of the present study is informed. One research that has been found interesting to mention is a case study which has been carried out by Min (2011) on parental discourse strategies and a bilingual child's code-mixing. The case study was conducted to examine the relationship between parental discourse strategies and the mixed-coding of language behavior of a 2-year-old Mandarin-English bilingual girl in interactions between the parents and the child. Parents were non-English native speakers and adopted the "one-person one-language" practice in the family, where the father spoke Chinese to the daughter and allowed the daughter to respond in either Chinese or English, while the mother used only English in the interaction with the daughter. The participants were from a Mandarin-English bilingual family in Taiwan and the family lived in a community where a mixture of Mandarin and Southern Min were spoken. The data was collected through audio recordings, field notes, and interviews. The results of the study indicated that the mother negotiated a more mono-lingual context whereas the father negotiated a more bilingual context. In addition, the results revealed that there is a positive relationships between parental discourse strategies and the child's overall rate of code mixing, confirming the expectations that the more monolingual strategies.

In another research which was carried out by Mishina-Mori (2011) on speaking skills, focus has been made on the longitudinal analysis of the language choice in bilingual children. The study aimed at finding out the role of parental input and interaction in the home. In order to carry out the research, the author used a qualitative and quantitative approach for data collection. The data was collected through a longitudinal observation of two Japanese/English bilinguals around the age of two. Parents participated in the study based on the one parent-one language policy since the child's birth and had showed positive attitudes towards bilingualism, and they constantly made efforts to adhere to the one parent-one language policy as well as to keep the amount of input of the two languages as balanced as possible. The analysis of the data revealed that parental language choice alone could explain the language choice patterns of each child, even though it seems to contribute to the children's use of the parent's native language. Moreover the analysis showed that the children's consistency in the language choice depended not only on the consistency in language choice on the part of the parent, but also on how mixing was being treated in each occurrence.

With regards to reading comprehension, Lacour et al. (2013) did a research on improving pre-kindergarten children's attitude and interest in reading through a parent workshop on the use of dialogic story book reading techniques in the home. The study intended to find out whether pre-kindergartens attitude in reading would improve if parents received instruction on the use of dialogic reading techniques during the storybook reading event. Dialogic reading according to Cutspec (2006) is 'an early childhood intervention strategy based on the theory that children's language develops best when scaffolding techniques were used during the adult/child shared book reading event. Dialogic reading was a specific form of storybook reading which encouraged emergent literacy development through the social interaction of the adult and child' (cited in Lacour et al. (2013)). The results of the study indicated that parents observed an improvement in their children's attitude and interest. In addition, parents expressed their satisfaction through increase in their self confidence in assisting their children in reading story books. Moreover, an increase in the occurrence of storybook reading was observed in the home. Moreover, specific emergent literacy skills were expressed by parents with regards to storybook reading.

Stoltz and Fischel (2003) carried out a research about different parent and child strategies while reading. In the study, they intended to examine the strategies parents use naturally to help early readers at difficult points of text or pronunciation. For doing so, forty two parent-child pairs were selected to participate in the study. The students were between ages of six and eight years old. The data was collected in a laboratory setting by observation of parent-child pairs. Parents were asked to bring three books representative of the books the child had in the home. In the lab, the pairs were presented with a book written for the purpose of this study. The results of the study suggested that parents did not provide specific instructional feedback while they were listening to their children reading. Parents supplied their children more with the miscued words by encouraging the child to read the word again without providing further feedback or let their children to continue uncorrected. However, Parents of children who were less skilled readers provided more varied feedback than parents of more skilled readers. In the end, the researchers categorized parents into two groups of inactive parents and direct parents based on their reaction towards the errors their children made.

3. Methodology

The present study was an attempt to explore parental roles and strategies they employ to assist their children's first and second language (or L1 and L2) development in the home environment. The main aim of this research was to highlight parental roles in supporting language skill development. For achieving this purpose, a qualitative approach was used not only for data collection, but also the analysis and implementation. In this chapter, the methodology used for data collection, sampling and data analysis is described. The description assisted answering to the two research questions in this study:

1. What strategies do families use to support first and second language development of the children?
2. What are the parental attitudes to developing bilingualism?

This chapter contains four parts. The first part introduces types of researches, the type which is used in this study, and finally why has it been chosen. The second part focuses on data collection, processing and analysis. It will elaborate on the participants, piloting, and interview analysis and transfer of data. The third part describes the methodological concerns including reliability and validity and the last part focuses on ethical aspects.

3.1. Research types

3.1.1. Qualitative and quantitative research

Among qualitative, quantitative research or a mixture of both, a qualitative approach was used in this study. The small number of participants and the interview as a tool were chosen as a result of the researcher's choice of the qualitative paradigm. Since, this paradigm was the best to help the researcher's to fulfill the research aims.

Qualitative research focuses mainly on factors such as events, people, settings, cultures, experiences and so on. Qualitative methods rely on how people understand and perform in various social settings (Tewksbury, 2009:38-39). According to Dornyei (2007:24), qualitative research includes a data collection procedure that is open-ended and has non-numerical data. The results are analyzed by non-statistical methods. In addition, Zacharias (2012:10) describes qualitative research as understanding an event or an individual which is on-going and dynamic. In

addition, the number of participants is small and the data are analyzed and interpreted based on participants' words and stories.

On the contrary, quantitative methods are regarded as more scientific, and they focus on definitions that intend to find out what concepts and variables actually mean in addition to the use of statistical methods (Tewksbury, 2009:38-39). Quantitative research according to Dornyei (2007:24) has numerical results, which are analyzed by statistical methods. In addition, sometimes both qualitative and quantitative methods can be used for data collection in a research such as using an interview and a questionnaire in a research together. Zacharias (2012:10) highlights that the purpose of quantitative research is to generalize and predict the relationship based on fixed and decided data collection which is presentable by numerical figures and percentages.

Johnson and Turner (2003) believe that the main reason for using a mixed method, i.e. qualitative and quantitative methods, is because of the data which should be collected with different strategies and methods. Another reason would be to strengthen the whole procedure and to reduce or eliminate the weaknesses which a study would have. Caracelli and Greene (1997:6) identified three typical uses of a mixed methods study: 'First, testing the agreement of findings obtained from different measuring instruments, second clarifying and building on the results of one method with another method, and third, demonstrating how the results from one method can impact subsequent methods or inferences drawn from the results'.

Creswell (1998) describes six mixed method research designs. The first method is sequential explanatory design in which qualitative data are used to support the quantitative findings. The second method is the sequential exploratory design in which the quantitative data are used to support qualitative findings. The third method is the sequential transformative design in which the quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analyzed separately. The fourth method is the concurrent triangulation design in which the qualitative and quantitative data are collected simultaneously in order to confirm and cross-validate the findings. The fifth method is the concurrent nested design in which the quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analyzed together. The last method is the concurrent transformative design in which the qualitative and quantitative data are collected at the same time and are compared and contrasted equally during the investigation of findings.

In this research a qualitative paradigm was chosen because of the choice of the researcher to focus on the topic of parental strategies and support for first and second language of children and also the parental attitudes to bilingualism. Therefore, a qualitative approach with conducting a semi-structured interview for parents seemed appropriate to fulfill the aims of present study. The reason for using a qualitative approach was because of the researcher's interest to elicit more information about the interviewee's opinion, feelings and experiences in the home which was not approachable otherwise. The semi-structured interview assisted the researcher on focusing on individual beliefs and perceptions of the interviewees.

3.1.2. Qualitative data collection techniques

There are various methods for data collection in qualitative research. Hancock (1998:9-13) categorizes data collection methods for a qualitative research into three types: observations, focus groups and individual interviews. The observation method is to see how people react in natural situations. There are various techniques for data collection through observation, including written description, video recording, photographs, artifacts, and finally documentation. Focus group is another data collection method, which is carried out by a researcher with a group of participants, who are being asked about their perceptions, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes towards an idea or concept. The interview is yet another method for data collection in a qualitative study. Interviews, according to Hancock (1998), can be highly structured, semi-structured, and unstructured. The structured interview is to ask each respondent the same question the same way by eliciting a limited number of responses. This type of interview is very similar to a questionnaire. The semi-structured interview has a series of questions which are more open ended and enable the interviewee and interviewer to discuss more about a question. Unstructured interview allows for in-depth discussion with fewer numbers of questions.

According to Patton (2002:340-342), researchers use the interviews to elicit information, which are not directly observable, such as feelings, thoughts and intentions. By means of interviews, one can access the interviewee's perception about a subject matter. Patton categorized interviews into three types of informal conversational interview, general interview guide approach, and standardized open ended interview. Similar to the categorization of Hancock (1998), Mackay and Gass (2005:173) categorize interviews into three types of structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interviews. The first is similar to the verbal questionnaire which

makes the comparison between other respondents easier. In the second, the interviewer prepares a list of questions beforehand. And finally, in the unstructured interview no questions are prepared beforehand so that the interviewer could adapt the questions according to the flow and speed of the conversation.

Semi-structured interviews have cues or prompts, which assist the interviewer to consider the question further whenever the interviewee has difficulty understanding a question. In a semi structured interview, the interviewer also has the freedom to probe the interviewee to elaborate on the original response or to follow a line of inquiry introduced by the interviewee (Hancock 1998:9). Moreover, Griffiee (2012:159-160) describes interviews as being on a continuum between open and close. The open-ended interview gives an interviewee a clue on how to answer and sometimes may encourage the interviewer to ask a particular question which was not intended to be asked in the first place. The close-ended or standardized interview has fixed numbers of questions, which the interviewer does not ask for elaboration or further clarification. Semi-structured interviews are between open-ended and close-ended interviews on the continuum, in which the interviewer has the freedom to ask for more information or even add more questions to the whole interview.

A semi-structured interview was chosen as the method for data collection in the present study. Semi-structured interviews or the general interview guide approach, according to Patton (2002:343) uses an interview guide as the main source of eliciting data from participants. There are a number of questions, which are to be explored during the interview. An interview guide helps the interviewer to elicit the information he/she needs in a more step-wise manner and around the subject areas, which the interviewer intends to explore. This kind of interviewing tends to be more systematic and comprehensive in elaborating and answering the questions.

3.2. Data collection, processing and analysis

3.2.1. Participants

The participants in this study were parents of children who were attending Norwegian schools. The children were between grades one and four. The reason why this age group for children was selected was because of the fact that parents tend to be more involved in assisting younger children with respect to language skills in the home. Ten families were chosen based on their consent after an invitation to participate in the research. A letter of invitation was prepared

by the researcher and was sent with the children home to their families. The reason for choosing the aforementioned participants was due to the nature of this study, which was qualitative and the aim which was to find out the attitudes, supports and strategies which families use for first and second language skill in the home.

Participants in this study have a variety of nationalities. The mothers/fathers in each family were from: Greece/Greece, Romania/Romania, Poland/Poland, Finland/England, Norway/Mexico, Norway/England, Ethiopia/Ethiopia, India/India, Nepal/Nepal, and Iran/Iran. In three of the families parents had a different mother tongue. Among the interviewees, three worked at a kindergarten as an assistant, three did not work, three worked as a teacher, and one worked in a restaurant. All the participants were highly educated. Five participants had a bachelor degree, four had a master degree and one was studying in a master programme.

Among the children, five were attending regular Norwegian schools, four were attending the Johannes Learning Center and one was attending the International School of Stavanger. Johannes learning center is a kind of school which provides training and teaching for refugees and immigrants, both for adults and the children. The center has pre-school, primary school for the children, and adult Norwegian courses for refugees and immigrants. The International School of Stavanger is an English-language private school for students from pre-school to grade twelve. The school provides an internationally-accredited education for the students in a multi-cultural environment.

3.2.2. Data collection instrument

A semi-structured interview was chosen to carry out the present research. The idea behind choosing a semi-structured interview was to elicit more responses from the participants while having the questions as a framework in order not to deviate from the questions. Some questions were devised in order for participants to provide explanations of how they are involved in language skill support in the home and what attitudes they have to bilingualism. In addition, questions were devised to elicit answers from parents to give reasons why an emphasis is put on an activity, for example.

The interview guide consisted of three main parts. The first part focused on background of participants such as their age, level of education, number of children, country of origin,

language(s) that parents speak with each other and with their children, and language(s) sibling talk to each other, etc. The second part elaborated on attitudes to bilingualism such as positive or negative attitudes and how parents intend to keep the two languages separately or simultaneously. The last part focused on language skills for the first and second language. In other words, the focus was on parental strategies to support language skills, which included reading, listening, speaking and writing. In the reading part, there are questions such as the place and the materials parents used to assist their children. In the listening part, there are some questions including the language and time of the day which children watch TV and the kinds of programs they watch, etc. In the speaking section, focus was made on the language which parents and children practice with each other, whether or not they work on vocabulary or accent and so on. In the last part, which focused on writing skills, some question such as the writing activities and spelling were discussed. All the questions were asked for both Norwegian and the family's mother tongue. The interview guide is provided in the appendix.

3.2.3. Interview piloting and conduction

The interview questions were piloted prior to the main interview conduction. The reason for piloting was to ensure that questions were not vague and were understandable by the interviewee. According to Dörnyei, (2007:137) piloting is carried out to “ensure that the questions elicit rich data and do not dominate the flow of the conversation”. In addition, piloting allowed the interviewer to test the recording device and the total time which the interview takes. Two piloting sessions were carried out with two volunteers who were not included in the final sample to be interviewed. Volunteers were also parents who were from other countries and had children between grades one and four. After piloting, the researcher revised the questions based on what has been answered and added some relevant questions and deleted questions which were vague and difficult to understand. Piloting also assisted the researcher to add sections to the interview and to separate the questions based on their exact content. Moreover, piloting helped the interviewer to check whether questions were clear in content and comprehensible for all interviewees with different knowledge, culture and educational level.

Four interviews were carried out at Johannes Learning Center, three at Sandnes Learning Center, and three at Bekketunet kindergarten. After finding a quiet place for interviewing, the interviewer started and checked the audio recorder to ensure that it works properly. The

interviews lasted between twenty five and thirty five minutes, depending on the pace of the interview process and the elaborations and explanations that parents provided. In addition to voice recording, the interviewer took notes of the necessary parts. Patton (2002:383) states that taking notes during interviews assists the interviewer to provide new questions which could be asked later in the course of interview. Moreover, notes taken during the interview helped the researcher for later analysis of data and were a backup in the event that something happened to the recording device. Notes taken by the interviewer along with the recorded voices assisted the interviewer to have a clearer picture of what was actually being said. After conducting each interview, the interviewer went through the field notes very quickly to make sure that notes were not ambiguous and asked the interviewees for more clarification.

3.2.4. Interview analysis

The audio recordings of the interviewees were reviewed and transferred to a computer. Each interview was transcribed in a separated file. For the interpretation and analysis of the data, the researcher went through the interview guide as a framework, section by section, to find similar or different themes and topics in the answers of the interviewees to each part. In a separate chapter, all the interviewee's answers were discussed in detail in order to find out the similarities and/or differences between the interviewees. The themes or topics which were common among the interviewees were selected for more discussion and comparison with the previous research in the same area of study. Based on the analysis of the interviews, the researcher could get a view of what most of the participants like or disliked regarding bilingualism and what most of them did in the home to support the language learning development of their children.

3.3. Methodological concerns

3.3.1. Reliability and validity

Reliability and validity are two concepts which are mostly used for quantitative studies. Reliability, focuses on consistency of test results from one study to another. Reliability signifies the extent to which the device used for data collection in a study is consistent within a study or over a period of time. In other words, the results at the end of a study should be replicable and repeatable. According to Drost (2011:106), reliability is the repeatability of measurements from

one person, occasion, or condition to another. In quantitative studies reliability is measured with correlation coefficient, which itself is the reliability between two or more variables. On the other hand, validity tends to find out if the tests measure what they are supposed to measure. These two processes are represented by digits and numbers.

However, reliability and validity are represented differently in the qualitative study. Reliability and validity can be defined as the true, honest, meaningful answers which are provided by participants. Golafshani (2003:598) refers to Joppe (2000:1) who defines reliability in a qualitative study as:

The extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable.

Basit (2010:70) highlights the issue that due to the nature of uniqueness of each study in qualitative researches, attention should be paid to preciseness and honesty in answering the research questions of the study. In order to determine reliability of the data in a qualitative research, Mores et al. (2002:2-4) also suggest to focus on the “trustworthiness” at the end of a qualitative research rather than focusing on the process of data collection and analysis itself.

Validity concerns whether a test or an instrument measures what it is actually supposed to measure. Drost (2011:114) defines validity as the meaningfulness of a research component. However, terms which are used for a qualitative research may not completely be applicable to quantitative research. Morse et al. (2002:1) argue that:

Qualitative researchers should reclaim responsibility for reliability and validity by implementing verification strategies integral and self-correcting during the conduct of inquiry itself. This ensures the attainment of rigor using strategies inherent within each qualitative design, and moves the responsibility for incorporating and maintaining reliability and validity from external reviewers’ judgments to the investigators themselves.

According to Golafshani (2003:604), reliability and validity are described as truth worthiness, rigor and quality in a qualitative research. Moreover, both terms ‘get affected from the qualitative researchers perspectives, which are to eliminate bias and increase the researcher’s truthfulness of a

proposition about some social phenomenon' (Denzin, 1978). In this study, efforts have been made to remain as truthful and unbiased as possible.

In this study, focus was on the answers that were provided by the participants. In other words, focus has been made on the truthfulness and meaningfulness of the responses. To find out whether the answers were true and meaningful, the interviewer assisted the interviewees in providing more comprehensive and comprehensible responses by asking question clearly and thoroughly. What mattered most in the study was to provide as much meaningful results, procedures for interpretation of results, and discussions as possible in different components.

3.4. Ethical aspects

All the necessary information about the interviews was given to the participant on the day of interview in addition to the given information in the invitation-for-participation letter. On the interview day and in the invitation letter it was stated that personal information would not be published. Moreover, it was stated in the invitation letter, that participation in this study was completely voluntary.

In addition, all personal data would not be published in line with NSD (meldepliktig) inquiry. This was to ensure the anonymity of participants in addition to deleting the data after completion of the research.

3.5. Summary

In this chapter, the methodology which was chosen for the present study was defined. Focus has been made on the data collection and processing. Moreover, detailed information about the participants and piloting, the data collection instrument, which was a semi-structured interview, the methodological concerns about reliability and validity, and ethical aspects, was presented. In the following chapter, the findings of the study will be presented and elaborated on in detail, which will allow a comparison and contrast to be made among the interviewees in the discussion chapter.

4. Findings

4.1. Introduction

This study aimed to investigate parental attitudes to bilingualism and strategies they use to support first and second language learning in the home environment. The present chapter is a summary of interviews with ten parents.

All the real names are anonymised and are given pseudonyms. Each summary presents the background of participants, their attitudes to bilingualism and their efforts and strategies to assist improving children's language learning skills, including reading, listening, speaking and writing. It should be noted that sometimes the summaries may not follow the direct structure of the interview guide.

4.2. Interviewee 1

Arora was 37 years old. She had a master degree in Social Psychology and did not work. Arora and her family, which included her husband and two children with the ages of three and 6 years old, had moved to Norway one and a half years ago in 2011. They had moved to Norway because of job opportunities they could find in the Stavanger area. The country which they both came from was Greece. Therefore, the mother tongue of both parents was Greek. When I asked Arora about the language or languages both parents spoke to their children in the home, she replied that they both spoke Greek because they wanted their kids to hear the mother tongue every day. The other reason for only speaking Greek to the kids was due to the fact that the family had moved to Norway recently and Arora felt that both she and her husband were not fluent enough to speak Norwegian to their children. However, she emphasized that her children, especially the older son, who was in the first grade, tended to speak Norwegian and Greek to the parents, siblings and friends.

When I asked Arora about her and her husband's attitude to bilingualism, she positively replied that 'learning new languages brings great changes to people's lives'. Therefore, she believed that bilingualism will have a positive effect on her children's language development. In addition, Arora mentioned that bilingualism helped the educational progress of her children, especially the older one, because he was in the first grade at school and knowing Norwegian in

addition to Greek had helped her son to learn better the subject in the school. Overall, she did not see any disadvantages in knowing two or more languages at the same time.

Moreover, Arora emphasized that she and her husband had tried to keep their mother tongue and Norwegian simultaneously and they, as parents, had put a lot of effort in order for their kids to know and to speak the two languages equally eventually. In addition, Arora was very active in the home with her older child when it came to reading. She encouraged her son to read by reading 'together', especially, when doing homework. However, Arora emphasized that since both she and her husband were not as fluent in Norwegian as their own mother tongue, they were mostly reading Greek story books to their son. Meanwhile, she added that she and her husband would help their son with assignments related to reading comprehension from school. Arora also said that she had more time to do the reading activities with her child than her husband because she was a stay-at-home mother.

When I asked Arora about the kinds of books she read to her son, she replied that books were mostly fairy tales which the family had bought in Greece. Since her son was in the first grade, he was still not able to read long texts alone. Therefore, Arora assisted him in reading very short books with short texts, sometimes differentiating between vowel and consonants, as an example. Moreover, Arora mentioned that her son was very eager to read himself and to listen to stories Arora read to him. He followed the process of reading by asking a lot of questions about the parts he did not know, especially when he saw a word whose meaning he did not meaning. Therefore, he would ask for a definition and clarification in Greek and if it was related to Norwegian assignments, he would ask for translation to his mother tongue.

I also asked Arora about the frequency of times the family bought or borrowed books. She replied that her son borrowed Norwegian audio books and books from his school library every week. In addition, the family had bought a lot of mother tongue books from Greece. As for doing homework assignments which were related to reading comprehension, Arora said that they would always sit in the living room to show to her son that they were doing a very serious activity. However, for reading other than for schools purposes, they would read the books in her son's bedroom while he was in his bed.

Speaking was another skill which was focused on. When I asked Arora if she worked on her son's accent or pronunciation, she replied that she would do that for their mother tongue but

not Norwegian because she thought she was not fluent enough in the Norwegian language yet. The family, in addition, had dinner time discussions at weekends in which they talked about what happened during the week and at the school. Arora mentioned that her son was very eager to talk about the school issues and had just started to make some friends.

During the family discussions, Arora would correct her son's mostly grammatical errors by repeating the grammatical errors in their correct form. With respect to father and mother distinction in error correction, Arora said that there was not a significant difference between the ways she and her husband corrected, in particular Greek errors. As for assisting in improving Norwegian, the family had planned to go to the cinema to see Norwegian movies and cartoons every now and then. If their son did not understand something, the mother or father would use a dictionary for definitions and translations.

Arora and her family would listen to music a lot. Therefore, their children were exposed to music almost every day for at least one hour. The songs the family listened to were a mixture of English and Greek songs. In addition, he would watch TV for one hour each day, mostly Norwegian and Greek channels. Arora emphasized that her son would watch TV channels only if there was an educational and an appropriate program. Otherwise, her son would watch selected cartoons on YouTube. Arora's son also could play with his play station and use an Ipad, especially when talking to his other family members in Greek. Arora also sang Greek songs to her children and the children liked it very much so that they would ask for repetition of songs.

Since Arora's son was in the first grade, he was still not at a stage to write sentences. He would write words or combinations of words and she and her husband would help him both in Norwegian and Greek. The Greek language also had a different alphabet than Norwegian, therefore, both parents made an effort to teach it to their son. In addition, Arora and her husband had bought some alphabet books from Greece. As a practice for writing, she and her son had made a mini-dictionary for themselves. Her son would write the words that he did not know their meanings and then would find the meanings in the dictionary. She thought that this was a very positive way to encourage her son to write. Arora and her husband also had the same strategies for error correction in writing. They would ask their son to write the word or letter in the correct way. Moreover, she would assist her son in writing activities, in Norwegian, almost immediately after her son came from school and the activities usually took around one and a half hours.

4.3. Interviewee 2

Beata was 31 years old. She and her husband came from Romania one year ago. She had a bachelor degree in Economics and did not work. Both Beata and her husband tended to speak both Romanian and English with their son, who was six years old and was in the first grade at his school. Beata and her son spoke mostly Romanian, especially when they were playing games or watching cartoons. Her husband and son spoke English together. However, she and her husband spoke English with each other at home because her husband was Norwegian and Beata was not fluent in Norwegian. The language or languages their son spoke would change in different contexts. For example, he would speak Norwegian with his Norwegian friends at school or English with his English speaking friends and Romanian with close relatives and his mother. But, overall, he preferred to speak Norwegian when being around friends from school.

When I asked Beata about her and her husband's attitude to bilingualism, she replied that being able to speak other languages than the mother tongue, especially the language of the country they were living in, had helped her son to have a better relation with other children at school or in the neighborhood. In addition, Beata believed that bilingualism or trilingualism has definitely had a positive effect on their child's language development because, when her son was using one language, he would also want to know in other languages that he had the knowledge of. Moreover, Beata believed that bilingualism had helped the educational progress of her son. She believed that the human mind had a very large capacity to absorb a massive amount of information and the more one learned the more brain capacity increased. When I asked Beata if she would put any kind of pressure on her child, she replied that her son learned things because he wanted to learn and there was not any pressure on him learning new subjects. In addition, Beata and her husband put effort to keep the three languages simultaneously with respect to listening and speaking as much as possible. However, she emphasized that their focus had been less on reading and writing.

Beata encouraged her son to read by reading books of his interests to him every night. In addition, she said that she would normally read books to her son because her husband travelled a lot and did not have enough time to read every day. However, she emphasized that the times in which her husband was in Norway he would read books his son. Beata would read Romanian books to her son and her husband, whenever he had time, would read Norwegian books. They

had not started reading English books up to now. When I asked about the kind of books they would read to their son, Beata replied that she and her husband read manner books, poems, and story books. She also noted that her son really enjoyed reading Mickey Mouse books, in which he would learn colors, letters, and numbers. Beata engaged her son in the reading activities by doing role plays of different characters which were in the books. This way, she believed that her son would learn faster and better. While listening to the stories Beata read, her son would ask a lot of questions about the issues which were unclear to him. As for vocabulary development, she used flash cards to practice new vocabulary with her son, particularly in Norwegian.

In addition to the previous discussions about reading activities, Beata and her husband bought a lot of books in Romania and Norway. She or her husband and their son read the books while their son was in bed or read books at a special place at a corner in their house. She reiterated that since their son was at the beginning phase of learning Norwegian, he was interested to ask questions in Norwegian while reading books with her and her husband.

Beata believed that children learn very fast, therefore, she had not put much effort for speaking correction because her son would try to correct a word or sentence that he had mispronounced by himself. Other times, Beata interrupted and corrected her son by telling him the right pronunciation. She and her family also had family dinner time discussions in which they talked about friends, games, and what happened at the schools or what their son would like to do in the near future, for example, at summer time. The languages they used during discussions were Romanian and English. In addition, she said that she and her son would practice the new subjects in role plays since she believed that he learnt best when he was taught in a form of a game or fun. The most frequent types of speaking error corrections were mispronunciation of individual sounds or words. Both Beata and her husband tended to correct the same way. As a concluding remark for speaking assistance, she said that she had tried to take her son to play grounds two or three times a week in order to integrate him more in the Norwegian environment. He also attended SFO (After school activity), which Beata thought would have a very positive effect on her son's Norwegian language development.

Moreover, Beata would let her son watch cartoons on DVD's for around two hours every day. The cartoons he was interested in watching were mostly English and Romanian and Beata was trying Norwegian cartoons but she admitted that her son would lose interest quite soon

because he could not understand everything yet. As for the frequency of listening to music, Beata replied that her son listened to music whenever she and her husband were listening to music on radio channels in Norwegian and English. In addition, the family had provided their child with an iPhone and a tablet only to play games or watch cartoons with their permission. Moreover, Beata said that she and her son sang English, Romanian and a few Norwegian songs every day. Her son was also very much interested in listening to Romanian books that Beata read to him.

When I asked Beata about the language or languages they used for writing she replied that her son wrote homework assignments in Norwegian and he wrote cards to their family in Romania in English. In addition, Beata stressed that Romanian language had a similar alphabet to Norwegian with some different letters. She had tried to work on the Norwegian alphabet; however, Beata said that sometimes her son could not differentiate between some sounds and letters. In addition, they did a variety of activities to practice writing, for example, they played games practicing names of places and countries and they made short letters for each other and her son's friends at school, for example for birthdays, Christmas and Easter. Since she believed that her son learned better through games, she and her husband had bought many playing games and she corrected him by focusing on the error at a later time. Writing activities were done five or six times a week mainly for doing Norwegian homework because it was the language her son was in contact every day.

4.4. Interviewee 3

Hoda was 28 years old. She had a master degree in Law and had moved to Norway with her husband and two daughters one year and nine months ago. Her daughters were in the first and third grades. She worked every day in a restaurant. Hoda and her husband would talk Polish at home with each other since it was their mother tongue. They would also talk Polish to their kids. When I asked which language or languages their children speak to them, Hoda replied that her children also spoke Polish to them in the home. However, she mentioned that when her kids were around Norwegian friends, they tended to speak Norwegian as much as they could because they thought it was fun and enjoyable to speak Norwegian. In addition, she admitted that from the time they moved to Norway, it was obvious that their children's mother tongue fluency had been deteriorating. Therefore, she believed that being a bilingual had not helped her daughters with respect to keeping their first language at the level it was before.

When I asked about Hoda and her husband's attitude to bilingualism, she replied that it was important for their children to become bilinguals because they had a plan to live in Norway for a long time; therefore, their kids needed to know fluent Norwegian as well. In addition, Hoda said that bilingualism somehow had helped the educational progress of her daughters because sometimes their first language could help them in understanding the second language. She was also interested in keeping the two languages simultaneously with respect to speaking and listening, though she thought it was difficult. As for reading and writing, Hoda and her husband were in the process of exploring the Norwegian language themselves and she believed that because their alphabet was different from Norwegian, it was difficult to explain the differences all the time to her children.

Hoda said that she was very interested in reading books herself, therefore, she encouraged her children a lot to read too. Hoda and her kids read every day, especially at bed time. However, she noted that reading was an activity that she was more interested in doing with her children than her husband. When I asked about the kind of books she read to her children, she replied that her children mostly liked to read fairy tales and short story books. However, she said that her son, who was in the first grade, was not at a level to read books independently by himself and she had to read to him. But her older son, who was in the third grade, could read Polish books fluently. Hoda said that her children were very much interested in reading; therefore, they would ask a lot of questions during the reading process. As for vocabulary development, she and her husband did not use any kind of flash cards with her children, rather, she would teach the new vocabularies through reading books.

Hoda had bought Polish books in Poland in addition to the books she had borrowed from the Stavanger library. The children's preferred time for reading Polish books was at their bedtime. In addition, when one of her children did not understand something, Hoda would look it up in the dictionary and would tell the meaning to the kids. The children usually asked questions in Polish but sometimes they asked for Norwegian translation as well. Moreover, when I asked her how she would work on vocabulary development, Hoda replied that she would do mostly at reading time by explaining the meaning of new words.

In order to find out what strategies she used related to speaking, I asked if she would correct her children's pronunciation. Hoda replied that she did not correct her son who was in the

third grade in Polish because he was fluent enough. However, she corrected him in Norwegian by telling him the right way of pronunciation and by asking him to repeat. The family also had dinner time discussions every day in which they talked about every day events. They talked in the Polish language. Hoda corrected pronunciation error by saying the words in a correct way. Hoda and her husband corrected speaking errors the same way. In addition, Hoda was very eager to keep their mother tongue alive by travelling frequently to Poland and by contacting family and friends often.

When I asked about the frequency of the times her children watched TV, she replied that the kids mostly watched programs on the computer and not very often on TV. The programs they could watch were mostly cartoons. The kids watched TV in the Norwegian language. The family also liked to listen to the radio all the time, mostly English and Norwegian channels. But Hoda and her husband had some Polish CD's too. The children had also been provided with an Ipad to play games. In addition, I asked about the song or songs that Hoda and her husband sang to their kids. In reply, she said that they sang a lot of Polish songs to their kids many times a week because, they as parents, believed that they should keep the Polish traditions alive, even though they were living in Norway.

The language which Hoda's children wrote was Norwegian. She added that Polish had a similar alphabet like Norwegian with a few different letters. She had worked on the Polish alphabet to her children by showing the new letters and pronouncing correctly. She would, then, ask her kids to repeat. The only activity she did with her kids other than school writing activities were writing short stories, such as what happened to the teddy bear. But she said that she used to do it more often before. Hoda corrected writing errors, especially from school assignments, by writing the correct way on the paper and asking the kids to copy correctly again. They did writing activities every day right after school, which normally took one and a half hours. Hoda emphasized that she had not begun with Polish writing yet because she wanted her children to get good enough in Norwegian first.

4.5. Interviewee 4

Julia was 35 years old. She had a master degree in International Hotel and Tourism Leadership; however, she was a divorced staying home mother from when she moved to Norway. Julia had three children with the ages of two, three and seven. Her oldest child was a boy who was in the

first grade. Julia had moved to Norway one year ago. Julia spoke English with her ex-husband and Finnish with her children. She could speak Finnish, English and a little Norwegian. Her children, especially the oldest child, spoke Finnish, English and Norwegian. When I asked about the language the siblings talked to each other and to her, she replied that they would mix the three languages but most of the times English took over. She also mentioned that her oldest child spoke Finnish with family and friends in Finland.

Julia believed that it was important for her kids to know at least two languages. Julia said that they have Finnish and Swedish as the official languages of Finland. She believed that knowing Swedish was a great benefit to her because it was very close to Norwegian and it facilitated her process of Norwegian learning. However, she had chosen only 'to speak Finnish to her children in order to make their mother tongue strong.' She believed that having a strong first language was very important. Moreover, Julia believed that bilingualism had a positive effect of her children's language development even though sometimes it hindered the progress. She said that when they moved to Norway her oldest son, Peter, was uninterested to communicate with other kids even though he could speak English. But now, as Julia said, her son was very interested in learning Norwegian and sometimes he would correct her by saying new words he had just learnt.

When I asked Julia if she would put effort to keep the two languages simultaneously, she replied that she only had tried teaching her kids Finnish in the home because she believed that teachers at schools would handle the Norwegian and English languages. However, she would help her children in case had any problem with the two other languages. She also believed that it was not possible to keep the two or three languages equal with respect to speaking and listening because they were living in a country where the language of the country would take over. As for reading and writing, she believed that it was important for her children to be able to write and read the two languages equally; however, she believed that this process would take a long time.

Julia encouraged her children, especially her oldest child, to read. She had shopped Finnish books in Finland and her son also borrowed Norwegian books once a week from his school library. Julia read Finnish books every night to her children who were very interested in listening to her and she did not have to do anything in order to encourage her son to read or to listen to stories she read to him. While she was reading, her son would only listen if he had heard

the story before; otherwise, he would ask questions. Julia did not use flash cards to practice reading new vocabulary. Moreover, she bought books in Finland and Norway. Julia and her son whose name was Peter would read books in his room. Julia explained things that her son did not understand in another word and with examples. Julia's son asked questions mostly in Finnish because he understood it better than the other two languages.

When I asked Julia if she would work on her children's accent or pronunciation in order to improve their speaking, she replied that she would help her children, especially her oldest child, with respect to Finnish and then English but she believed, she was not fluent enough in Norwegian because Norwegian and Finnish or Swedish had differences in pronunciation. When it came to the speaking error correction, Julia said that she did not say that a word that her son had pronounced was wrong but instead she would pronounce it in the correct way. Moreover, the family had family dinner time discussions in which they talked in the Finnish language and they talked about what happened at school, future plans, holiday and so on.

Julia's children watched TV every day. They watched Norwegian cartoons most of the time and if they could not find anything interesting, they would watch English cartoons. Julia and her family seldom listened to music. She had provided her children with a kind of laptop for children in which they could play games or watch cartoons. She normally sang songs from church to her kids in Finnish and English. She also sang songs that her oldest son had learnt from school which he enjoyed a lot. In addition, her children enjoyed listening to stories she read to them but as she said, sometimes it was difficult for her to concentrate on one language because her children were at different ages.

Julia worked on vocabulary by looking up new words from books or movies in the dictionary. She and her son would do this only when they encountered new words. She mostly corrected grammatical mistakes. Julia mentioned that if her son was with her father, he would only correct Peter in the English language because he could not speak Finnish. In general, Julia's son asked more questions about Norwegian when he did not understand something.

When I asked which language or languages her son wrote, she said that he mostly wrote in Norwegian because he had assignments from school every day. However, she mentioned that her son was very much interested in learning the Finnish alphabet. Julia added that the Finnish alphabet had some different letters which were pronounced differently. She, then, explained how

a particular word was pronounced in English and Finnish, afterwards she would compare them with Norwegian. She thought her son learned better through comparison between languages. In addition, she had taught her mother tongue alphabet to her oldest child. She added that in order to practice the letters, she had bought Finnish magnetic letters, which were stocked on the refrigerator door. Her son also learnt a lot from letters on the key board of the computer, especially when he was playing games. However, she added that she did not push him to learn the alphabet and had let her son to learn based on his own interests.

Julia mostly assisted her son with spelling when he was doing his homework. Afterwards, she would ask him and tell how he should write. If he did not know the meaning of some words, they would look it up in books or the children's dictionary. Julia asked her son to write again in case he wrote something wrong. In addition, she and her son did writing activities shortly after school and mostly in the morning before going to school. In the whole process of writing assignments from school, Julia explained in the Finnish language because it was easier for her son to understand.

4.6. Interviewee 5

Pia was 31 years old. She had a master degree in Social Anthropology and she was a teacher of English and Norwegian. She was originally from Norway but she used to live in Mexico for a period of six years. Pia's husband was from Mexico. She had three children with the ages of one, three and six years old. Her oldest son was in the first grade. She spoke Spanish with her husband at home. When I asked about the language or languages she and her husband spoke with the children, she replied that they tried to speak mostly Spanish. However, she mentioned that they had planned for Pia to speak only Norwegian and her husband to speak only Spanish to the children but their plan did not work. Therefore, they decided to speak Spanish in the home and to speak Norwegian when the family was around friends. In addition, she said that her oldest son could choose between the languages, for example, if he did not want others to understand what he was saying to his mother or father; he would speak Spanish in Norway or Norwegian in Mexico.

When I asked about Pia's attitude to bilingualism, in reply she said that it was very important because she and her husband believed that their children should be able to understand both Norwegian and Mexican cultures and they could have a proper contact with family members, especially in Mexico because families were a large part of people's lives there. In

addition, Pia said that she and her husband had a positive attitude to bilingualism; however, she expressed her worries about not exercising enough with respect to both languages because she believed she was very busy raising three children.

Moreover, Pia believed that bilingualism had helped the educational progress of her children, especially her oldest child, who learnt the two languages very quickly. Therefore, he did not have a specific problem with speaking and understanding. As for reading and writing, she said that they had not started with writing yet because her son's teacher had asked them to wait until her son move to a higher level in Norwegian. Overall, as Pia believed, it was important for both she and her husband that their children to be able to speak, understand, read, and write the two languages equally.

In addition to Pia's positive attitude to bilingualism, she said that she and her husband encouraged their children to read. Their son, who was in the first grade, had started reading Norwegian books. She and her husband read books to their children every day. They had bought many Spanish books in Mexico. The books were mostly fairy tales, family stories, and short picture books. In addition, she said that her oldest child was so interested in reading books that he had started reading them to his younger brothers and he felt very proud of his achievement. As for her two younger children, she mentioned that they mostly asked a lot of questions while listening. However, their oldest son listened to and concentrated on the content of the book. Sometimes he would ask some question if there was a very difficult word or sentence that he did not understand. Pia's family did use flash cards for vocabulary development.

When I asked her about buying or borrowing books from the library, she answered that she had a lot of story books from her childhood, which she had kept up to the present time and she and her husband mostly read those books to their children. In addition, she said that they would buy books in Mexico or Norway. She added that they did not have a special place at home for reading. They would read at places in the house which were more quite. Meanwhile, if the children, in particular the oldest son, had any problem in understanding, she or her husband would explain the word or sentence in other words to make it easier for their son to understand. Pia's son asked for explanation and translation for both languages depending on the language he was reading.

With respect to speaking assistance, Pia and her husband did not work on their children's accent because they believed that the accent would get better when their children become older. They had family dinner time discussions in which they talked in Spanish about what happened in the school or during the day. As for vocabulary development, Pia replied that she and her husband would focus on a particular word or sentence only when it was very funny. Afterwards, she would explain why that particular word was funny. There was no difference between mother and father error correction. However, she emphasized that she would not correct her children if she was not sure herself, especially in Spanish.

In addition, Pia and her husband were active in assisting their children in listening. When I asked how often her children watched TV, she answered that they would watch TV every day mostly in Norwegian. However, she emphasized that they had always tried to find Spanish cartoons and channels for the kids. Moreover, she added that her oldest son liked to watch action movies in addition to cartoons. Moreover, the children listened to adult music at least three times a week whenever she or her husband was listening. Most of the time, the family listened to Spanish music. The family had provided the children with the ex-box to play with. Pia and her husband knew many songs that they sang to their children every day with her husband playing the guitar. She confessed that sometimes they felt like they sang too much. She added that their children enjoyed listening to the stories they read to them. Moreover, she read mostly Norwegian books and her husband read Spanish books to the children. She added that her husband knew many fairy tales and stories from Mexico that their children enjoyed listening very much.

In reply to my question about the language or languages which her son wrote, she replied that her son wrote only in the Norwegian language, especially the assignments from school. As for Spanish, Pia said that the Spanish alphabet has a similar alphabet to Norwegian with only a few different letters. That was why she was not worried about her children learning to write in Spanish yet. However, she had started to work on teaching the Spanish alphabet a little at the same times as her son was learning Norwegian alphabet at school. , In addition, she and her son had made a secret book for themselves, in which they would write different private issues that her son enjoyed very much. She added that she would assist her son mostly in spelling in Norwegian, which was more difficult than their mother tongue. With respect to the frequency of times that her son did writing activities, she answered that her son did the school writing activities about

four days a week when he came from school. One writing activity that Pia and her son would do other than school assignments was writing cards on special occasions to family and friends.

4.7. Interviewee 6

Johan was 43 years old. He was from England and his wife was from Norway. Johan had moved to Norway eleven years ago. They had children with the ages of five, seven, and nine years old. Johan was a teacher of mathematics and English. Johan and his wife spoke English with each other in the home. Johan spoke English and his wife spoke Norwegian with the children in the home. When I asked about the language or languages their children spoke to them, he replied they used a mixture of English and Norwegian, with the English language getting better as time passes and the children were getting older. The siblings spoke English with each other. In addition, he mentioned that the languages they used changed in different contexts. Johan added that the family had a lot of English speaking friends. So, when they traveled to England the children could communicate very well with others. On the other hand, Johan added that his children, especially the two older children, could easily switch to Norwegian when they were around Norwegian friends.

Johan stated that bilingualism was important to him and his wife. He added that since the Norwegian language was the main language of his children, he himself had put much effort in order to maintain the level of English similar to the Norwegian. Moreover, as Johan believed, bilingualism has had a positive effect on his children because by knowing two languages, the children would absorb the culture and history of both Norwegian and English. However, he was not quite sure if bilingualism helped the educational progress of his children.

When I asked Johan if he and his wife would put effort to keep the two languages simultaneously, he asserted that they had always done so, by each parent always speaking in one language. He added that the family had bought some audio-visual books from England. Johan said that they had always tried in order to keep the two languages equally when it came to speaking and listening because they believed that knowing two languages was better than knowing only one language. They put effort with respect to reading and writing in order for their children not to fall behind Norwegian. As he said, English as a subject at school was very easy for the children; therefore, Johan and his wife had to think other ways to insert more difficult English materials in the home activities.

In addition to their attitudes to bilingualism, Johan and his wife always encouraged their children to read. They usually read books at bed time every night. They read both Norwegian and English books depending on what their children were interested in. Johan engaged his children while he was reading books to them by using different voices for different characters of the story, which the children enjoyed very much. Johan, then, added that their children would normally listen to stories but they would ask questions in case they did not understand some parts. Johan and his wife had also bought many English books in England because books were much cheaper in England. When it came to error correction by Johan or his wife, he said that they would correct errors by saying the right form. Sometimes he used a translation from Norwegian to English and vice versa. The children would ask in both languages for clarification of meaning.

As for speaking, Johan and his wife did not work on their children's accent or pronunciation. However, they worked on their children's speaking skills in family dinner time discussion, every night in which they talked about every day events, for example, what happened at the school. Johan added that he normally spoke English and his wife normally spoke Norwegian. In addition, Johan's children were acquiring new vocabulary through watching TV and reading books. If they came across some words that they did not understand, they used dictionaries for translation. Most of the oral mistakes that Johan and his wife corrected were prepositions and they both corrected with the same method. Johan believed that visiting England twice a year helped their children to maintain the English language and helped the children make friends and maintain the relationship with family and friends via internet and telephone.

The children in Johan's family watched TV every day in both Norwegian and English languages. However, he added that the children had a tendency to watch more Norwegian programs. The children also listened to music whenever Johan or his wife was listening to music. The languages the family would listen to music were mostly English and sometimes Norwegian. When I asked about the kind of TV programs their children would watch, Johan replied that their son, who was seven years old, liked to watch cartoons, but his oldest son, who was nine years old, would watch adult movies, comedies and programs such as the Big Bang Theory. The family had also provided the children with the iPods to listen to music. In addition, they sang songs to their kids often during the week; however, Johan confessed that they had done it when their children were smaller.

When I asked Johan about the language or languages his children wrote in, he replied that they would mostly write in Norwegian including the assignment from school. He added that his mother tongue, which was English, did not have a different alphabetical system; therefore, the kids did not have any problem learning and differentiating English from Norwegian.

4.8. Interviewee 7

Mark was 42 years old. He had a bachelor degree in Teaching and he was working as a teacher of mathematics and social sciences. He had been living in Norway for thirteen years and his wife came to Norway three years ago. Both Mark and his wife were from Ethiopia. They had two children with the ages of two and ten years old. His older child was in the fourth grade. Mark and his wife spoke Amharic in the home together and they spoke mostly Norwegian with their children. His daughter, who was ten years old, could speak the two languages but she preferred to speak Norwegian. Mark added that his daughter spoke Amharic with Ethiopian friends. The language his daughter would use depended on the situation and he believed that his daughter was very clever in switching between languages. He also emphasized that it was important for him and his wife that their daughter knew their mother tongue because it was their background.

When I asked about Mark's attitude to bilingualism, he said that it was important because he believed that language was one's identity and he believed that he had made a good connection between his daughter and her background in Africa. He added that his daughter could easily communicate by phone or by E-mail with their family and friends in Ethiopia, though she had never been there. In addition, Mark believed that bilingualism mostly had a positive effect on her daughter's language development and had helped the educational progress of his child because she could compare and contrast the two languages. However, since the two languages had the same alphabetical systems, his daughter at some points mixed the two. Moreover, Mark had tried to keep the two languages simultaneously but it was not always possible because the family was living in Norway and his daughter was in contact with the Norwegian language more than her mother tongue. He added that the Ethiopian community in Norway was not large therefore, chances that his daughter would see people from Ethiopia was not high. When I asked if Mark wanted his daughter to be able to speak, listen, read and write in the two languages equally, he replied that he did in way that he had always put all his effort to keep the Amharic language at the same level as Norwegian for his daughter.

Mark also encouraged his daughter to read the two languages. He added that sometimes he read to his daughter and sometimes his daughter liked to read by herself. Her favorite place for reading was in her room. Mark always read books from Ethiopia. His daughter would read all kinds of books which were age appropriate for the children. The best source of encouragement for his daughter, according to Mark, was the communication via E-mail or texting with the family members in Ethiopia. When reading, his daughter would ask questions, mostly in Norwegian, if she did not understand something. Moreover, she always needed an explanation in Norwegian for better understanding but Mark liked to give explanations in both languages.

In addition to all the efforts Mark made, he worked on his daughter's accent and pronunciation as well to improve her speaking. Most of the oral mistakes that Mark's daughter used to make were related to pronunciation and intonation. Mark would ask her to repeat it the correct way. However, it was not always easy for his daughter to understand because Ethiopian's word order was different from Norwegian which sometimes his daughter mixed the two and could not differentiate. In addition, the family had dinner time discussion in which they would talk about school events, family and friends in Norwegian. Moreover, he worked with vocabulary development of his daughter by finding new materials on the internet and teaching them to his daughter. In addition, he emphasized that his wife would only correct the speaking error of their daughter while Mark corrected errors both in writing and speaking. All the speaking corrections were for their mother tongue and not Norwegian.

Mark was the parent that was more active with respect to involvement in the home. When I questioned whether the family used flash cards to practice the new vocabulary, Mark said that they did not use flash cards for that purpose but for practicing sentence construction. Moreover, Mark's daughter used dictionaries for both languages when she encountered a word that she did not understand. Watching TV, such as cartoons, in particular the Disney channel was Mark's daughter's favorite activity. She usually watched TV at weekends in the Norwegian language. However, his daughter listened to music every day in her iPad and iPhone. Mark and his daughter also had some songs from Ethiopia that they used to sing very often which his daughter liked very much.

Mark's daughter wrote most of the time in Norwegian. He added that Ethiopia had two kinds of alphabetical systems, one of which was totally different from Norwegian and one very

close to Norwegian and the English languages. He had taught the one closer to the Norwegian language to his daughter. He would, then, correct the spelling errors of his daughter. Mark put effort to teach their alphabetical system to his daughter mostly on Sundays. They would work on spelling by writing some sentences and would find the unfamiliar words in the dictionary to make sure that the sentence structure was correct. Once more, Mark emphasized that he had tried his best for his daughter to first be able to speak and understand their mother tongue in order to have basic communication with family and friends in Ethiopia and then helped her with reading and writing to be able to read about the culture and history of their country.

4.9. Interviewee 8

Nancy was 31 years old. She had a bachelor degree in Management and had been living in Norway with her family for the past six years. She was working as an assistant in a kindergarten. She and her husband were from Nepal and had two children aged four and a half and seven years old. She and her husband spoke Nepali together in the home. The sibling spoke Norwegian together; however, she and her husband tried to speak Nepali with them. Even though Nancy's older child preferred to speak Norwegian with her parents and brother, she was still able to switch to the Nepali language when they met friends from Nepal. She added that her daughter, who was seven years old, could speak and understand the Nepali language quite well.

When I asked whether bilingualism was important to Nancy and her husband, she replied that it was important to them that their children could speak and understand their mother tongue, and as long as they were living in Norway, they needed to know the Norwegian language. Moreover, she added that her daughter was only ten months old when the family decided to move to Norway; therefore, Norwegian was regarded as her first language because she had been in contact with the Norwegian language from the kindergarten when she was one years old. In addition, she believed that bilingualism had a positive effect on her daughter's language development, even though it was difficult for her to communicate in the beginning. Nepali and Norwegian, according to Nancy, had different alphabetical systems. Despite all the differences, she said that her daughter could differentiate between the letters of the two languages. It was also important for Nancy and her husband that their children be able to speak, understand, read and write the two languages equally because they were not sure for how long they were going to live in Norway.

Nancy and her husband encouraged their children to read, especially their daughter, who was seven years old. However, it was still difficult for their daughter to read Nepali books because she was not familiar with all the letters in the alphabet. The family had bought story and counting books in Nepal in order to improve their daughter in the Nepali language. In addition, she stated that her daughter read both Norwegian and Nepali books, but she needed help when reading Nepali books. Moreover, they encouraged their daughter to read by buying books in Nepal and Norway. They also borrowed books from the school library. Nancy would also read books to her children, which they enjoyed very much. Her daughter would first listen and then ask questions if she did not understand something. Nancy added that when she was reading Nepali books to her daughter, she would ask questions in the Nepali language and when she was reading Norwegian books to her daughter she would ask for clarifications in Norwegian. Nancy or her husband read books to their children at bed time in their room. They would make the meaning of something clear by giving examples and saying the correct form. Moreover, Nancy said that her daughter would ask a lot of questions for both languages and she also asked for translation in the two languages, if necessary.

Nancy or her husband worked on speaking by correcting their daughter when she said something wrong and they would ask her to repeat that word in the correct form. The family also had family dinner time discussion in which they talked about what happened at school. She added that her daughter mixed the two languages when speaking. With respect to vocabulary assistance, Nancy said that she had taught her daughter to use the dictionary, both from the internet and from a dictionary. In addition, they mostly corrected grammatical mistakes in their daughter's speaking and they had the same method for error correction. However, she mentioned that since her husband's Norwegian was not as good as hers, he would search the internet for a correct form in order to assist his daughter. The parents had a tendency to correct more in the Nepali language than in Norwegian.

As for the parental strategies for listening, the children were allowed to watch TV three days a week. They would watch Norwegian cartoon channels. The children also listened to music two or three days a week. When the family was together, all would listen to Nepali songs, at other times when Nancy's older child was alone, she preferred to listen to Norwegian music. In addition, they had provided the children with an iPad but they were only allowed to use it at

weekends. They also sang songs in Norwegian and the Nepali languages, which the children enjoyed very much.

As for the language or languages that Nancy's daughter wrote in, she replied that her daughter mostly wrote in Norwegian and a little in English. However, her daughter could write the Nepali alphabet. As Nancy had mentioned before, she had bought some alphabet books from Nepal. In addition, her husband took an active role teaching the alphabet to his daughter. Nancy or her husband used some activities for writing by finding games or lessons on the internet for teaching their mother tongue alphabet. She assisted her daughter in Norwegian spelling by writing the correct form herself first and asking her daughter to copy it. She added that sometimes her daughter could correct her Norwegian mistakes herself. Moreover, Nancy's daughter did her writing activities after dinner time, mostly in Norwegian and English and a little in Nepali. When I asked her about she and her husband's overall impression of helping their daughter, she replied that they had taken an active role by using Google, YouTube, books, and songs in Nepali and Norwegian. The family used flash cards in Norwegian and Nepali languages to practice spelling.

4.10. Interviewee 9

Madhu was 32 years old. She had a master degree in the English Language. She and her husband along with their children had been living in Norway for the past nine years. She had two daughters with the ages of six and seven and a half years old. Therefore, one child was in the first and the other child was in the second grade. She was an assistant in a kindergarten. The language which Madhu and her husband spoke together was Hindi. In addition, they spoke Hindi to the children. The children spoke Hindi to their parents. According to Madhu, it was important for her daughters to be fluent in Hindi because they travelled to India a lot and the family, especially the children, needed to communicate with family and friends. Madhu added that her daughters spoke Norwegian when they were around Norwegian friends. Moreover, her daughters could speak English as well because they had learnt it from when they were very little.

Madhu emphasized that it was important for she and her husband that their children be at least bilinguals. She added that her daughter learned the Norwegian language very quickly. Moreover, she thought that bilingualism had a positive effect on her children's language development. She also believed that bilingualism would not hinder the educational progress of her daughters because the human mind had a large capacity to store and use information. In

addition, Madhu and her husband had tried to keep the two languages simultaneously by watching a lot of Indian movies every day. They wanted their children to have no difficulty in communicating with people in India if they decided to go back there. When I asked her if it was important to her that her daughters be able to speak and understand the two languages equally, her reply was positive. She believed that in the home and with their friend, the children must be able to understand and speak their mother tongue in addition to knowing and speaking Norwegian, which was the language of the community. As for reading and writing, she was not completely sure if it was necessary to keep the Hindi language at the same level as Norwegian. She thought that maybe it was more important for her daughters to read the two languages and writing could develop at later stages in the language development.

When I asked about the reading activities that Madhu or her husband did in the home to help their children to read, she replied that they did assist the children to read by themselves; however, they read a lot of books to their daughters at least three days a week. Mostly Madhu and then her husband read to their daughters from Hindi, English and Norwegian books. The books were most of the times books for children and sometimes moral books to teach them lessons in the form of a story.

In addition, the children borrowed books from the school library every week. While reading, they would ask questions if they did not understand something. As Madhu said, her children enjoyed the stories she read to them. Moreover, Madhu had bought many books in India. However, the family did not use flash cards to practice new vocabulary. The children liked reading books at their bedtime. Madhu would make meaning clear in Hindi by giving explanations and examples. But sometimes it was not easy for her to explain in Norwegian because Madhu thought she was not fluent in the Norwegian language. Therefore, she would use the dictionary or the internet. In addition, the children would ask mostly in Hindi and ask for translation in Hindi because they thought their mother could help them most in that.

When I asked if Madhu or her husband worked on their children's accent or pronunciation for assisting the speaking skill, she answered that they did especially in Hindi by saying the correct form and asking the children to repeat. In addition, the family had dinner time discussions in which they talked about what had happened during the day in the Hindi language. She added that she and her husband did not work directly on vocabulary development because they believed

that their children would acquire a lot of words by watching Indian cartoons and movies. Most of the mistakes that she and her husband corrected in speaking were related to word order and she believed that her husband was better than her in correcting speaking errors. The parents also had the tendency to correct the children more in Norwegian.

As for assisting their children with listening comprehension, Madhu's daughters were allowed to watch TV at least one hour a day. At weekends they watched Bollywood movies for three or four hours. The children watched cartoons in the Hindi language. But sometimes when they had school assignments they would do on the laptop. Her family listened to music every day. As she said, as soon as they got home they turned on a Hindi channel on the radio. She said that she and her husband did not have concerns for Norwegian because they had always received positive feedback from the school. The family had also provided the children with an iPad, which they could play educational games, such as solving mathematic problems through games. Madhu added that they sang Norwegian and sometimes English songs together.

Madhu's daughters did the writing activities in Norwegian and English. The Hindi language had a totally different alphabet than Norwegian and English, as Madhu said. She added that the family had bought some alphabet books in India but they had not started working on them yet. Moreover, she was very strict with the spelling. She demanded her children to write as neatly as possible by asking the children to copy the word many times. As for grammatical mistakes, Madhu let her daughters make mistakes because she believed that it was part of their learning process at school. The children did the writing assignments in Norwegian and English after school in addition to the writing activities that Madhu gave them.

4.11. Interviewee 10

Shadi was 34 years old. She had a bachelor degree in Agriculture. She had moved to Norway six years ago with her husband and her daughter, who was ten years old. They were all originally from Iran. Their daughter was a student at an international school and was in the fourth grade. She was working as a kindergarten assistant. Shadi and her husband spoke Persian at home together. They also spoke Persian with their daughter. Their daughter could speak Persian, English and Norwegian. She added that her daughter could easily speak Persian, however, when she could not find the right work, she would switch to another language to make her flow of

conversation easier. The language which Shadi's daughter used changed in different contexts. For example, she spoke English with her parents when she was around her English friends.

When I asked her whether bilingualism was important to her and her husband, she said it was. In addition, she said that they preferred their daughter be a tri-lingual person. She also would put effort to keep the three languages simultaneously by encouraging her daughter to read books in the three languages. Shadi also was willing her daughter to be able to speak, understand, read and write the languages she knew perfectly because Shadi wanted her daughter to have the options to live in different countries when she grew up.

In addition, Shadi said that she would encourage her daughter to read by buying many books in Iran and Norway, in addition to the books that her daughter borrowed from her school library. However, her daughter mostly liked reading English story books and she liked reading alone. Two or three times a week she read Norwegian books and one day a week Persian books. She mentioned that her daughter used dictionaries to other languages she knew, if she did not know the meaning of some words. Her daughter's favorite place for reading was in her bed before sleeping or sitting in her sofa. Her daughter was very much interested in reading. Shadi made a meaning clear by explaining in her mother tongue, which was Persian, and her daughter did not understand, she would explain in English. Shadi would make a meaning clear by telling in simpler words and by giving examples and comparisons. Shadi's daughter would ask most of the times for an English translation and her mother would mostly reply to her in Persian.

Moreover, Shadi's daughter was allowed to watch TV twenty minutes in the morning during week days and as much as she wanted at weekends. She mostly watched English and Norwegian channels and sometimes Persian. Shadi's daughter liked to watch cartoons and teenager programs and also had an iPad and an iPod which she could listen to music when she was eating lunch at weekends for ten or fifteen minutes. She liked to listen to pop music. She added that sometimes her daughter listened to Persian traditional music as well. In addition, she sometimes sang a song from Iran, which her daughter liked.

As for assisting her daughter in speaking, especially accent or pronunciation, Shadi said that her daughter did not need any help in English and asked about the words she did not know in Norwegian either from her parents or from her teacher at school. She thought that her help with pronunciation was mostly effective when her daughter could not pronounce some Persian words.

The family also had dinner time discussions in which they talked about every day events and the objects their daughter would want. At dinner time, the family would speak Persian. Shadi and her husband corrected errors the same way immediately after an error was made. They would mostly correct the Persian errors in the forms of words or sentences by explaining why it was wrong and saying it the correct way.

When I asked about the language or languages Shadi's daughter wrote in, she replied that her daughter wrote mostly in English, then Norwegian and least of all Persian during the week. Her daughter had a spelling examination once a week at her school, therefore, Shadi worked with English and Norwegian spelling during the week in order to prepare her daughter for the exam. She added that her mother tongue had a totally different alphabet. However, she had set a day, which was on Sundays, to work on her daughter's spelling in the Persian language. In order to do so, Shadi had bought Persian alphabet books from first to fourth grade in Iran. She said that her daughter was in the second grade, as for the Persian language. In addition, she said that she had bought many mini short story books in Iran too to encourage her to read. A writing activity that she would use in the Persian language was to ask her daughter to read a book carefully and then she would say many words that her daughter had to write down. She, then, corrected her daughter's errors and would give her a mark and a present if her score was high. Another incentive was that Shadi had made a table which was hanged to the wall. For every positive thing that she would do with respect to the homework, assignments in the three languages, either at home or at school, she would get a star. Her daughter would get a present after getting ten stars.

4.12. Summary

In this chapter the parental backgrounds and attitudes to bilingualism was summarized. Parental strategies to supports the first and second language learning skills were also presented. All the summaries were based on the transcription of the individual interviews. It should be noted that efforts have been made to remain as objective as possible with respect to the presentation of the interviewees' answers. In the next chapter the findings will be discussed in detail with a comparison to be made across the parents and with the previous research which was carries out relevant to findings.

5. Discussion

The aim of this research was to find out what kind of attitudes parents have towards bilingualism. In addition, the present study attempted to explore the strategies that parents use in the home to support their children's language learning skill both in the first and the second language. Therefore, the four language skills, including reading, listening, speaking and writing, were chosen to focus on. In order to reach the answers to the two questions raised in this research, a semi-structured interview was conducted. It was hoped to get useful information about what actually parents do in the home to assist their children in their mother tongue and the Norwegian language. Moreover, it was also expected that positive or negative attitudes of parents to bilingualism may influence their perspective and the way they act to support their children in the two languages.

The present chapter discusses the findings of the parent interviews. The discussions will be based on the content of the interviews. Moreover, the discussion is arranged thematically, similar to the arrangement of the interview guide (see appendix). The present section is divided to parental strategies for the four learning skills and the parental attitudes to bilingualism.

5.1. Parental strategies for language skills

In this part, the summaries of parental strategies for learning skills are provided. The skills that have been focused on in this research are reading, listening, speaking, and writing.

5.1.1. Reading

The first skill that was focused on was reading because it was assumed as a kind of activity that probably most engages parents with their children. The individual interviews about reading skills indicated that all the families, including both the person who was interviewed and their spouses engaged their children in reading by encouraging them to read alone if they could or by reading books to them. In addition, the families did the reading activities at least four days a week. Among the parents I interviewed, mothers were mostly the ones that used to read to their children because, as they asserted, their husband were usually busy with other activities at home or outside home. However, a few fathers were interested in reading books to their children too. One

of the fathers whom I interviewed read books to his children and engaged them in reading by changing his voice for different characters.

The most favorable books that parents read to their children were fairy tales, short story books, moral and manner books. A few parents mentioned that they used moral books in order to teach a positive behavioral aspect to their children through reading instead of telling it directly. In addition, all the interviewees brought mother tongue books from their country in order to practice reading skills with their children. This issue may be explained by the fact that these parents were very eager to maintain their mother tongue as a heritage.

Darling (2005) highlights that parents can influence their children's fluency in reading by reading aloud, letting the children choose the books they want to read or to be read, making the reading process fun and for pleasure, acting out a books or story, talking about the new words and their meanings, and talking about using the library. Moreover, parents can influence the vocabulary development by reading aloud a variety of genres, talking about daily events and books, searching the new words in the dictionary, and helping the children to learn the new vocabulary based on hobbies and interests. In this study, a few strategies such as reading aloud, making the process of reading fun and for pleasure and talking about new words and their meanings were used by parents, which are in line with the Darling's mentioned strategies for influencing in reading.

Moreover, the families used most of the times their mother tongue as the core reading to the children because they did not want their children to forget their mother tongue. However, as many of the interviewees mentioned in the interviews, they had given the option to their children to choose between reading Norwegian or mother tongue books. In a few cases, some families even used English books as a third language because their children could understand three languages, such as the family who was from India. The mother whom I interviewed said that children would learn English at the same time they learn the Hindi language in India. Therefore, her kids, for example, could understand and speak Norwegian, Hindi, and English with different levels of fluency and accuracy. Moreover, almost half of the interviewees' children borrowed Norwegian or English books from the school or the city library in order to encourage their children to read more.

The most favorable place for children to read appeared to be their bedrooms and the preferred time for reading was before sleeping in which focus was not only on linguistic skill but rather focused was made on the book-reading as an activity which was fun and interesting for the children. This finding supports Hall's (1994) statement that parents mostly have a respondent and participant role in educating their children. However, focus is not always made on linguistic skills themselves, rather, linguistic exercise are embedded within other activities such as game playing. Moreover, many parents engage themselves in literacy activities by buying alphabet or instructional books but most of the times there is children themselves who initiate 'printed-focused event' by asking many questions. Book reading to the children appears to be the most popular activity among researchers to focus on because they are clear and simple instruments for literacy development.

Among the interviewees only two used flash cards for practicing the new vocabulary and grammar. However, only Beata used the cards for practicing the new vocabulary in Norwegian. Johan, another interviewee, only used flash cards for practicing English spelling with his child. It seems that most of the parents who were interviewed either were not familiar with the usages of flash cards or they thought that they could find other ways of teaching new vocabulary to their children.

Generally, all the parents made the meaning clear when their children did not understand the meaning of some words or sentences by explaining and giving examples. All the parents who were interviewed believed that their children would always ask for clarification if they did not understand something. It was quite interesting to find out how kids with the age range I had chosen were eager to learn and to ask questions. However, through the interviews, it was found out that the children's frequency of asking question got lower as they grew older. The families, who had children in the fourth grade believed that their children were more self-reliant i.e. they used the internet or dictionaries in case they did not understand something. In addition, most of the children asked for translation in another language, either their mother tongue or Norwegian, in case they did not understand the meaning of words or phrases.

The strategies that parents used in this study are in line with the strategies mentioned by Partridge (2004), who suggests a few strategies that parents could use to support their children while reading. These strategies include: establishing a routine, making reading enjoyable, reading

often, rereading favorite books, bridging the language between the child and the book, paying attention to the cues the child is giving, talking about the print, reading various types of books, and encouraging books-related plays. Using any of these strategies, according to Partridge, makes the reading experience more enjoyable and meaningful to young children. In addition, the findings of this research reflect Darling's (2005) strategies, which include reading often to the kids, making reading fun and enjoyable, reading favorite books, talking about the new words and their meaning, using the library books, using dictionaries to find meanings and so on.

Moreover, the interviewees reported that they would make the meaning clear by explaining in the mother tongue or the Norwegian language. The language they would choose most of the time depended on the level of their children's understanding. Sometimes they believed that it was easier for them to explain in their mother tongue because they, as parents, were not fluent enough in Norwegian, as in cases of Arora and Beata, who had moved to Norway recently. Other parents still felt not completely comfortable explaining in the Norwegian language because they believed that they may say something wrong, except for Johan and Mark, who had been living in Norway for more than ten years.

In addition, the interviewees read and re-read easy books to their children, which assisted their fluency of reading which is in line with what Piper (2010) stated. According to him, parents can influence reading fluency by reading and re-reading easy books to the children daily; poetry and nursery books also help fluency in reading. Reading every day, according to Piper, would help most in improving fluency and accuracy in reading texts and books.

From the answers of the interviewees to the reading skill questions, it seems that all the parents were engaged in the reading activity with their children. Each family had its own style of focusing on reading; however, one common theme among all of the families was that they put emphasis on maintaining their language as a heritage and a connection between their children and the mother tongue. In addition, it appears that the reading activity was favored by the children and their parents among other language skill. The reason could be the availability of a variety of Norwegian, English or the mother tongue books to the children.

5.1.2. Speaking

An aspect of the speaking skill most of the interviewees worked on was pronunciation by repeating a word or phrase in its correct form and by asking the children to repeat. Moreover, both parents all families used the same method for correcting errors. It is worth noting that there seemed to be fewer errors as the children's age was higher because they were more aware of the errors they were making. It can be inferred from the discussion about speaking skill that both parents were engaged in the speaking's error correction by correcting the error orally and by asking their children to repeat the correct form.

In addition to pronunciation error correction, all the families had dinner time discussions, in which they talked about various subjects, such as every day events, activities, future plans and different wishes and wants. The families used their mother to discuss the subject matters if the mother tongue of both parents was the same. However, for some of the families in which the mother tongues of the parents were different, efforts were made for each parent to speak and respond in his/her own mother tongue. For the children of the families who were in the fourth grade and the parents were fluent in Norwegian as well as their mother tongues, the tendency was towards communication in the Norwegian language between the parents and the children or their siblings. According to Dickinson and Beals (2004), the interaction between parents and children will result in language development, such as the development of the speaking skill. Dinner time discussions are very beneficial activities in which much information will be conveyed through speaking. In addition to the exchange of information, children will learn many new vocabularies through discussion over different topics. In this study all families had family dinner time discussions, in which the family talked about a variety of topics. This gathering would improve the interaction among family member in addition to the fact that the children were learning new vocabularies through such discussions.

As a response to my question about working on the new vocabulary, interviewees, both mothers and fathers would assist their children by explaining the meanings of new words in a simpler form and by looking the words up in the dictionaries or searching on the internet. Most of the vocabulary error corrections were in the mother tongues because parents believed that since their children were attending school, they could learn new Norwegian vocabulary and be corrected by their teachers and other classmates. Therefore, the mother tongue, which was the

minority language, needed more focus and attention, as interviewees believed. This finding is similar to what Darling (2005) highlights. According to him, parents can influence vocabulary development by reading aloud a variety of genres, talking about daily events and books, searching the new words in the dictionary, and helping the children to learn the new vocabulary based on hobbies and interests.

What has been found out about parental strategies to support speaking development as a language skill is in accordance with Halliday (1973:24). According to Halliday (1973:24), learning one's mother tongue is learning the use of language and the meaning; therefore, learning a language is 'learning how to mean'. In addition, he adds that children perceive the world around them by making it sense. In other words, language is a medium used for interaction in addition to other aims such as fulfilling objectives. Halliday summarized some conditions for oral language to emerge, including the role of children themselves in constructing their knowledge, involvement of children in non-linguistic tasks for comprehension and creation of meaning and ultimately the social interaction. Parents, in this process, are viewed as facilitators of the whole process. In this study, parents put emphasis on teaching their mother tongue to their children so that they could communicate and convey meaning through their language with family and friends. Moreover, parents involved their children in a variety of non-linguistic tasks such as writing letters or learning through playing games which would assist the development of the language skills.

An activity which was favored by all the participants and their families was dinner-time discussion in which they could talk about a variety of subjects by speaking in mostly in their mother tongue or Norwegian and English. Interviewees believed that their children would learn much new vocabulary through the dinner-time discussions.

5.1.3. Listening

There is no doubt that speaking and listening are inter-related. When one is speaking, he or she is listening to something or someone else. Listening is classified as a receptive skill, i.e. people would absorb the information around them before they start communicating with others, which is a productive skill. Almost all the parents who were interviewed allowed their children to listen to music every day. The older their children, the more freedom they had with respect to listening to their favorite music on the radio or on the iPad, iPod or iPhone. In addition, the families enjoyed

listening to their mother tongue music, if they had access. Only Madhu's family preferred listening to Hindi radio channels and other families liked listening to English or Norwegian songs. The only interviewee and her family who seldom listened to music were Julia and her family because she had provided her children with a lap top for children in which they could watch cartoons and programs they were interested in.

The children also practiced listening skills through watching TV. Most of the families allowed their children to watch TV every day after school time and after the children had done their homework from school. The only interviewee who allowed her daughter to watch TV in the morning and before school time was Shadi because she believed that children should not waste much time on watching TV for a long time. The children were mostly interested in watching Norwegian and English TV programs. However, some families would prefer their children to watch TV in their mother tongue because they believed that children needed more exposure to their mother tongue. It was interesting to find out that Madhu's family were very much interested in watching Bollywood movies, especially at weekends, because Madhu believed that her children learned the mother tongue best through watching such movies. As for the kinds of programs the children were interested in and allowed to watch, the first and second graders were mostly interested in watching cartoons and age-appropriate programs. However, those families who had children in the fourth grade said that their children would watch movies and other channels in addition to the favorite cartoon programs.

In addition, all the families provided their children with some kind of audio-visual devices, such as iPads, iPods, iPhone or laptops for children. However, the children were only allowed to use such devices with the permission and supervision of their parents. It appears that the families who were interviewed in this study were very alert with respect to the exposure of their children to different kinds of materials. One aspect of relative importance for all the families was the maintenance of their mother tongue as much as possible in conjunction with the Norwegian language, which was the language of the community. Parents would assist in keeping and developing their mother tongue through providing their children with different kinds of devices in order to expose them to and give the opportunity to their children to listen to their mother tongue whenever possible. Moreover, families encouraged their children to watch and listen to the Norwegian channels because they believed that their children needed to be fluent and accurate in the Norwegian language because it was the language of the community. In addition to

the devices that the children were provided with for listening or watching, they were very much interested in listening to the songs their parents sang to them. All the interviewees sang mostly mother tongue songs to their children throughout the week. In addition, the children in these families liked listening to stories that their parents read to them.

Since most of the families had children in the first and second grade, the children were not at a level that would allow them to read all by themselves. Therefore, the parents were engaged in the reading process while their children were mostly in their bed listening to the stories. It appears that book-reading is an activity which was used both for listening and reading. The interviewees who had children in the fourth grade believed that their children could read by themselves and parents would read stories if the children demanded. It may be inferred from the answers of the interviewees to the listening questions that all of them would try to provide as much opportunities as they could to expose their children to a variety of materials in order to improve the listening comprehension of their children both in the Norwegian and the mother tongue languages.

It appears from the discussion of listening skills that parents in this study exposed their children in the listening skill by providing a variety of devices by either watching or listening to their favorite channel or music. All the activities would be under the supervision of parents. In addition, most of the parents would expose their children to the mother tongue by singing songs or reading books, which their children enjoyed a lot. It seems that children most of the time or engaged in listening and speaking at the same time, which would expose them more to the languages. However, it should be noted that the researcher could not find any relevant research studies about parental strategies in the home to support the development of children's listening skill. The discussion of finding on this section would have been much stronger if there were relevant articles or books to compare and contrast the results with.

5.1.4. Writing

Writing was the last skill that was focused on in the present research. It seems that parents were mostly engaged in the writing activities which were related to the Norwegian language because it was what the children had to do as assignments for school. However, Arora, Beata and Shadi were parents who were more interested in engaging their children in writing in their mother tongue throughout the week, even though their children were at the beginning stages of writing.

All families focused on writing assignments after school time except one, who preferred her child to do the writing activities in the morning before going to school. Moreover, most of the interviewees had a different mother tongue alphabet than the Norwegian language. Among the interviewees Hoda, Julia and Pia's mother tongue alphabet were similar to the Norwegian alphabet with a few different letters. For this reason, they were not worried teaching the mother alphabet to their children. In addition, it was inferred from the response of the interviewees that they believed their children would learn their mother tongue writing system better if they already had learnt a core writing system, which would make the comparison between the two or three languages easier for the children. However, even though there were some similarities between the three interviewees' alphabetical systems and Norwegian, parents still needed to have some focus on the two languages because of the difference between some sounds and letters.

In spite of the fact that most families devoted their time to the Norwegian writing system, they were still eager to teach their mother tongue alphabet to their children as time allowed. Among all the interviewees, Shadi was the parent who engaged her daughter most in the mother tongue writing activities by devoting a selected day and time during the week to teach the alphabet and spelling to her daughter, who was in the fourth grade. She believed that her daughter would gain fluency and accuracy in their mother tongue, English and Norwegian by keeping the three languages simultaneously.

Although parents and their children were at the beginning stages of focusing on writing activities, especially in the mother tongue, parents were still very active with respect to buying alphabet books for their children, mostly from their home country, in order to teach the alphabet and writing system to their children. With having less focus on mother tongue writing, some families used alphabet books to teach the new letters and sounds to their children in forms of games or interesting activities, which would attract their children's attention. For example, Julia had bought alphabet magnetic letters from her country that could be used on surfaces such as refrigerator's door and her son would play with the letters by changing the places of letters in order to make simple words, including his name. Pia and Arora were two other interviewees who made the writing activity for Norwegian and their mother tongue interesting by making a mini dictionary or book in order for their children to write the new and interesting words in. From the variety of activities and focuses on the writing skill, it can be inferred that parents were willing their children to be able to write the mother tongue and Norwegian eventually. However, they did

not put much pressure on their children to learn their mother tongue alphabet with the same level of focus that the children have in their schools. Most of the parents wanted the writing activities to be fun and enjoyable for their children.

As for error correction, either in Norwegian or in the mother tongue, all the interviewees, except Madhu, tried to correct the writing errors by writing a word or letter in its correct form and by asking their children to re-write what they had written wrong. Moreover, there was not a distinction between fathers' and mothers' error correction.

The parents would assist their children in writing in case their children did not understand the meaning of a word or a sentence, by using a dictionary or the internet in order to find the correct form. Almost all the families allocated an hour or two after school for doing writing activities. In addition, most of the supervisions and assistances in doing writing assignments from school and mother tongue were carried out by mothers of the families. This finding is in line with the finding of the study by Aram (2010) who carried out a research about parental and maternal guidance in which she compared the fathers and mothers with respect to writing with their young children. She selected mothers and fathers of 51 kindergarteners who were videotaped separately at home while writing words with their child. The results of the study indicated that both parents helped their children in completing the writing task; however, mothers cooperated and guided their children more in the completion of tasks and the children were more attentive to the suggestions their mothers provided. Therefore, it appears that mothers tend to engage themselves more in the home activities including the assistance with language skills.

Grabe and Kaplan (1996) stated that writing is not necessarily done with a linguistic purpose. In other words, writing a shopping list, writing one's own name, writing an essay or an academic writing all can be regarded as different forms of writing with different levels of formality and difficulty. However, writing in the first and second languages has differences which need to be taken into account i.e. second language writers have their own needs and uses of writing. Many of the interviewees asserted that they did the writing activities in the form of a game or an interesting subject which would attract their children's attention. The interviewees stated that since their children already had formal assignments from school, they did not want to put more pressure on their children by formally teaching their mother tongue alphabet to the children.

Parents in this study were all eager to teach their mother tongue alphabet to their children by buying alphabet books or CDs in their country. Most of the interviewees believed that enough exposure to the mother tongue printed materials would facilitate their children's learning. This finding is supported by what Nigel (1994) claimed about the role of alphabet books and the exposure to printed materials in writing development of the children at early stages of learning. He believes that exposing the children to printed materials will influence their literacy development in writing. Activities such as sending and receiving letters and notes, looking at TV guides, glancing at comic magazines and filling out forms, and every day family activities, for example, have a literacy input. However, sometimes families directly focus on the nature of the writing. For example, parents would buy alphabet books or other instructional books for the children and the children would themselves 'initiate print-focused events.

The findings related to the writing skill suggest that all the parents were involved in the writing skill, especially Norwegian, because the children had writing assignments from school, which needed to be done after school hours. Except three interviewees who had mostly the same alphabet as Norwegian, all other interviewees were eager to teach their mother tongue alphabet to their children. In addition, parents in this study tried to be active by buying alphabet and grammar books in their country. They would make the mother tongue alphabet learning more interesting through games and similar activities. Similarly to speaking error correction, parents would correct the writing errors by asking their children to repeat and write the correct form. There was also not a distinction between mothers' and fathers' error correction methods.

All the strategies which parents used for the four language skills showed whether they have a positive or negative attitude to bilingualism. In the next section parental attitudes to bilingualism will be presented and discussed in detail.

5.2. Parental attitudes to bilingualism

In this part, the interviewees' attitudes to bilingualism will be discussed in detail. It is worth noting that the definition presented by Vaughan and Hogg (2005:150) and Cooper and Fishman (1974) about bilingualism fits the general purpose of this study. In other words, feeling, beliefs and behaviors that parents hold towards objects or groups or events will influence their attitude in positive or negative ways. Moreover, the attitudes that one can hold towards a language can vary based on factors such as social status or difficulties in learning, for example. From the above

definitions attitudes to language, they can be mentalistic or behavioristic. The former focused on what attitude a person has in her mind and is internal while the latter focused on how one person reacts to language practically. As a part of the interview, focus has been on the parental attitudes to bilingualism that will be discussed in detail in this part.

All the interviewees had a positive attitude to bilingualism and expressed their belief that it should be beneficial for their children in various ways. With the rapid speed of life nowadays, the interviewees thought that bilingualism would assist their children in various types of communications and would not limit their children to one country alone. In addition, the interviewees believed that language is ‘identity’, which can connect one person to a culture and a country. They asserted that children should be able to understand and communicate in their mother tongue with the family members and friend in their country. It can be inferred from the responses of the interviewees that they regard bilingualism as an important matter which should be maintained and valued. They regarded bilingualism as having a positive effect on their children’s language development. The parents believed that knowing two or three languages would help the educational progress of their children and bilingualism would help their children to communicate with other children in the community and at the school.

Parental beliefs about language and cultural maintenance are in line with Park and Sarker’s (2007) study of Korean immigrant parents’ attitudes toward heritage language maintenance for their children and their efforts to help their children maintain Korean as their heritage language in Montreal. For doing their research, they selected nine Korean immigrant families whose children were between ages 6 and 18. The data collection methods used in the study were an interview and a questionnaire. In the interview, questions about the parental attitudes toward mother tongue language and maintenance, the Korean community and churches, and the parental effort to keep the mother tongue were asked. The questionnaire consisted of questions asking about participants’ personal background, level of education and immigration status. The results of the study indicated that parents had a positive attitude towards maintenance of their mother tongue. In addition, parents showed high expectations for the high level of proficiency of their children’s mother tongue because, in their view, keeping a proper level of the mother tongue would help the children to keep their identity, to ensure economic opportunities, and to communicate with family and friends.

Parents in this study had a positive attitude to bilingualism. According to them, knowing two languages would enable their children to have a better communication and understanding of the people in their country and in Norway. The findings of this research support the previous researches about the parental attitudes to bilingualism, which have been carried out in different parts of the world. For example, Wu (2005) studied the attitude and behavior of parents and children towards bilingualism in the United States. His intention was to see how families maintain their mother tongue, which in this case was Chinese, and English, which was the language of the society. The results of the study indicated that parents had a positive attitude towards bilingualism, which would assist the academic progress of their children in the long run. However, they expressed worries about keeping the balance between Chinese and English. Likewise, the interviewees in this study were somehow worried because they thought that keeping the balance between their mother tongue and Norwegian was not always easy.

In another study which was carried out by Tavi (2009:331-340), the research of parental attitudes towards English education for kindergarten children in Turkey showed that parents had a positive attitude towards bilingualism. The method for data collection method was a questionnaire. Participants were forty-six parents who were randomly selected and classified based on their ages and occupations. The results of the study showed that parental positive attitude towards bilingualism increased children's motivation and success in second language learning. The result also indicated that all the parents were aware of the importance of knowing another language for the future career of their children. In addition, parents believed that being bilingual increased their children's self-confidence and communicative skill.

As could be expected based on the parents' positive attitude to bilingualism, almost all the interviewees put effort to keep the two languages simultaneously; however, it sometimes was not easy to maintain the mother tongue and Norwegian at the same level because the children were studying in the Norwegian educational system, which exposed them to the Norwegian language every day. Therefore, the mother tongue was a language in which the children were not formally instructed. Parents had different views about teaching their mother tongue reading and writing skills to their children. Four of the interviewees stated that they did not put much effort to formally teach reading and writing of their mother tongue to their children because they did not want to put their children under pressure and would like their children to explore the new subjects

themselves. However, all the parents bought books, games and DVDs to practice reading and writing with their children in their leisure time, after finishing their homework from school.

As for speaking and listening in their mother tongue, all the interviewees expressed that they wanted their children to be able to speak and understand their mother tongue and Norwegian and to have a similar level of oral skills, because according to the interviewees, speaking and understanding one's own mother tongue would make a bridge between their children and their country and culture. All the interviewees travelled at least once a year to their country; therefore, it was necessary for their children to be able to communicate and understand other family members and friends there.

Parents can get involved in educating and teaching the language skill to their children in a variety of ways. Smit et al. (2007) define parental involvement as 'the involvement of parents in the upbringing and education of their own child both at home and at school. According to them, when parents are involved in children's education, they are participating in the educational progress of their children. Therefore, they define parental participation as 'the active contribution of parents in school activities'. Similar to the above definition, all the interviewees were active at home with regards to the strategies they used for four skills of reading, listening, speaking, and writing and did a variety of activities to support their children both in their mother tongue and the Norwegian language. This involvement reflected their positive attitudes to bilingualism. Epstein (1995) states that parents are involved when they have an understanding of their parenting and of the challenges they may encounter, when they have an awareness and they monitor the educational progress of their children by having contact with the community and the school, for example.

Desforges and Abouchaar (2003:4) highlight the issue that family involvement can take many forms, such as good parenting at home, providing a rich environment, having constant contact with schools and teacher. In addition, they point out that parental involvement is influenced by factors such as social class, level of education, ethnicity, and marital status, child's level of attainment which is closely related to level of parental attainment. Parents in this study were highly involved in the home with their children. The involvement may be due to the parents' high level of education, for example three interviewees were working as a teacher who might be aware of using different tools in the home to practice the language skills.

To sum up, all the interviewees were active in the home with regards to the strategies they used for the four language skills and did a variety of activities to support their children both in their mother tongue and the Norwegian language. This involvement seemed to show their positive attitudes to bilingualism. Moreover, the participants in this study were highly educated parents who were between ages twenty eight and forty three. In addition, except three interviewees, all other interviewees had different jobs. Although these factors were not the topics of discussion in this study, they may still affect the degree of involvement and the attitude of the interviewees. The active role of parents to support the learning of the language skills and the kind of strategies they use in the home may be affected by the age or degree of education of parents.

5.3. Limitations of the study

It is acknowledged that there are limitations to case studies. The participants in the study were families who had different mother tongues who were living in Norway; therefore their background such as the country of origin, languages which they spoke could not be controlled. In addition, due to the time constraint, it was not possible to interview both parents and other results might have been gained if the researcher had had the opportunity to interview with both parents.

Another minor limitation of this study was the sole use of voice recorder and sometimes the voices were not as clear as should be. It could have been more convenient if the interviewer could use two recording devices for the interview sessions to assure that voices had been properly recorded. In addition, this study would be more reliable if observations had been included as an additional data collection method to see what actually parents do in the home to support learning skill.

Moreover, the subjects were selected based on their volunteering and willingness to participate. Therefore, factors such as age, educational background, level of education could not be controlled. Most of the participant in this study were highly educated of whom a few were working as a teacher. These factors may have been influential in the types and the range of strategies they reported using. This study was done with children between grades one and four; therefore, other results would have been gained if the subject were attending kindergarten or the middle school and higher levels. Despite the fact that this study was small in scale, it is still believed that the ten interviews with parents provided enough information and data for the issues presented and discussed in this study.

5.4. Suggestions for future research

This study focused on parental strategies in the home environment with respect to the four skills including reading, speaking, listening and writing. Further studies could focus on other activities for teaching the mother tongue and the language of a country in the home which can engage both parents and their children. Moreover, other studies may focus on the parental language strategies in the home and the reflection of the home strategies at school, i.e. to see whether what parents do in the home would assist or hinder the educational progress of the children. In other words, parents and schools can cooperate in order to foster the development of the four language skills in the two languages. Further studies could examine the impact of the family and school collaboration on the children's language development.

5.5. Summary

The aim of the present chapter was to discuss the findings based on the data in the previous chapter. The discussion allowed a comparison to be made between the parents. Based on the findings and the discussion of findings of this study, it was found out that participants have a strong role in assisting and supporting their children with respect to reading, speaking, listening and writing in the home environment. The parents also had a positive attitude to bilingualism. In the next chapter, all the finding will be summarized and a conclusion will be made.

6. Conclusion

This thesis was based on case studies of ten families living in the Stavanger area of Norway. The families had different cultural backgrounds and different mother tongues. The focus of the study was on parents who had children between grades one and four. This study aimed to find out how families assist and support children in the home in order to develop the mother tongue and Norwegian as a second language. The study also intended to discover what kind of language support parents provide in the home in the two languages.

In this study the researcher focused on the four language skills of reading, listening, speaking and writing. The aim was to see how parents were engaged and what strategies they used in these areas with their children. Another aim was to find out the attitudes of parents to developing and maintaining bilingualism. The methodology used in this study was a qualitative approach. The small number of participants and the interview as a tool were chosen as a result of the researcher's choice of the qualitative paradigm. In order to carry out the research, a semi-structured interview was used.

The main findings of the study were that all interviewees were very much involved all the language skills in Norwegian, English, and especially their mother tongue. From the parental involvement in the development of their children's language skills it can be inferred that irrespective of the nationalities and the cultural backgrounds, parents were very much engaged in different kinds of activities in order to both maintain their mother tongue and Norwegian or other languages such as English. This high level of interest in using a variety of strategies to support their children in the home may be due to the high level of the education of the parents, both fathers and mothers, who had at least a bachelor degree. The interviewees were very much alert to and conscious about their children's education, especially the development of their mother tongue.

As for the reading comprehension, for example, parents motivated their children by buying and borrowing a variety of books from their country and also from the libraries. Moreover, parents engaged in the reading activities by reading books to their children almost every day. For example, among other speaking and listening activities, dinner-time discussions were favored because parents and their children could talk about various subjects, mostly in their

mother tongues, with a low level of formality. As for the writing skill, all the interviewees mostly focused on writing activities which were related to the Norwegian language, including the assignments that the children had from their schools. At other times, the parents would focus on teaching their mother tongue alphabets to their children. It can be understood from the responses of the interviewees to the language skills questions that most of the parents used the same strategies for all the four language skills, and only made minor changes to suit their own family environment.

As for the error correction in the mother tongue and Norwegian, it was noted that all parents corrected the errors by explaining and giving examples if their children did not understand some words or sentences and would encourage their children to ask questions and use dictionaries for clarifications of meaning. No particular distinction was found between the mothers and father in speaking and writing error correction, though it was found out that mostly mothers were the ones who engaged themselves with different kinds of activities in the home. This finding shows that parents in this study would generally approach an error the same way in order to keep the consistency in the language development and providing support to the children. It was also noted that the higher the age of the children, the less focus on error correction was needed. Therefore, parents in other countries who raise bilingual children would approach the error, more or less, the same way as the parents in this particular study did.

Parental attitudes to bilingualism were another aspect of focus in the present study. The results of the study indicated that all the interviewees had positive attitudes to bilingualism. First, they believed that it was important to maintain their mother tongue as a cultural heritage. Second, the interviewees wanted their children to be fluent and accurate in the Norwegian language in order to integrate their children in the Norwegian society. Moreover, the maintenance of the interviewees' mother tongue would enable their children to communicate better with the family and friends in their country. In addition, all the interviewees believed that bilingualism would have a positive effect on the educational progress of their children, even though the process might be slow in the beginning. Another finding of the study was that the interviewees intended to keep the two languages simultaneously; however, their focus had been less on reading and writing up to the present time because the interviewees did not want to put extra pressure on their children.

These findings regarding bilingualism provide support to the previous researches about the attitudes of parents to bilingualism. Parents in this study favored and valued bilingualism firstly due to the importance of maintaining their mother tongue irrespective of the country they were living in, because it would connect their children to their country and their cultural background. Secondly it can be inferred from the findings that parents would like their children to have fluency and accuracy, both in the mother tongue and Norwegian because it would broaden the educational growth of their children. The present research would encourage parents in other countries, who are raising bilingual children to be more involved in the home in order to assist their children in the first and second language's learning skills.

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Appendix I

Interview guide

1. Back ground questions

1. How old are you?
2. What is the level of your education?
3. How long have you been living in Norway?
4. Do you work?
5. How many children do you have? How old are they? (Number and age of siblings)
6. What language(s) do you speak with your spouse/partner at home?
7. What language(s) do you speak to your children at home? (Language(s) both parents use with children)
8. Which language does your child speak to you and your spouse/partner?
9. Does the language which your child uses with you change in different contexts/places?
10. Which language(s) do your children speak to each other?
11. Does this language change in different contexts? (referring to previous question)

2. Attitudes to bilingualism

1. Is bilingualism important to you? Why?
2. Do you regard bilingualism as having positive or negative effects on your child's language development?
3. Do you think that bilingualism helps/hinders educational progress of your child?
4. Do you put effort to keep the two languages simultaneously? How?
5. Do you want your child to be able to speak/understand the two languages equally? Why yes or no?
6. How about reading and writing in two languages?

3. Language skills (L1 and L2)

Reading

1. Do you encourage your child to read?

2. How often do you read to your child (you and/or your spouse/partner)?
3. In what language do you read to your child (you and/or your spouse/partner)?
4. What kind of (L1 and L2) books do you read to your child/or your child reads?
5. How do you engage your child in reading?
6. How does your child follow reading (ex. closes eyes and listens or talks)?
7. Do you use flash cards to practice new vocabularies (explain to parents)?
8. Do you buy books or rent them from library? How often?
9. Do you have a special place at home to read with your child?
10. How do you make the meaning clear if your child does not understand something?
11. Does your child ask questions which he/she is listening to you?
12. In which language does your child ask questions?
13. In which languages does your child ask for translation, if at all wants?

Listening

1. How often does your child watch TV?
2. In what language does your child watch TV?
3. How often does your child listen to music?
4. In what language does your child listen to music?
5. What kinds of programs does your child watch? (educational, cartoons, etc..)
6. Have you provided your child with personal audio-visual devices (ipad, mp3player, etc.)?
7. Do have song/songs to sing with your child (mother/father distinction, languages they use)?
8. Does your child like listening to stories you read to them?
9. If yes, in what language(s)?

Speaking

1. Do you work on your child's accents (pronunciation)? If yes, how?
2. Do you have family dinner time discussions?
3. If yes, in what language(s) do you or your spouse/partner and vice versa talk to your child?
4. If so, what kinds of topics do you talk about?
5. How do you work on vocabulary?

6. Do you correct your child's speaking errors?
7. What kind of oral mistakes do you correct? How?
8. Does this correction differ between mother and father?
9. Do you/your spouse have a tendency to correct errors in one language more than the other?
10. In general, how do you help your child to speak L1 and L2?

Writing

1. Which language(s) does your child write in (for example in texting to friends, assignments in school, at home, with friends)?
2. Does your mother tongue language have a different alphabet? If yes, then how do you help your child?
3. Do you teach your mother tongue alphabet to your child? How?
4. What kinds of activities do you use for writing? For example, writing a shopping list?
5. Do you assist your child with spelling? How?
6. How do you correct your child's spelling? (oral/written)
7. How do you correct other errors in writing?
8. When do you do writing activities with your child?
9. In what languages (referring to previous question)?
10. Is there anything else that you do to support both L1 and L2 writing?