

Graphical analysis – Survey among Czech, Lithuanian and Polish parents raising their children bilingually

The main objective of the survey is to identify the special linguistic needs of bilingual children, their learning style and the difficulties they have to tackle with special regard to the development of a learning platform. We asked those involved mainly in the learning process of bilingual children: their parents and teachers at Saturday schools.

This rough summary presents the answers retrieved from parents. Graphs refer to a total number of 113 respondents. 52 of them are of Polish, 45 of Czech and 16 of Lithuanian origin.

The survey among parents furthermore seeks to gain insight into the speaking customs and language awareness in bilingual families, the motivation of the partner to join activities in Czech, Polish or Lithuanian. It should answer the questions, how do parents try to involve their children in language learning, what would support them best in their effort to raise children bilingually.¹

Please note, that the study represents the thoughts, attitudes and approaches of only those that participated on a voluntary basis and it therefore can not be claimed to be representative of the whole Czech, Polish and Lithuanian community living abroad.

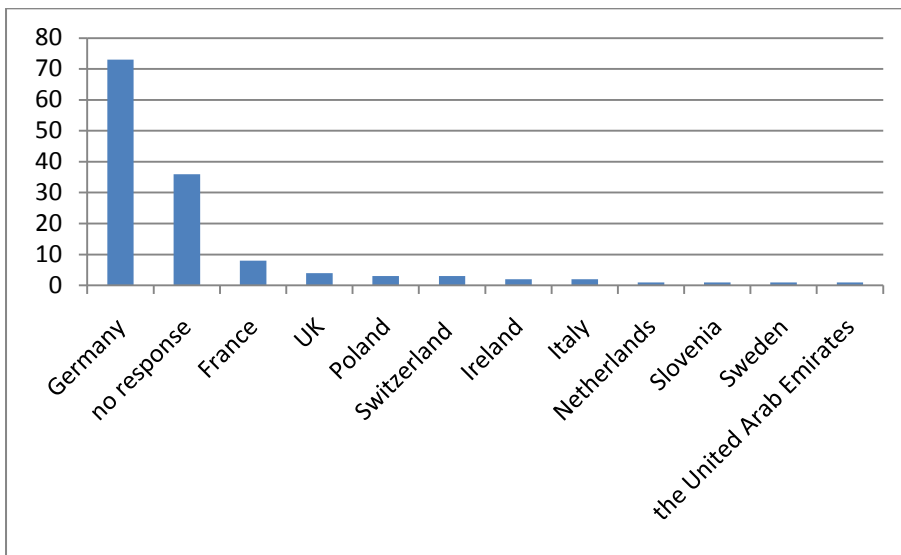
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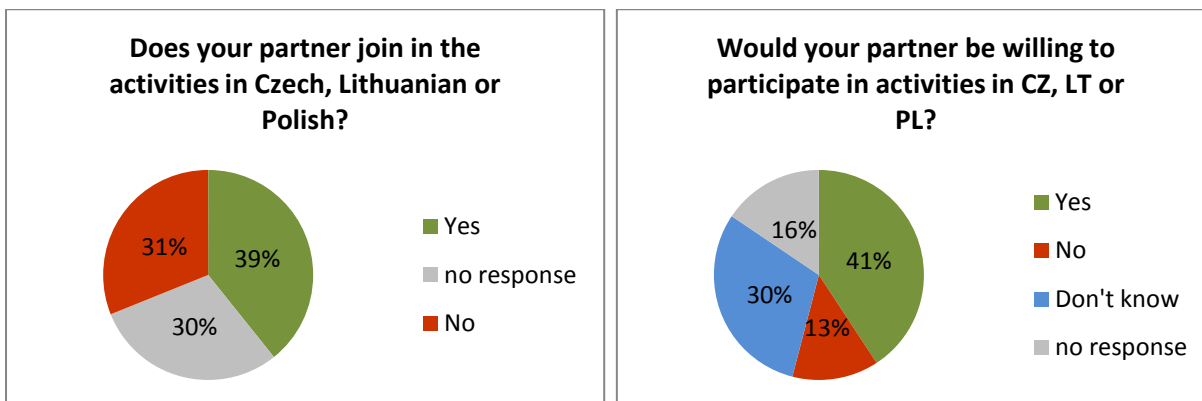
¹ Other aspects of the survey not evaluated here:

Importance of cultural references, importance of good pronunciation, ideas and comments on learning materials that could support language learning

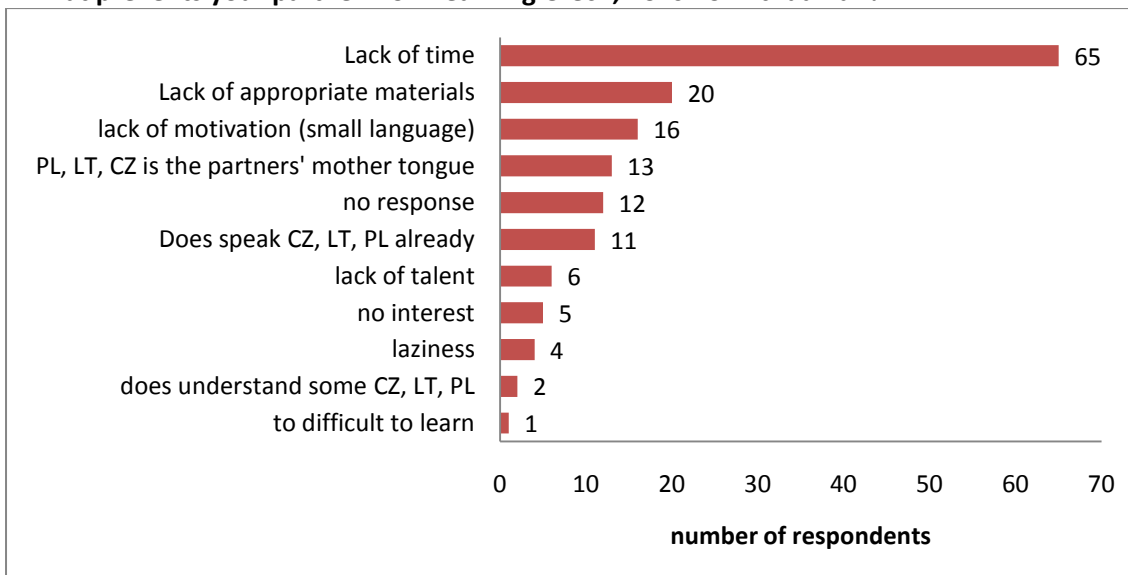
Where do respondents live?



Motivation of the partner who does not speak Czech, Lithuanian or Polish to join activities in that language



What prevents your partner from learning Czech, Polish or Lithuanian?



Communication and speaking customs in bilingual families

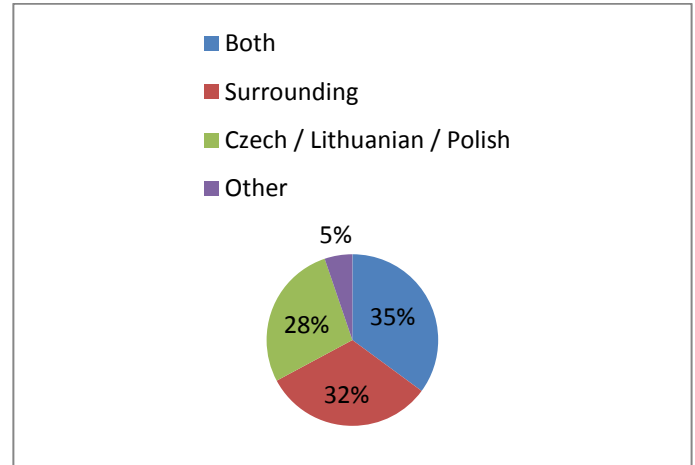
Which language do parents prefer in communication with their children

(refers to the total number of children including siblings)



Which language do prefer siblings to communicate with each other

(refers to the total number of children with siblings)



In which situations do parents switch to the surrounding language?

(in descending order)

- I do not switch at all when turning to the child directly
- in the presence of friends, classmates, persons that do not speak CZ, LT, PL
- school matters, when leaving from school, doing homework
- to make sure that children do understand and if attention is demanded
- when explaining something precisely and exactly
- when the partner takes part in the conversation
- in public, if speaking CZ, LT, PL could be perceived to be impolite
- in case of anger or when punishing
- when asking for something, ordering

In which situations do children switch to the surrounding language?

(in descending order)

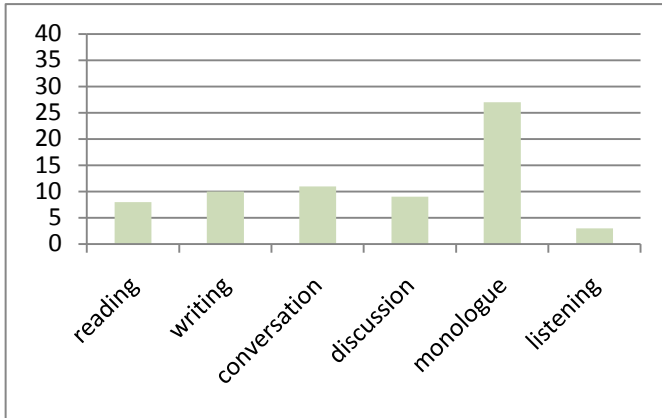
- at school, kindergarten, at the doctor, at the shop etc.
- in the presence of persons who speak the surrounding language, persons from outside the family who do not speak Polish (classmates, peers)
- when speaking with its brothers and sisters, especially when talking about school
- when telling about what happened in the surroundings/places where the child spends its time: "because the situations, persons, events, names and conversations have been remembered / experienced in the surrounding language"
- when telling about school: "it is easier for the child to tell about what happened, it does not have to look for Polish equivalents of a special school-vocabulary", "The surrounding language allows to tell about its own feelings and experiences better and more exactly."
- when it wants to say something quickly, when it is nervous
- when there are needed more complex statements and special vocabulary e.g. about school, computer issues
- telling long stories, when it does not know a Polish equivalent
- in every situation: "I am the only person who speaks Polish with the child", "The child always switches to the surrounding language to communicate. Since it goes to the kindergarten, he thinks it is the best strategy especially as I also understand German very well."

Which skills are most difficult to bilingual children?

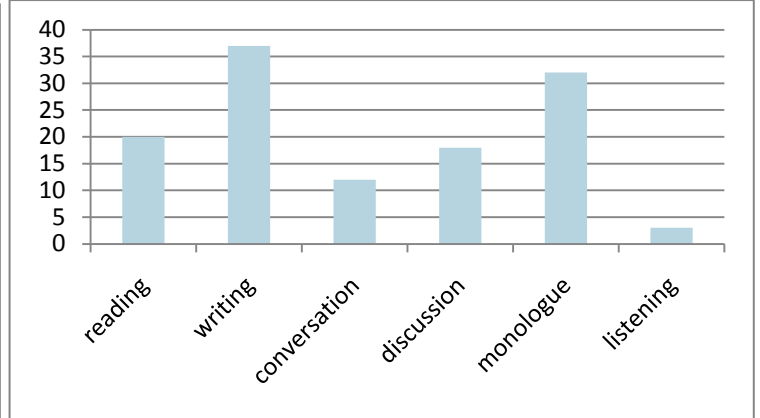
Results are shown separately for children aged 2-5, 6-11 and 12-16.

Which skills are most difficult to your child?

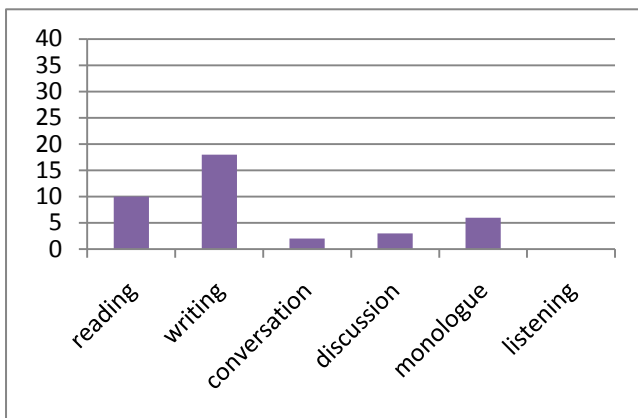
2-5 years old



6-11 years old



12-16 years old

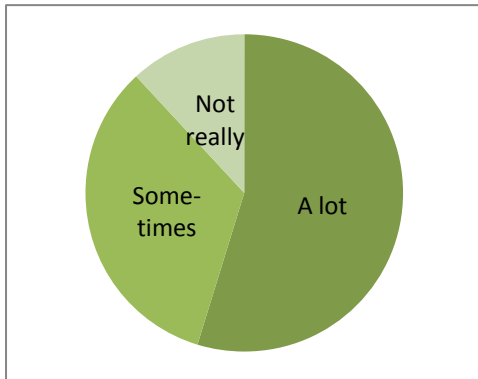


How do parents support language learning and how do they raise motivation

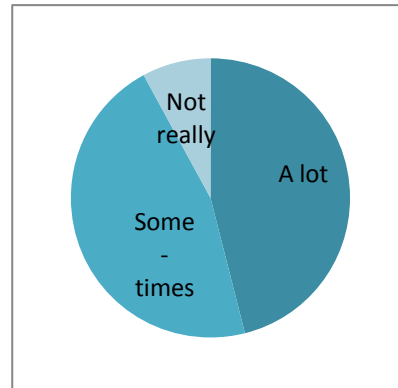
Results are shown separately for children aged 2-5, 6-11 and 12-16.

Does your child want to learn Czech, Polish or Lithuanian?

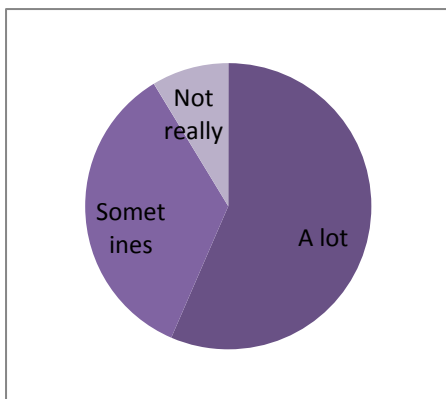
2-5 years old



6-11 years old

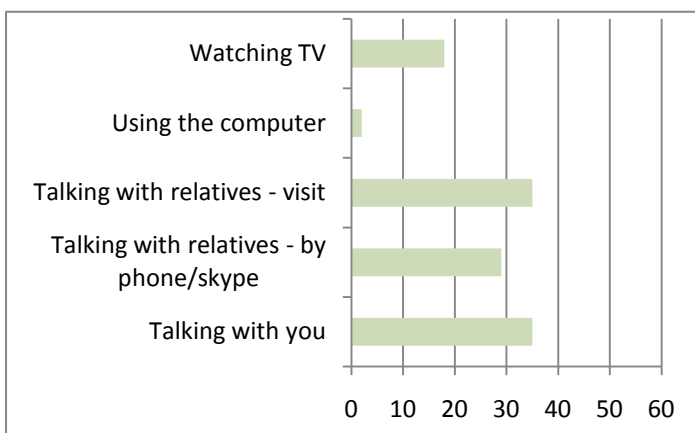


12-16 years old

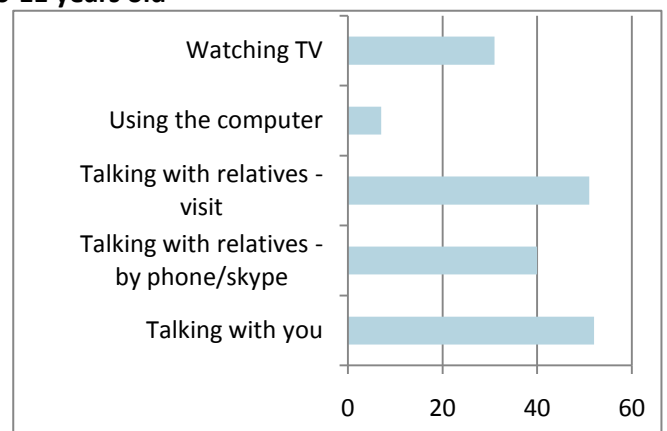


What encourages you child to speak Polish, Lithuanian or Czech?

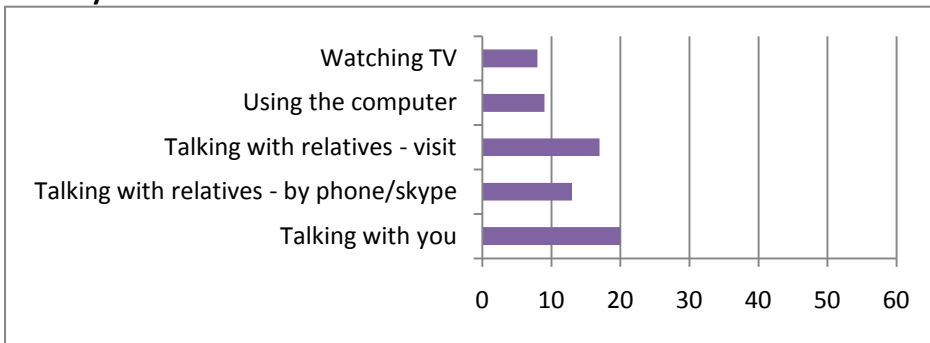
2-5 years old



6-11 years old

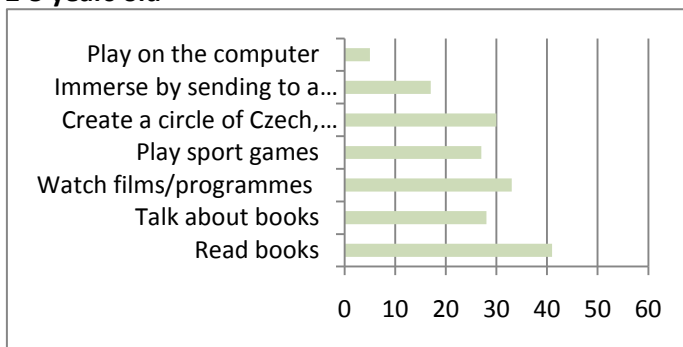


12-16 years old

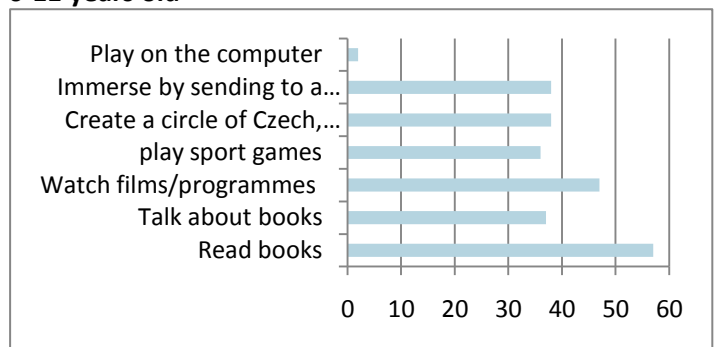


How do you help your child to improve / learn Czech, Lithuanian or Polish?

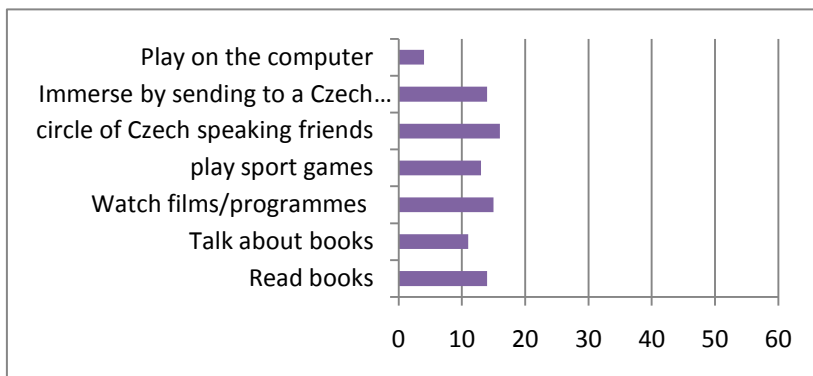
2-5 years old



6-11 years old



12-16 years old



summary by: Karin Schöne for the Heuropa-Project team: <http://blog.heuropa.eu>