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BILINGUAL UPBRINGING OF CHILDREN

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that I have written this bachelor's thesis on the topic of Bilingual upbringing of children solely by myself.

Prague, 10th April 2010

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THANKS

I would like to express my thanks to Mark Farrell, B.A. for his professional help with leading this work, enough free space and stimulating comments without which this work would not come into being. My thanks also go to the families that were the subject of my research for their time and cooperation.

ABSTRACT

TITLE OF WORK: Bilingual upbringing of children

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ABSTRACT: This text is primarily for those parents who intend to bring up their children bilingually as well as the general public and teachers who may encounter these bilingual children in the process of further formal or informal education. This thesis describes the steps towards raising a child bilingually and contains the reflections of families who have bilingual children.

KEY WORDS: bilingualism, bilingual environment, early bilingualism, case studies

NÁZEV PRÁCE: Bilingvní výchova dětí

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ABSTRAKT: Tato práce je primárně určena jak rodičům, kteří zamýšlejí vychovávat své děti bilingvně, tak odborné veřejnosti a učitelům, kteří se s největší pravděpodobností s těmito bilingvními dětmi setkají při výkonu své pedagogické profese ať už formální nebo neformální výuky. V teoretické části práce jsou popsány kroky k bilingvní výchově a praktická část obsahuje reflexe rodin, kteří mají s bilingvní výchovou osobní zkušenosti.

KEY WORDS: bilingvismus, bilingvní prostředí, ranný bilingvismus, případové studie

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INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, the issue of couples of mixed nationalities and languages is of ever-growing importance. Many books have been written about this topic, especially by American authors, since the USA has always been a melting pot of not only languages but cultures too. Thanks to geo-political changes, Europe, and especially the countries of the European Union are beginning to experience these changes as well.

Since the issue of mixed-language communication is very broad, I have decided to narrow it down to conditions of the Czech Republic – mainly to families that speak Czech and English – and to families where the mothers' first language is Czech as well. Given that mothers are in most cases the ones to spend most of the time with children, especially in their early childhood. Furthermore, it is always the parents who decide on the ways of communication within the immediate and larger family.

The aim of this work is to outline and document the different systems the families develop to be able to communicate among themselves as well as with the community and society they live in. The main focus is on the planning of the bilingual upbringing and consequently reflecting on the methods and finding out whether they worked in real life.

There are a large number of questions regarding the bilingual upbringing from the parents' point of view that come to one's mind. How thoroughly do parents think about the future bilingualism of their children themselves? How do they plan the process of bilingual upbringing? Where do they search for information on this topic? Do they search the Internet, read books, consult professionals or experienced friends? These are the main questions to be answered by this thesis.

Together with this issue and the questions mentioned above, there are three hypotheses to be answered by the theoretical research of this issue and to be confirmed or denied by empirical research. These hypotheses are as follows:

- 1. I believe that parents do not necessarily plan and study the issue thoroughly.**
- 2. I am of the opinion that they change the strategies pragmatically during the upbringing.**

- 3. I think that the families that do not have a strict system are likely to fail in the way that their offspring do not develop toward being bilingual in both languages.**

OUTLINE

At the beginning of the theoretical part I would like to focus on the institution of the family and the incentives that may lead to forming one within the framework the Czech Republic. I would also like to research the institutions and organizations which help parents with possible problems they may encounter when starting a family.

In the next section I will be concentrating on the child as such and its perception of two different languages and the capabilities it performs when using them. I believe I can use the in-depth knowledge of child psychology and education I have acquired in my second major course of studies, pedagogy.

At the end of the theoretical part I wish to concentrate on the different types of bilingualisms and different attitudes towards them I have come across when studying various works of, primarily, American and British scientists.

The main focus of my work is on the practical part, which will be derived from a created standardized questionnaire. With this questionnaire, in which I focus on the way parents themselves research information about bilingualism before they put their children through the process of learning and consequently a personal interview in which I would like to go deeper under the surface of their answers and learn more about them using bilingualism on a daily basis, the problems they may possibly encounter during the process and how they possibly learn from their mistakes.

I hope to gather valuable data and information and upon presenting them in my work, they could be beneficial not only to possible future parents but also teachers who are going to teach these children – to help them understand the abilities of the children and also how Czech society deals with the issue of bilingualism.

THEORETICAL PART

THE INSTITUTION OF THE FAMILY

The role of the family has been currently discussed in many scientific fields, mainly in connection with the changes it has undergone in modern society. Traditionally we perceive a family as a small group of persons, who are connected by marital, relative or similar means. It is discerned also by a common way of life. The nucleus of a traditional family is a man, woman and children. In most cultures, the family is the main institution responsible for reproduction and the upbringing of children. Among other functions the family provides, it is supposed to be give a good example and to secure an emotional background in which the children can flourish. The parental responsibilities, as expected from society, include caring for the children, securing them financially and emotionally and providing them with opportunities to socialize within the larger family and outside of it. On the other hand, the children are expected to be vulnerable and dependent on their parents in ways mentioned above as well as being brought up in a way common to the community including the specific features of the culture, such as language and the rules of the society.

To a child, the family is crucial and indispensable. It is the main influence on the child's personality in every way. The family helps the child to create its own view of the world, based on the patterns the parents make available for it. The family also plays a critical role for being able to function in the community and society as a whole.

The modern society has implemented some changes to the traditional functions of family on a large scale, such as, e.g., the impact of industrialization, female emancipation, etc., which leads to the destabilization of the traditional family. However, the preferences of individual interests over the family values, the mobility of individuals and tendency to starting the family informally, i.e., without marriage, brings with it opportunities of starting what may become a bilingual family. All this would not be possible without pushing the boundaries of traditional society and consequently the traditional family.

THE UNIFICATION OF EUROPE

Even though the Czech Republic does not have a long tradition of mixing cultures and languages on the whole, throughout the history there were different time periods when

the political situation influenced the people of this nation and could be called in a way bilingual.

However, in some parts of Europe there have been not only bilingual, but sometimes multilingual influences for decades. Nowadays, of the 27 countries of the European Union, there are five which have more than one official language. These countries are Belgium, Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg, and Malta. Also there are regional language specifications for almost all areas around borders, regardless of the countries.

THE CURRENT SITUATION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Nowadays, the situation is influenced by mobility within Europe or even to and from the Americas. People travel for studying, work or even leisure reasons, though the Czech lifestyle and mentality as well as work opportunities are the two main reasons for relocation, although there is no statistical confirmation of these data. According to New and Cochran, "... the Czech Republic has been a markedly monolingual country ... the phenomenon of bringing up children bilingually in the family has largely been a new one".

FORMING A BILINGUAL FAMILY

A preparental phase of a relationship is a crucial point in forming a bilingual family. It is the time where the most important socialization processes take place and the two people establish the patterns of communication that are vital for the future of the relationship. Hand in hand with this, people might have to reevaluate personal ideals, needs and life goals.

The preparental phase is followed by a parental phase – when the child is born is usually the most demanding part of the parents' life. Some of the routines typical for the preparental phase may need to undergo remarkable changes. It is the mother who sets up the communication channels with the child, which leads to the deepening of the relationship. Later, the interactions with the father establish a connection and lastly, the relationship is developed between the child and possible siblings.

If a child is exposed to two different languages at this point, we can talk about infant bilingualism for this kind of bilingualism is typical, that "the baby goes directly from not speaking at all to speaking two languages" (Harding and Riley, 39). It is also quite typical that these children start actively using language(s) slightly later than monolingual children.

This is based on the exposure and/or need for the usage of the language. The exact time the child starts speaking might be also influenced by the number and order in which the children are born.

Another type of bilingualism is called child bilingualism and the acquisition of a second language starts later, than the first one. This is usually caused by relocating of the family to a different country and it is "... a difficult period of adaptation in the child's life and obviously this includes learning the language" (Harding and Riley, 41). However, the children tend to adapt and start using the second language very quickly because the level of exposure needed for communication is high. Nonetheless, once relocated back to the previous habitat, the child is quick to lose this ability if it is not strengthened.

INFORMATION, HELP AND SOURCES

Unfortunately, there is a lack of institutions and organizations that offer guidance or help when forming a bilingual family, on the local level, i.e., in the Czech Republic, in the Czech language. Parents have to rely on foreign publications, out of which only one, Harding and Riley's *The Bilingual Family*, has so far been translated into Czech. The information available in Czech is limited to articles in online lady's magazines, such as marianne.cz, mojedite.cz, and agatinsvet.cz. The best one is to be found on rodina.cz, which is the largest portal regarding families and children, where you can not only find the essential information, but also the parent's reactions to the topic on a discussion board. An overview of such articles is listed in an **appendix no. 1** although; some of them lack the date or even information about the author, since their essence is rather columnar. The most visited discussion board is also beremese.cz and rodina.dama.cz, where mothers, who are bringing up their children bilingually, give advice to others as well as share their stories.

INTERNET SOURCES

The only website that covers bilingualism thoroughly in Czech and English is www.bilingualbaby.eu. It is designed to help families who follow the most prominent strategy of bilingualism: one parent-one language. This site also answers various questions parents may have regarding bilingualism plus the possibility of contacting other bilingual families and sharing experience with bilingual upbringing on the website. Apart from the sources available to the Czech-speaking public, there are various websites in English that

THEORETICAL PART

cover the topic of bilingualism; however, for the purpose of this work and the special case of the Czech Republic, these sources are irrelevant.

CREATING A BILINGUAL ENVIRONMENT

As Baker mentions in her *Parents' and Teachers' guide to Bilingualism* “bringing up children to be bilingual is an important decision that will affect the rest of their lives as well as the lives of their parents” (18). It affects all the levels of one’s personality as well as their social and cultural life. Most parents are clearly aware of the advantages the bilingual environment will have on their children. Among the most highly valued benefited areas are those of schooling, employment, travelling and thinking. On the contrary, some parents, as well as some relatives may fear certain lay claims, which are in fact proven myths about bilingualism that come from a lack of knowledge about this issue.

There are different strategies when creating a bilingual environment. Probably the most natural one is two people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, living in the native location of one of them. However, there are examples of parents from the same cultural and language background, living in their native location, who create a bilingual environment for their children by hiring an au-pair or nanny with a different native language from the parents’. Further, the intentions of forming a multilingual environment are at hand in families where both parents happen to be from different cultural and language backgrounds, which are different from the location in which they bring up their children.

EARLY BILINGUALISM

According to Pearson (88), early bilinguals are people, who acquire or learn the second language before their puberty, as opposed to late bilinguals, according to the critical learning period theory. For the purpose of this work, we will concern ourselves with early bilingualism proper and the subdivision into infant and childhood bilingualism.

INFANT BILINGALISM

This term applies to children who are exposed to two different languages from their birth, up to the age of 2 or 3. This exposure usually causes a delay in the speech production, but on the other hand, once the infant bilinguals start speaking, they speak in both languages. However the delay is never out of the range of speech production for monolinguals, the parents usually start worrying, when they compare the language performance of their bilingual children to monolinguals. Also, the children’s performance

is driven by the need for using the language and the necessity to communicate, so once the parents are not persistent in the communication strategies and the children discover ways around it, it can lead to individual preferences of one language to the other, which the parents may also find dissatisfactory.

CHILDHOOD BILINGUALISM

Pearsons writes, that children bilinguals are either 2 - 3 year-olds, who are exposed to two different languages at home, or 5 year-olds and more, who learn the second language at school (88). One factor akin to both of these groups is the acquisition of the second language once the first language has been established. This situation is usually connected with relocation to a different country. As Harding points out, children, who move to a different country, are able to learn the language of the community quite rapidly, due to the exposure. On the contrary, once they relocate to yet a different country, they lose the language previously acquired and mastered before with the same rapidity (41). This phenomenon is directly connected with the need for using the language, mentioned above, only the necessity is broader as the communicative intentions of older children shift from the immediate family to a greater variety of people, especially peers.

MIXING AND CODE-SWITCHING

Even though the term *mixing* has a slightly negative connotation as mentioned by Harding, the definition overlaps with *code-switching* (Pearson, 310) it refers to the "...practice of changing from one 'code' or language, to another within one sentence or conversation". This is a normal transition period which gives children the opportunity to first be able to express themselves in situations when they do not know the correct expression in the required language, and second, this code-switching on the level of words can later develop into switching clauses, sentences and finally utterances, which is the required communication pattern for bilinguals. Harding also points out to the fact that parents tend to mix languages as well and this leads to children's copying this strategy (129).

However normal and inevitable at various stages of the bilingual language acquisition this phenomenon may seem to specialists, the general public, such as the extended family and sometimes even the parents themselves, may perceive it as a

malfunction. Such misinterpretations can (and in the past obviously have) led to the development of myths about bilingualism.

BILINGUALISM

There are several definitions of bilingualism which tend to overlap or even contradict one another. Some of them are more suitable for members of bilingual communities or countries, others for individual bilingualism. The reason for the multiplicity is simply that ... “it is almost impossible to compare an individual’s abilities in two different languages because we are not measuring the same things...” (Harding and Riley, 22). Nonetheless, what is common to all the definitions is the degree of relativity and language sufficiency that can vary according to different social, economical and even geopolitical backgrounds.

For the purpose of this work Bloomfield’s definition of bilingualism as “...native-like control of two languages” with an expansion on the relativity in the sense of relative competence, in other words, how good is one’s conduct of languages in contrast to relative use, how often and to what extent does the speaker use the languages on an everyday basis.

BILINGUAL STRATEGIES OF COMMUNICATION

To be able to talk about types of bilingualism, we first have to set a common ground of terminology. The term majority language as explained by Pearson refers to “the language that the majority of speakers in a community use, often with ‘official’, language status if it is used for government, in education, and in other official or public domains” (313). Meanwhile minority language is specific to “...a subgroup of a population, or even just one family” (313). Using this terminology, we can proceed to the differences between the bilingual types. According to Pearson (137) there are four basic types of bilingual strategies divided into these categories according to the communication pattern within the family. The terminology is recognized by other linguists as well, nonetheless, Pearson uses abbreviations in order to make it simple for the readers and for language economy. The abbreviations are given beneath the name of each strategy, in parenthesis.

ONE PARENT – ONE LANGUAGE

This strategy is based on the precedents that each parent addresses the child in a different, usually but not necessarily, their native language. One of the parents’ languages

is usually also the language of the community (as used in this work). Otherwise the child may become multilingual. This is the most favored strategy among specialists and the general public, however, the key to success in bringing up a bilingual child is in the persistence and equality of exposure to both languages.

MINORITY LANGUAGE AT HOME

The families which use this strategy usually speak the minority language at home (whether it is their native language or not), leaving the majority language of the community as an “outside” language. This strategy only works in case that both parents are able to speak the minority language fluently. This strategy is given priority in extended families that happen to relocate with older members, who are not able or willing to learn the language of the majority language.

LANGUAGE OF TIME AND PLACE

This is a specific strategy mainly used in formal bilingual education. This strategy is based on the supposition that both, time and place changes to signal the required change of language for the child. An example could be speaking the minority language only at weekends at grandmother’s.

MIXED LANGUAGE POLICY

The strategy of Mixed Language Policy follows complicated rules, and in many cases these are understandable to a specific family or community. These strategies are favored mainly in India and may seem chaotic and without conventions to an outsider. In general, “...the language choice is dictated by topic or situation and is set by the speakers, i.e., you answer in the language you were addressed in” (Pearson, 139).

PRACTICAL PART

THE MOTIVES FOR RESEARCH IN BILINGUAL FAMILIES

I have always been interested in the bilingual upbringing of children. This remarkable children's ability is based on the fact that children might not understand the concept of different languages that are unique in their syntax and morphology, yet they are able to discern them for their communicative purposes, has always amazed me. Furthermore, there have been many occasions in my life from either my personal experience or my friends' experience that directed my interest to this matter.

I have been collecting ideas for this work for almost two years now, with the possibility of extending it to a Master's thesis in the future. My idea is to follow the development of the children even further and maybe get their perspectives of being bilingual.

I have dedicated a large amount of time to studying publications and extracting the results from my research. I believe the results will be beneficial not only for my further work, but for the use of parents who find themselves in similar situations and educators who have to work with these children.

PREPARATION

I contacted the families in many cases one year prior to the actual research to find out whether they would be interested in participating in my study. Since the value of the research is in the qualitative, not quantitative outcome, I tried to ascertain a personal connection with the families to make the cooperation easier for both parties. Moreover, I informally discussed the matter with some of the parents to get a better idea what is it like to be a parent in such challenging environment.

METHODS OF RESEARCH

The main method I used for my research was a questionnaire. This was to confirm or deny my hypotheses. Consequently the method of non-standardized individual interview, which followed was to help me understand the parents' answers from the questionnaire and to get an insight into the communication patterns of the family. Lastly, I have used the method of observation, also non-standardized. The observation was focused on the children

in their natural environment, usually home and with their parents. The outcome of these three methods is summarized in the case studies.

SELECTION OF FAMILIES

The respondents for my research are mostly my acquaintances whom I have known for a considerably long time and who are currently at a different stage of bilingual upbringing. In addition to the families I know personally, there were some respondents who filled in my questionnaire upon their being contacted by a member of a family of my original research. The age of the parents as well as children vary greatly, which I believe gives a broader insight into the topic. Altogether, there were ten families who provided me with answers in the questionnaire, of which five families I conducted interviews with.

Basic data:

Number of families: **10**

Average age of parents: **34.8 years**

Average age of the children: **3.43 years**

The youngest child: **6 months**

The oldest child: **10 years**

Number of subjects undergoing the study: **35**

Number of families living in the Czech Republic: **6**

Number of families living elsewhere: **4** (2 USA, 2 Scotland)

QUESTIONNAIRE METHOD

The questionnaire (**appendix no. 2**) consisted of ten questions, excluding personal information, which I chose to enlighten the intentions and ways of communication within bilingual families. The questions are arranged from vague outlines to specific methods to give as precise an idea of the effects of bilingual upbringing as possible. Questions 1-4 focus on the incentives and the planning. The following questions 5-6 concentrates on the implication of bilingual upbringing and the possible problems. And finally, questions 7-10 monitor the outcome of the bilingual strategies and the actual child's performance of the languages.

For the confirmation or contravention of my hypotheses the following questions of my survey were crucial. To be able to obtain valuable data to verify my first hypothesis **I believe that parents do not necessarily plan and study the issue thoroughly.** I specially designed these questions. Question number 2. – Did you study up on the topic (of bilingualism) beforehand? And question number 3. – What sources did you consult? Questions number 4, 5, 6 – What strategies did you want to use? What strategies did you actually use? And has the strategy changed in any way? Are to prove the second of the hypotheses **I am of the opinion that they change the strategies pragmatically during the upbringing.** The last hypothesis, stated as **I think that the families that do not have a strict system are likely to fail in the way that their offspring do not develop toward being bilingual in both languages,** was to be answered by my overall analytical evaluation of the questionnaires answered and supported by the non-standardized personal interview and observation. All these methods have been put together to briefly summarize the current situation of each of the families in the process of bringing up their children bilingually and are stated in the next chapter called Case Studies.

METHOD FOR NON-STANDARDIZED PERSONAL INTERVIEW

I have conducted each of the interviews as a non-standardized and informal individual conversation. I have tried to place open-ended questions to involve the parents and to get to understand their attitudes and involvement in bilingual upbringing. This method also helped me to establish a more sincere contact with the families, which lead to more honest, frank, and open responses. I have also used the opportunity to verify my correct understanding of the results of the questionnaire and got feedback to the individual questions, regarding their relevance.

METHOD OF OBSERVATION

I have also used the technique known as non-standardized, direct short-term observation with five of the ten surveyed families. The object of my observation were the children, in their natural environment, either at home or outside in a park usually in a duration of thirty minutes to one hour. I have concentrated on the children's behavior towards parents, other children and to me. I have tried to address them in their minor language, which is English for most of the children, to assess the level of lexis and overall performance.

CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY 1 – EMA, AGE 3, LOCATION: THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Ema is the first daughter of Karolina (Czech) and Luke (American). Both parents are professional teachers of English and they live on the outskirts of Prague. Karolina has recently returned to teaching part time in the bilingual preschool Ema attends. Her working hours are very limited because their second daughter, Eliška, is only a year and a half old. Due to the parents' education and careers, they decided to bring up their daughters bilingually, even though Luke's language competence in Czech is quite high, owing to the needs of communication with Karolina's relatives. Not only do they believe that both daughters will get to know their parents better in their own language, it will be also beneficial for their future. Prior to Ema's birth, they consulted several books on the topic of bilingualism and asked Luke's aunt, who is a child psychologist for advice. Upon this information, they have decided to use the OPOL (one parent – one language) strategy and it hasn't changed in any way. Ema's Czech developed prior to English, probably because of the time spent with her mother. The English seemed to come a few months later. Ema's understanding and performance is now equal, which is probably thanks to the exposure and need for communication within the preschool, moreover, bedtime reading is mainly in English.

CASE STUDY 2 – SOFIA, AGE 3, LOCATION: THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Sofia's parents are both well educated. Her father, Mark, is an English speaking Canadian working as a university professor. Her mother, Vilma, comes from a Slovak speaking background although she speaks Czech with Sofia. The reason for bringing up Sofia bilingually, for them, is the benefit she will gain from it throughout her life on different levels, such as cultural and social. They had studied the topic of bilingualism beforehand, using books as prime sources and the internet as an additional source. After which they decided on using the OPOL (One parent – one language) strategy, following it consistently, without changes. The outcome is that Sofia uses and understands both languages equally, even though she is more exposed to Czech from her mother and even Slovak from her mother's relatives, also due to her attendance at a Czech preschool. The parents use various techniques to strengthen her English, such as books, DVD's and even a

few computer games. She has no problem addressing her parents in their own language and seems to like both equally as well.

CASE STUDY 3 – AMELIA, AGE 5, 5, LOCATION: THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Even though Amelia's parents were separated for some time, they have always been consistent with their strategies of upbringing and have shared her care as equally as possible. Her father, Noah, is American and Květa is Czech, her younger son, Antoni, is 5 months old. They felt the need for Amelia being bilingual to be able to communicate with Noah's side of the family and for the usefulness of the English language in general. Neither of them had studied or expressed any interest in the matter of bilingualism, prior to Amelia's birth. In Noah's words it has been touch and go all along but it turned out well. They also use the OPOL (One parent – one language) strategy, which came most natural to them from the beginning, the key being their persistence and as much exposure to Noah's native language as possible. (It should be mentioned that they are uninformed on either the strategies or the terminology). Amelia is fluent in both languages, even though her exposure to Czech speaking environment is much greater, namely from Květa, at preschool, grandparents and friends. Even though Noah is the only one who speaks to Amelia consistently in English, there are several people, who live as tenants (Americans) in the same house who are close to Amelia and address her in English. The tactic used by Noah is based on the precedents that it should be as entertaining as possible. They are currently learning the alphabet (by songs), numbers and counting (by games) with the additional use of American public television shows, such as Sesame Street. He is also in favor of "contextual role play with dolls" as he calls it, where he sets up different scenarios to practice different aspects of English. Amelia tends to ask a lot of vocabulary questions in the process. She mixes the languages only in the instances when she does not know the correct word in English, she is never corrected by her father, but encouraged and provided with the suitable word in a fun approach. There were a few instances around the age of three when she refused to speak English, as Noah reflects, this was maybe due to his constant attempts to keep it amusing, because he never wanted it to be a task. They also had fun when just the two of them were visiting Noah's parents in America. There they used Czech as their "secret language" to reaffirm the importance of speaking English as well as Czech.

CASE STUDY 4 – NATALIE MARIA, AGE 3, LOCATION: THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Natalie comes from a bilingual Czech/English speaking family, even though her father, Piet is originally from The Netherlands and considers Dutch as his first language, he is fluent in English as well and addresses his daughter solely in English. Annamaria speaks only Czech to her daughter. They both were in favor of bilingual upbringing because of the natural way of language acquisition, which was supported by the fact that they both had firsthand experience with bilingualism, from mother's bilingual family or father's bilingual community. They both see it as a great opportunity for Natalie, to learn both languages effortlessly. As mentioned above, they admit not studying on the topic beforehand; they relied on their self-experience, nonetheless, they had read some articles in magazines or on the internet, but not excessively. They use the natural way of OPOL (One parent – one language) strategy, with the assertion of active talking, describing things, book reading, cartoon watching and talking with relatives, to increase her vocabulary and natural speech in both languages first and later they would like Natalie to start learning grammar and improve knowledge of the language, followed up by spending time with her cousins of the same age, who live in England. The proportion of her using both languages is now equal, although Annamaria asserts the proportion being about 70% Czech and 30% English during the first 1.5 year of Natalie's life. This was due to Natalie's spending more time with her mother while her father was traveling a lot. Currently Piet is spending more time with her, since Annamaria has started to work again. According to her parents, Natalie can understand both languages very well and she recognizes the language she should talk to whom, despite the fact that she is now in the period when she is mixing up both languages a lot when she is talking. Her pronunciation in both languages is precise. The parents do not have any special techniques for strengthening her English apart from those activities mentioned above. They are currently waiting for the opportunity for Natalie to take English lessons in preschool.

CASE STUDY 5 – SEBASTIAN, 10, ISABELLA 9, THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Sebastian and Isabella are the oldest of the children surveyed. Their father, Patrick, is American and their mother, Pavlina, is Czech. The intention of bringing up both siblings bilingually was caused by the fact that Patrick's Czech is not good enough and he feels frustrated with the grammar, especially conjugation and declination. Moreover he has

always been working in an English speaking environment and using his native language with his wife, therefore he has not developed the need for learning Czech. Because Pavlina and Patrick have always communicated in English it seemed most natural to keep this strategy for at home use and use Czech outside the home. In terminology, they decided for the mL@H (Minority language at home) strategy, as the most suitable for their situation, since exposure to English only from their father's would be insufficient for their children. Even though Pavlina is a teacher of English herself, unfortunately she has failed to communicate English to the children in the early years as it was much more natural for her to use her native language, this was even intensified by the effect of Czech only speaking grandparents and friends. This has now lead to both, children being native in Czech, and having a strong passive knowledge of English, their spoken English is, in their father's words rather "dodgy". Even though they both know their father's Czech is not good enough to communicate with them, they refuse to speak English to him. Isabella seems to have a better attitude towards this matter, does well at school and benefits from her knowledge of English in her English lessons. Sebastian has seemed to become quite rebellious in the past year or so, his grades have dropped in English and other subjects as well and he has developed a negative attitude towards English classes even though he used to like it when he was younger. This mind-set might have been caused by the fact that the school English grammar has become rather difficult and he cannot rely on his acquired knowledge any longer. The family does not seem to have any special techniques to strengthen the weaker language, neither have they the motivation to do so. Since both children have perfected their use of colloquial Czech, the family communication has been affected on many levels. Even though Patrick is able to understand most everyday family situations, there are cases when Pavlína, Sebastian and Isabella communicate together in a way which is not understandable to Patrick and the subject matter needs to be translated, otherwise he is left out of the conversation completely.

CASE STUDY 6 – ATREYU, AGE 3, LOCATION: THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Atreyu is the son of Gail (American) and Joost (Dutch) who met in the Czech Republic and have lived there since. Gail is a trained teacher and psychologist, multilingual in English, Spanish, French, Czech and Dutch. It is extremely important to her that Atreyu speaks a minimum of two languages; she believes it will enable him to communicate with more people in the world, not only increasing his opportunities, but also enabling him to

experience more of what the world has to offer. Joost is a trained language teacher and a translator, multilingual in Dutch, English, Swedish and Czech. The fact of bringing up Atreyu in multilingual environment was obvious, since he also grew up multilingually. He sees a great advantage for his later life both in terms of already knowing the language and in his language learning ability, which he has experienced himself. It had never occurred to any of them that bringing up Atreyu multilingually would not be possible. However, after deciding on raising their son in a multilingual household, Gail did a lot of research, mostly in special publications, as to what the limit might be, how he should go about acquiring/learning them and how this would affect his growth milestones. Using this research, they decided on the OPOL (One parent – one language) strategy, in the third language community, i.e., mother (English), father (Dutch), community (Czech). They keep this strategy consistently and carefully monitor his languages and if he falls behind in any, they try to give him extra exposure to the language. Since Joost was the stay-at-home father, Atreyu's language competence in Dutch is the strongest, of about 90% of the level of a native speaker of his age and even though it is the language in which he is most comfortable, he is able to distinguish to whom is he talking to and switch the languages accordingly with some mixing, which in percentage is as follows: Dutch 50%, English 35%, and Czech 15%. His performance of Czech is expected to rise due to the fact that he is now attending a Czech preschool and this will increase the need for usage of Czech as it is already his preferred language with other children. According to his mother, he sometimes wakes up speaking Czech and will continue to speak Czech with them until he comes out of his sleepy state. As far as his level goes, he is probably at about 50% capacity as that of a native Czech speaker his age. The strategies of strengthening his Czech is that the parents also ask their English speaking Czech friends to only speak Czech with Atreyu and he watches a lot of Czech programming. They are also considering extra Czech lessons for him. Finally, English is the language in which he has the biggest vocabulary and which he understands the most, but does not use as much to communicate even though he probably could. Atreyu has recently started attending a French language classes, he sings songs in French, understands the instructions and occasionally uses sole French words at home.

CASE STUDY 7 – MAREK, 6, GABRIELA 2, LOCATION: SCOTLAND

Marek was born in the Czech Republic to Lucie (Czech) and Anthony (Scottish, speaks English to the children) and moved with them to Scotland at an early age, where later, Gabriela was born. The parents thought it would be easier for both children to learn an additional language in early age. Another reason was communication with immediate family in Prague, who do not speak English. They studied the topic prior to Marek's birth, using the internet and the advice of friend's in the same or similar situation. Upon their relocation to Scotland, they started using the OPOL (one parent – one language) strategy, in the major English speaking community. They tried to speak only Czech during the day, when only the mother was with the children and then use both languages once the father arrived home from work. They keep this strategy without fail, even though Marek's school attendance has changed the routine a little bit in the means of him being exposed to English at school during the day now. His performance of both languages equals to 30% Czech and 70% of English now, because he benefited from the frequent visits to the Czech Republic in early age. These are not possible now, because of his school attendance; nonetheless they try to visit their relatives and friends in Lucie's homeland on most holidays and family occasions. Gabriela's abilities in Czech are much lower at this stage, about 15%, which the parents think is due to the lacking of the frequent visits to the Czech speaking environment. Her performance, mainly understanding, in English accounts for about 85%. The methods of supporting the weaker language include, daily video calls with family in Prague, and upon the installation of Czech satellite TV, their exposure to the Czech language has increased. During their visits to the Czech Republic, the children are encouraged to choose various DVD's and children books to be read at bedtime. Finally, even though Marek and Gabriela both prefer the English language, they both have become reasonably fluent in Czech upon spending approximately one week in the Czech only environment, however, their grammar is still lacking.

CASE STUDY 8 – JAKUB, AGE 3, 5, LOCATION: SCOTLAND

Jakub is a friend of Marek and Gabriela: His mother, Zuzana, speaks Czech and his father, Scott, is an English speaking Scotsman. Jakub also has a 6-month-old sister, Hana. The incentive for bringing up Jakub and Hana bilingually was primarily influenced by the innate need of Zuzana's speaking her mother tongue to the children, which was far more natural for her. They also wanted to enable them to speak to their grandparents from Zuzana's side and to get to know her roots, culture and where half of their genes come

from, which would be impossible without the knowledge of Czech. In their words they studied on the subject very lightly, mostly they consulted other people's experience (namely Marek and Gabriela's mother, Lucie) rather than books. They decided to use the OPOL (One parent – one language) strategy consistently, with Zuzana speaking strictly in English at home or out. This has recently changed a little, since Jakub has formed friendships and the children come to their house, Zuzana finds it quite difficult to be consistent in speaking Czech, when she is supposed to address a group of them in English. She always tries to say it first in Czech to Jakub and then in English to address them all. Jakub's English is definitely the stronger, primary language, even though he started speaking (in English) much later than his peers, this has now leveled out. His vocabulary is very large and he speaks English at a native level. He understands both languages equally, but his Czech is much more passive. Zuzana mentions, that he will not answer back in Czech at all, but he uses solitary Czech words here and there, even though he will not form a sentence. Even after six weeks spent in the Czech Republic he still would not use the language. She hopes it is only a transition period and she tries to support the weaker language by reading Czech books and speaking to Czech friends. And she is determined to be persistent in speaking Czech to both children.

CASE STUDY 9 – SOPHIA, AGE 3, LOCATION: THE USA

Sophia is the older daughter of Lucie (Czech) and Daniel (American). She and her brother Dorian (1 year and 6 months) were born in Washington, USA. The parents wanted them to be able to communicate with the immediate and extended family and thus they decided to bring them up bilingually. Prior to Sophia's birth they had consulted books and the internet on this topic, and decided on using the OPOL (One parent – one language) strategy, which so far has not undergone any changes. Sophia's language performance is slightly better, about 60% in Czech and 40% in English. This inequality is caused by the larger amount of Czech exposure from her mother (her father being in the navy and often away from home), despite the fact that it is the minority language. The parents have not applied any techniques to strengthen the weaker language, because they are aware of the fact, Sophie will be starting preschool in September and therefore her English will only get better. Currently she has no problems communicating in English to her father or her friends, as well as switch and even translate for others who do not understand Czech. Also, Lucie is sure that as Sophie grows up, English will become her dominant language and

there will be a need to read more Czech books and watch more Czech DVD's. Later in the future, she would also like to obtain some Czech books on grammar and history. Currently her Czech seems to be very good, yet there are no other children Lucie can compare her to. Regarding Dorian, his vocabulary is limited, due to his age, but he knows both Czech and English words.

CASE STUDY 10 – ADAM BOHUSLAV, AGE 6 MONTHS, LOCATION: THE USA

Adam is the youngest of all surveyed children, for the purpose of monitoring the early stages of infant bilingualism and the parent's attitude towards it. He was born in California, USA to a bilingual couple of Lucie (Czech) and Bradley (American). The reason for bringing up Adam bilingually was a natural outcome of their cross-cultural marriage. The parents had studied on the topic in advance only slightly, by means of reading a few articles and having met with other multilingual families, upon which they agreed on bringing up Adam with the use of OPOL (One parent – one language) strategy and even though they are at an early stage of his upbringing, Lucie sometimes finds it difficult to speak only in Czech in an English speaking environment. She tries to avoid speaking English for the sake of Adam and the confusion she may cause him in the future. Together with Bradley they also try to stick to one language pattern in their communication, since Bradley's Czech is on a reasonable level after having lived in the Czech Republic for some time. So far they speak together in the more convenient language in the situation (i.e., sometimes in Czech, sometimes in English), and they seem not to be aware of the inconsistency. Adam's performance cannot be judged yet, since he does not speak. In the future, the parents are determined to do their best to support the knowledge and usage of both languages equally, by reading books, listening to music, singing songs etc.

THE RESULTS

The first hypothesis concerning the planning of bilingual upbringing has been verified by two independent questions in order to increase the statistically significant value. The first question regarding studying on the subject of bilingualism beforehand, i.e., in the preparental stage, was positively answered by only four responding families out of ten. On the other hand, the rest of the families either answered negatively, or said they studied up

on the subject only a little, was 60% of responding families. In this sense, **my first hypothesis** about parents not necessarily planning and studying on the subject in advance **has been hereby confirmed**. To expand on this subject, the main sources of studying the topic of bilingualism for either involved or uninvolved families were (in this order) books, internet and magazine articles, friends with experience, and in three cases the adults had a firsthand personal experience from being brought up bilingually themselves. One of the respondents even consulted a specialist in the form of his relative, trained in child psychology. The exact answers are summarized in graphs **in appendix no. 3**.

To the second question, related to my second hypothesis, concerning planning and changing the strategies for bringing up the offspring bilingually, most of the families (80%) actually chose the One parent one language strategy (OPOL) and are being consistent with it, even though some of them might find it difficult in certain situations. This mainly applies to mothers living in an English only speaking community, where they find it difficult addressing their children in their native language, especially when the children fail to respond in the mother's language, under the influence of the language of the community. Regarding the question whether the families tend to change the strategy under the influence of current developments in the family, **my second hypothesis proved to be wrong**. My assumption of the parents changing the strategy pragmatically, was rejected by 70% of the respondents. Only in two cases the children's forming friendship and/or the beginning of school attendance has changed the routine slightly due to the level of exposure to the community language. One case (case study 10) could not be judged due to the age of the child

Furthermore, by the means of overall analytical evaluation of the questionnaires answered and supported by the non-standardized personal interview and observation, **my third hypothesis**, which suggested the possibility of failure in the children's development toward being bilingual, by the optimistic assessment of the children's abilities and steps towards being bilingual **has been confirmed**. In seven families out of ten the prospects are very good, the parents claim that their children are using both languages more or less equally, or at least in proportion to their exposure to them. In one family, this performance is impossible to judge due to the age of the child (case study 10). However, in one example (case study 8) there seems to be a great inequality between the child's language performance (of the mother's, minority language) and the exposure. This disproportion

may be only transitional and could be caused by the child's motivation for communicating with peers in the majority language. Moreover, there is one more example (case study 5) which in fact reconfirms my hypothesis, upon the assumption that the lack of a strict system leads to only limited bilingualism.

CONCLUSION

The aim of my thesis was to outline and document the different systems families develop in order to communicate among themselves as well as with the community and society they live in. I focused on the planning of bilingual upbringing and consequently reflecting on the methods and finding out whether they work in real life situations. The research was conducted by means of a questionnaire, interviews and observation and the outcome was analyzed critically using the theory on bilingualism. The research has brought interesting results. It shows that all the parents see clear benefits in their children being bilingual, whether as a means of communication with the immediate and extended family, or for their future social, cultural, or economic prospects. Further, they do not necessarily plan and study on the topic prior to the child's birth, there might be a correlation between this fact and almost one third of the parents are trained teachers and therefore have encountered this topic at some time of preparing for their profession.

As expected, the OPOL (one parent – one language) strategy proved to be the most favored one, because it is the most natural one and in fact neither the parents nor the children perceive the situation as something unusual. Moreover, the parents are not, in most cases, over concerned with the fact they are a bilingual family. On the other hand, there are certain concerns expressed by uneducated observers, either from the extended family or others, who may comment on the child's mixing of languages. Even though this was not the theme of my research, many families have mentioned this predicament in the personal interview and it even reassured the need of this work for the general public, because education is the only way to tolerance of bilinguals within our society.

What proved to be the most crucial point on the way towards the children's bilingualism is the parents' motivation and persistence in their strategy for communication. Especially if the children go through periods in their lives, when they refuse to speak the (usually minority) language, which might turn out to be extremely frustrating for, and raising fears in, the parents, when comparing their offspring to other children. Among other fears that I have learned in the personal interview proved the one of children possibly developing their speech a little later than their monolingual peers. This aspect is described in the chapter here titled "Forming a Bilingual Family" or in Harding and Riley's book.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, in the early years of the 21st century, most of us either know or at least have heard about cross-cultural or cross-linguistic marriage or partnership. Given the examples of the variety of the cases in the Practical section – the chapter on case studies, we can get an insight into such families, before forming our own opinions on the subject. Moreover, the bilingual and in this sense bicultural children are given a larger choice as to location later on in their lives and are likely to form a bilingual family themselves.

The research was beneficial for me personally and for my further involvement with the subject as well. Upon setting the common grounds of the motivation and strategies, other questions came up in the process regarding the problems the families may encounter and their resolution in the practice of bilingual upbringing or the correlation between the parent's education and the success in having bilingual offspring. These could be the subject of a future Master's thesis.

SUMMARY**BILINGUAL UPBRINGING OF CHILDREN****DANIELA KULÍKOVÁ, DIS**

The aim of my thesis was to outline and document the different strategies bilingual families use. I focused on Czech-English bilingual families, living either in the Czech Republic or in an English speaking country. My main concern was the planning of bilingual upbringing, setting up the strategy and finding out and evaluating whether it works in real life. The research showed that the parents do not necessarily plan the bilingual upbringing of their children thoroughly, they mainly use the one parent-one language strategy, they do not change the strategy throughout the process of upbringing and finally, that they are likely to fail in the way that their offspring will not develop toward being bilingual in both languages, unless they are motivated and persistent.

SHRNUTÍ**BILINGVNÍ VÝCHOVA DĚTÍ****DANIELA KULÍKOVÁ, DIS**

Cílem mé práce bylo nastínit a zdokumentovat rozdílné strategie, které bilingvní rodiny používají. Zaměřila jsem se na Česko-Anglické bilingvní rodiny, žijící buď v České Republice, nebo v anglicky mluvící zemi. Mým hlavním zájmem bylo plánování, ustavování strategie a následné hodnocení, zda tyto strategie fungují v reálném životě. Výzkum prokázal, že rodiče většinou neplánují bilingvní výchovu svých dětí důkladně, nejčastěji používají strategii jeden rodič-jeden jazyk a tuto strategii nemění v průběhu procesu výchovy svých dětí. Dále také, pokud nejsou dostatečně motivováni, a důslední v dodržování zvolené strategie, s největší pravděpodobností se jejich potomek nebude vyvíjet k tomu, že bude bilingvní v obou jazycích.

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APPENDIX NO. 1 – LIST OF ONLINE ARTICLES IN CZECH

Link	Date	Author	Attitude	Comment
http://www.marianne.cz/clanek/878/jedno_dite_dve_reci.html	July 2007	unknown	positive	Planning of bilingual family
http://www.rodina.cz/clanek7039.htm	April 2009	Unknown	positive	Followed by parents' discussion
http://www.prokrasnetelo.cz/clanky/bilingvni-vychova-ano-nebo-ne/	September 2009	Dr. Stibalová	ambivalent	Planning of bilingual family
http://vyuka.jazyku.cz/l.php?id=186	May 2007	Unknown	ambivalent	Planning of bilingual family
http://www.mojedite.cz/article_detail.php?id=720	Unknown	Unknown	positive	Personal experience and advice
http://praguemonitor.com/2009/03/27/bilingual-benefits	March 2009	Anna Fronková	positive	Personal story in English
http://www.agatinsvet.cz/dvojjazyzna-vychova.html	Unknown	Hana Merisová	positive	Planning of bilingual family
http://www.doktoronline.cz/zeny/clanek.php?id=488	Unknown	Unknown	positive	Advice on planning bilingual family
http://rodina.dama.cz/clanek.php?d=2829	April 2004	Unknown	positive	Excessive discussion on the topic

APPENDIX NO. 2 – QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear bilingual family,

This questionnaire is to support my bachelor thesis and I will be very grateful if you fill it in in detail. For easier navigation between the grey fields for your answers, you can use the arrow keys.
Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Daniela

DATE:

CURRENT LOCATION:

FATHER

First name:

Age:

First language:

Language/s spoken to children:

MOTHER

First name:

Age:

First language:

Language/s spoken to children:

CHILD 1

First name:

Age:

Language/s used at home:

Language/s used elsewhere:

CHILD 2

First name:

Age:

Language/s used at home:

Language/s used elsewhere:

CHILD 3

First name:

Age:

Language/s used at home:

Language/s used elsewhere:

1. Why did you decide to bring up your child/children bilingually?

2. Did you study up on this topic beforehand?

3. What sources did you consult? Please click on the grey field and choose your answer from the menu.

Primarily: books Partially: books please specify:

4. What strategies did you want to use?

5. What strategy did you actually use?

6. Has the strategy changed in any way?

7. In what proportion does your child use/understand the languages? (eg. 30% Czech, 70% English)

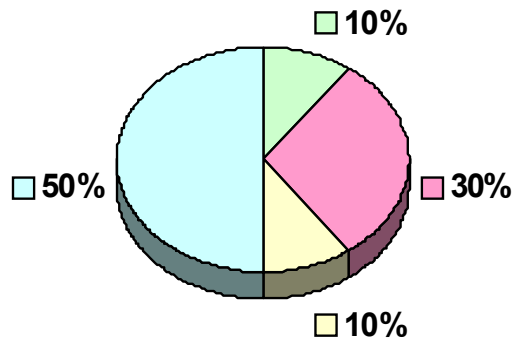
8. Does this reflect the time spent exposed to the language?

9. Do you have any techniques (games, rituals, diary, correspondence, friends) to strengthen the weaker language?

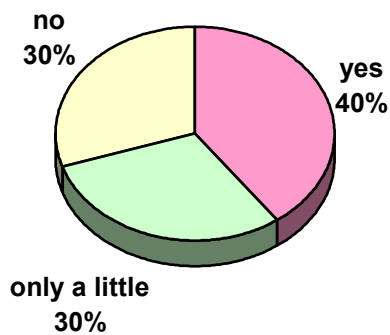
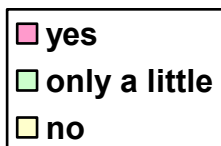
10. Please characterize the overall performance in both languages (including level, preference, fluency, abilities, attitudes...)

APPENDIX NO. 3 – GRAPHS

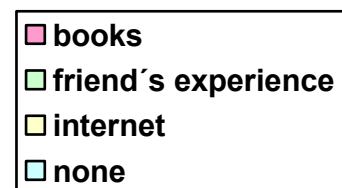
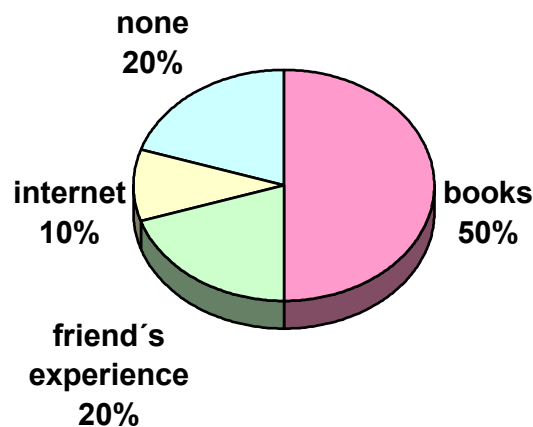
REASONS FOR BILINGUAL UPBRINGING



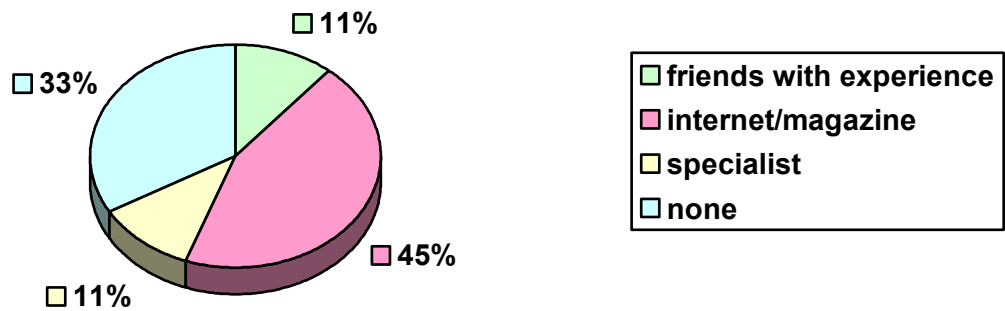
FAMILIES WITH PRIOR BILINGUAL RESEARCH



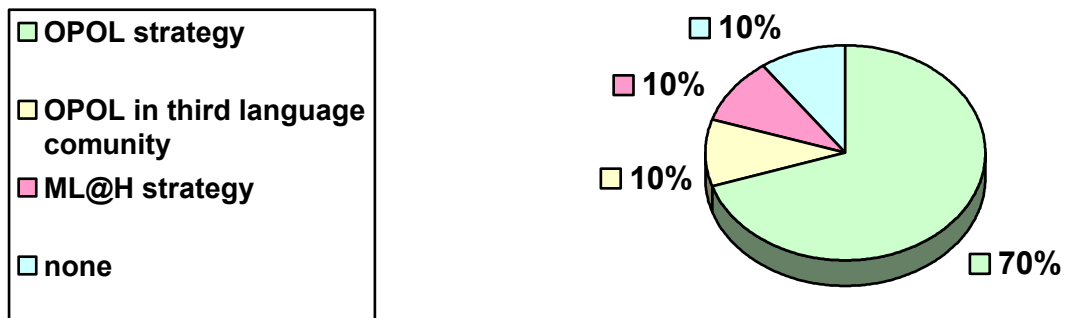
PRIME SOURCES FAMILIES CONSULTED



SECONDARY SOURCES FAMILIES CONSULTED



BILINGUAL STRATEGIES USED BY THE FAMILIES



CHANGES APPLIED TO THE FAVORED STRATEGY

