JULIA M. MURRMANN
University of Warsaw, Warsaw

EXPLORING ASPECTS OF RAISING MULTILINGUAL FIRST-BORN AND LATER-BORN SIBLINGS FROM PARENTS' PERSPECTIVE

ABSTRACT

It is believed that multilingual speakers outnumber those that are monolingual in the world's population, which renders the research into different aspects of multilingualism particularly worthwhile. The present paper wishes to address the topic of raising multilingual children in relation to their order of birth into the family. Parents, being crucial agents of primary socialization, play undoubtedly a decisive role in organizing the early multilingual development of their offspring and the variables of family size (two children or more) and birth order of the children seem to be of great importance. The most important differences, facilitating elements, difficulties and challenges, voiced by parents of multilingual toddlers and teenagers, including changes in parental attitude, implementation of new strategies, factor of experience and accumulated resources, position and function of the first-born, and others, were illustrated and discussed. The findings of the study may be of theoretical interest to linguists, and of practical interest to parents showing curiosity or concern about growing multilingual family.

INTRODUCTORY CONSIDERATIONS

Contrary to commonly held beliefs, monolingualism is characteristic only of a minority of the world's population and from both a contemporary and a historical perspective, multilingualism is to be seen as the norm rather than the exception (Bhatia, Ritchie 2013: xxi; Edwards 2013: 14; Franceschini 2013: 5; Spolsky 1998: 51). The present paper wishes to address the topic of raising multilingual children in relation to their order of birth into the family and to search for patterns, modalities and mechanisms in multilingual upbringing of the first-born and later-born siblings. Without any doubt, parents, being key agents of primary socialization, play a decisive role in organizing the early multilingual development of their offspring and the variables of family size (two children or more) and birth order of the children seem to be of great importance and have significant impact on the parents' approach, actions and possible changes in previously used strategies. A pertinent question is how the order of birth of the children affects parents' behaviors and attitude in the domain of early language education at home and with what result. The underlying hypothesis is that the endeavor of multilingual raising of the later-borns has different dynamics and characteristics

than the same project with the first child and produces different final linguistic effects in the siblings.

OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH INTO FAMILY MULTILINGUALISM

Research on multilingualism has received, as acutely noticed by Jason Ceroz (2013: 3), much scholarly attention in recent years and has spread in different directions. Being an interdisciplinary and complex phenomenon that can be studied at both individual (personal) and societal (collective) levels, multilingualism has been approached from different perspectives in applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, neurolinguistics, psycholinguistics, education, politics and other disciplines. Some of the most relevant fields of the research are the following: the cognitive outcomes of linguistic multicompetence and development (i.e. Bialystok 2001; Herdina, Jessner 2002; Stavans, Hoffmann 2015), including interesting studies suggesting positive effects of bilingualism in the process of healthy cognitive ageing[1], the relationship between language and thought in multilingual individuals (i.e. Flora 2010; Leva 2011; Pavlenko 2014), plurilingual processing (i.e. Blackledge, Creese 2010), cross-linguistic influence and interaction (i.e. Jarvis, Pavlenko 2008; Odlin 2007), multilingual (and multicultural) identity (i.e. Molinelli 2017), aspects of multilingual acquisition (i.e. Yip, Matthews 2007; Grosjean, Ping 2013; Aronin, Singleton 2012; Burck 2007), multilingualism seen through the impact of power relations (i.e. Pavlenko, Blackledge 2004). As multilingualism has multiple facets, researchers in all these areas have different goals when they try to test hypotheses or answer research questions. Regardless of the scope and objectives of the wide-ranging studies undertaken in many different directions, it is true to conclude that a growing number of books and collections keeps providing us a better understanding of contemporary multilingualism from different points of view. Also, recently, multilingualism has been discussed in a new perspective important for the worldwide marketplace, namely in the light of phenomena of internationalization and globalization that gathered momentum in the economic sphere (Stavans, Hoffmann 2015: 6).

Research into family multilingualism is sparse if compared with other fields, yet not inexistent. Many valid research practices can be adopted from the extensive linguistic, sociolinguistic, sociological, pedagogical and medical studies investigating the aspects of the family structure, sibling configuration, cognitive and linguistic development and intellectual achievement in monolingual children (i.e. Zambrana, Ystrom, Pons 2012; Sundet et al. 2010; Pine 1995; Berglund, Eriksson, Westerlund 2005; Oshima-Takane, Goodz, Derevensky 1996; Iacovou 2007; Hoff-Ginsberg 1998) but sibling language use in plurilingual households remains an uncharted area in

---

[1] According to recent studies bilingualism may delay the deteriorating effects on the brain caused by ageing and help to prevent detrimental conditions such as dementia, Alzheimer's disease and other cognitive impairments in older people (i.e. Bialystok, Craik, Ryan 2006; Bialystok, Luk, Craik 2009; Bialystok et al. 2010; Bialystok et al. 2011; Bialystok, Craik, Freedman 2010; Atkinson 2016; Bialystok, Sullivan 2017).

studies. Only a few studies have looked at the impact of family size and birth order of the siblings on language development in multilingual, mostly bilingual, families.

Suzanne Barron-Hauwaert (2011) showed how dynamic the family language situation becomes with the arrival of younger siblings: "The particular make-up of a family can affect language use in the family in several ways. Birth order, gender, age gap, family size, individual personalities or differences all work together to create a unique sibling language environment" (Barron-Hauwaert 2011: 164). With data from international families, she investigated the reality of family life with two or more children and languages, trying to find answers to the questions regarding how bilingual brothers and sisters talk to each other and how the factors of birth order, personality or family size interact in language production.

Colin Baker (2014), in her guide to bilingualism dedicated to parents and teachers, briefly addressed the question of how first-borns are different to later-borns in developing bilingualism. She accurately observed that "when the second child arrives, the language pattern of the household tends to be relatively well established" (2014: 71). Hence, with the second and every next birth, decisions about language interaction at home have usually already been made. She presented several possible scenarios that were observed at some households, yet without any particular patterns, algorithms or regularities. "Siblings may use two or more languages to talk with each other, translanguaging in a manner that maximizes communication, understanding and meaning" (2014: 71). She also noticed, that in other cases, "the language balance may change within the home with each new arrival. The balance of languages heard and spoken may be different for the younger than the older child" (2014: 72)". Therefore, later-borns show often different language histories over time compared with first-borns and "published case histories of bilingual families rarely show exactly parallel bilingual development between siblings" (2014: 73).

We should also mention some empirical studies that looked at how sibling structure variables are associated with second language acquisition. Karin Keller, Larissa M. Troesch and Alexander Grob (2015) examined the extent to which three variables (*number of siblings, birth order, and presence of an older sibling at school age*) are linked to the second language skills of bilingual children. The research questions were tested using an ethnically heterogeneous sample of 1209 bilingual children with German as a second language. Controlling for children's age, gender, nationality, number of children's books at home, family language and parental German language skills, hierarchical regression analyses showed an inverse relationship between the number of siblings and second language skills: the more siblings a child had, the lower was his or her second language proficiency. This relationship was mediated by attendance in early education institutions. Moreover, first-born siblings showed better second language skills than later-born siblings. The study revealed that the resource dilution model (the decrease in resources for every additional sibling) holds for second language acquisition. Additionally, the results indicated that bilingual children from families with several children benefit from access to early education institutions.

Kelly Bridges and Erika Hoff (2014) focused on older sibling' influences on the language environment and language development of toddlers in bilingual English-Spanish homes. They carried out two separate studies examining older siblings' influence on the language exposure and language development of U.S.-born toddlers who were being raised bilingually. The participants in Study 1 were 60 children between 16 and 30 months who had heard English and Spanish at home from birth; 26 had older siblings and 34 did not. The participants in Study 2 were 27 children, assessed at 22 and 30 months, who had heard English and Spanish from birth; 14 had school-aged older siblings and 13 did not. Both studies found that older siblings used English more in talking to the toddlers than did other household members and that toddlers with older siblings were more advanced in English language development. Study 2 also found that the presence of a school-aged older sibling increased mothers' use of English with their toddlers and that toddlers without a school-aged older sibling were more advanced in Spanish than the toddlers with a school-aged older sibling. Their interesting findings contribute to a picture of the complex processes that shape language use in bilingual homes and cause variability in young children's bilingual development.

Annabelle David and Li Wei (2008) studied differences in the lexical development of bilingual children. Their research aimed to investigate the issue of individual differences with a longitudinal group study of 13 French–English bilingual children. They examined how extralinguistic factors such as gender, parental input and birth order impact the lexical development of the children. Using quantitative (parental checklists, questionnaires) and qualitative measures (interactions with parents), they demonstrated that language exposure and parental input were closely linked to vocabulary size, amount of language mixing and cross-linguistic synonyms.

The research of Sarah J. Shin (2002) concentrated on birth order and a child's place relative to other children in a family and the language proficiency achieved in host country language English and heritage language Spanish in children of Mexican immigrants. The scholar questioned the commonly-held belief that the earlier Spanish-speaking Mexican immigrants began learning English, the lower their levels of proficiency in Spanish and studied the factors that influence children to preserve, neglect or lose their heritage language.

In our literature review, we did not encounter any study based on the same principles and aiming at the same research problem as the present investigation. Yet, the parents' experiences and opinions seem to play a central role in the process of growing multilingual family with success.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The empirical data was systematically gathered over an extended period of time, between January 2017 and February 2018. Data collection took the form of semi-structured interviews (widely used in qualitative research) with the parents of multilingual children. It is true to say that the interviewees were mostly mothers who, in the families

participating in the study, were often a stay-at-home and full-time caregiver. The questions during the interviews were open-ended to allow the participants to fully express their opinions and thoughts. In other terms there was a general framework of themes to be explored and the actual interview questions were congruent with the following research questions:

1) What major differences, if any, including both facilitating elements and difficulties, can be observed between raising multilingual first child and his/her later-born siblings?
2) How to describe the role of the first-born in the endeavor of multilingual upbringing of the later-born children?
3) What extraordinary internal or external circumstances accompanying the arrival of the second (and any next) child can significantly change the situation in the early language education at home and/or create new challenges for the parents?
4) Under what circumstances was it necessary or desirable to introduce a new (different, other than previously used) approach or a new (different, other than previously used) strategy in the endeavor of multilingual upbringing of the later-born children?
5) What can be told about the final multilingual competence in all children?

The interviews were carried out in different languages (English, German, Polish and Italian), depending on the interlocutor, and then all translated into English. The interview transcripts were content-analysed and trustworthiness criteria were applied. As almost all of the interviews were performed during play dates with children, direct observation connected with participation in the life of the group can also be added as a supporting method of data collection in the present research. Its aim was to gain a close and intimate familiarity with the multilingual families and observe the relationships between the parents, the first-borns, the second-borns and/or the later-borns. Thanks to this procedure the behavioral actions of the parents could easily be contrasted with their verbal statements.

Seven key themes emerged from the collected data, labeled 'Experience: Practice makes perfect', 'Changes in the parents' attitude', 'Old or new strategy?', 'The role of the first-born', 'Parental resources', 'New Challenges', 'Final multilingual competence in children'. The findings within each area offer insights into the impact of the broadly understood experience with the first-born on the situation with the second- and later-borns.

The study involved 18 international families with at least two children (in the body of the article referred to as Family A–R, using only the letters of the American alphabet). It was impossible, and not even especially desirable, to find the households with an identical family profile and exactly same characteristics (apart from having more than one child). The differences between the participating families include such variables as: age and education level, including linguistic skills, of the parent(s); social-economic status (class) of the family; composition of the household (nuclear or extended family sharing one place); gender of the children; family size, number of siblings, gap(s)

between the first- and later-borns (spacing from 1 year to 11 years) and the age of the eldest siblings resulting (or not) in their attendance of daycare, kindergarten or school; country of origin (nationality, race, religion) and place of current residence (home country or host country); number, kind, specifics and combination of the languages spoken in the day-to-day family life; approach, method, technique and communication strategy in raising multilingual children used in the household; diseases, disorders or deficits in (language) development diagnosed in a child. As a matter of fact, the participating families have very different social, economic and strictly linguistic backgrounds. In order to illustrate the wide spectrum of the family profiles, let's just cite that among the interviewees there was a household with three generations living under one roof (L), a 9-member-patchwork multicultural family (B), and a family on-the-move with 5 different places of residence on the globe within the last 10 years connected to several consecutive expat-contracts and resulting in new languages being constantly added to the linguistic repertoire of the family (H). All the previously listed variables, inevitably, affect the linguistic development of children, additionally to the variable taken under a special consideration in the present research which is the birth order. However, no research can claim to fully control the factors mentioned above – each family may evolve over time and as family circumstances change, as patterns of friendship vary, as geographical and social and vocational mobility occur, so the varying opportunities for multilingual development may also change over time. This is not the only limitation and artifact to the conclusions of the present research. We should always bear in mind that the judgment of every parent is, undoubtedly and inevitably, very subjective and partial. This it, however, a commonly known difficulty in the methodology that is related to the fact of interviewing human subjects who are always biased and emotional to some extent and base their opinions on inner experiences rather than facts. Additionally, the assessment of language development generally, in children and finally, in multilingual children, is – objectively – a very difficult and complex task requiring much effort and skills to deal with.

The most important data regarding the linguistic profile of the families participating in the research was presented in table 1.

Table 1. Language profile of the multilingual families (n=18) participating in the study

Code	Children's gender and age	Languages spoken in the family's life	Particularities regarding the family
Family A	girl (3), girl (1)	English (country language and father's native language), German (mother's native language), Russian (grandparents' language)	Children are exposed to two languages from birth at all times, and sporadically to a third language. Mother is originally bilingual. Family speaks English when all together.

Family B	girl (12), girl (10), girl (10), boy (2,5), boy (1)	English (host country language, father's native language), German (country language, mother's language)	In this patchwork (reconstructed) multicultural family children are differently exposed to the languages depending on where they currently live and with whom (with which parent).
Family C	girl (6,5), boy (2,5)	English (host country language), German (both parents' language)	The first child was raised in one language until the age of 4.
Family D	girl (15,5), boy (4,5)	German (country language, mother's native language), English (host country language, father's native language)	There is a constant exposure to both languages at all times for both children. There is a big age difference between siblings. Family speaks English when all together.
Family E	girl (4,5), girl (2,5)	Moldovian (both parents' native language), Rumanian (baby-sitter's language), English (host country language, parents' second language)	Family had an all-time care giver co-living with them for the first child. Family decide dot changed their strategy when raising the second-born (OPOL).
Family F	girl (4), girl (2,5)	English (both parents' native language, country language), Polish (grandparents' language, father's second language), Korean (host country language).	The first daughter was temporary exposed to three languages, including care givers Korean, mother's English and father's Polish). The second daughter is exposed to two languages.
Family G	boy (11), boy (3,5)	English (both parents' native language, country language), Polish (grandparents' language, mother's second language)	The first-born was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.
Family H	girl (9,5), girl (7), girl (5), boy (3,5)	German (both parents' native language), different host country languages over time (Chinese, English, French, Spanish)	Family moved several times. All siblings are constantly exposed to German and English (daycare language in different countries) and periodically to other languages.
Family I	girl (4,5), boy (3)	English (country language, father's native language), Polish (mother's native language)	Children are exposed to two languages at all times. Family speaks English when all together.
Family J	girl (5), boy (3)	German (both parents' native language), English (host country language)	Children attend a child care institution where they learn the second language. German is spoken at home.

Family K	boy (5), girl (3,5)	German (country language, both parents' native language), English (host country language)	Children received education in the second language during the stay in a host country (contract-limited stay).
Family L	boy (3,5), girl (2)	Italian (both parents' language, whereas it's not a mother tongue of the father), Arabic (grandparents' language), English (host country language)	Three generations (grandparents, parents and children) live together. Parents and grandparents try to be consistent and use the minority languages at home.
Family M	boy (3,5), girl (2,5), boy (1)	English (country language), German (father's native language), Italian (mother's language), Polish (grandparents' language, host country language)	All siblings are exposed to four languages at all times.
Family N	boy (15), boy (6), girl (3,5)	Polish (country language), German (father's language, school's language), Russian (mother's language), English (additional education's language)	The middle child was diagnosed with autism spectrum disease.

Family speaks German when all together.

Polish (country language) is actually not spoken well by any member of the family. |
Family O	girl (6), girl (3)	German (father's language), Polish (country language, mother's language), English (daycare language, home language not as mother tongue)	English (not a mother tongue) is spoken if the family is all together.
Family P	boy (4), girl (1,5)	English (country language), Chinese (two dialects; parents' native language)	Family mixes languages.
Family Q	boy (10), girl (8), boy (5,5), girl (3,5)	English (country language), Spanish (both parents' native language)	Parents try to be consistent and speak the minority language at home.
Family R	girl (4), girl (2)	English (country language, father's native language), Chinese (mother's native language, grandparents' language), Spanish (second country language, daycare language)	Children are constantly exposed to three languages.

Source: own elaboration

Finally, we care to stress that in the present article we will use 'multilingualism' as an umbrella term that includes 'bilingualism', 'trilingualism', 'quadrilingualism' and so on. Seeing 'multilingualism' as a generic term including 'bilingualism', can be regarded, nowadays, as the mainstream position (Aronin, Singleton 2008), although some researchers still prefer to distinguish between the term 'bilingual' for users of two languages and 'multilingual' for users of three or more languages, which is in line with the literal meaning of Latin prefixes *bi* ('two') and *multi* ('many')[2]. We are not treating, of course, these terms as synonyms, nor are we using them interchangeably, but – as this 'lack of precision' does not produce any misinterpretation of the research data – we just choose to see the dual language competence as subcategory of a more comprehensive hypernym. The discussion of whether it is fully legitimate or not, similarly as the correctness of other unclear and somewhat controversial elements of the definition of 'multilingualism' (for example the degree of fluency in the language), falls beyond the scope of this article.

<center>**STUDY RESULTS**</center>

Experience: Practice makes perfect

Being a parent is like entering a new role in life, like starting a new job. In this new, unexplored field one needs to learn and to gain experience. Some things can of course be learned from other more experienced parents but as the life circumstances and family profiles are different, so will be the individual experiences. The truth revealed in many interviews was that "with the first child you just learned your lesson" (Family A–D, F, M, O, R). The training, the practice, the routine makes you experienced and – to some extent – perfect. Parenting is a process and by the method of discovery, by trying out various means and, often, by trial and error, the caregivers manage the task of problem solving. As results from the collected data the factor of 'experience' can be understood in many different ways.

First, it regards an overall strictly parental experience. Many interviewees have admitted, with laughter, that the first child was a kind of "guinea pig child" (Family B, D, K, N). First-time parents need to get the basics about the baby care and learn about a child's development and reaching milestones. What tends to be an advantage for the later arrived offspring is that parents have already accumulated experience which includes

---

[2] Some researchers (Stavans, Hoffmann 2015) insist on drawing a clear line between the number of languages present in a certain contact situations. They choose to look at 'trilingualism' (the use of three languages; they tend to use it when discussing individuals with three languages) and 'multilingualism' (the use of more than two languages; which, however, obviously includes 'trilingualism'; they tend to use it to refer to both sociolinguistic and personal aspects) as distinct from 'bilingualism' because "[they] feel that the subject merits separate treatment, both when looking at individuals who acquire and use three (or more) languages and when taking a wider sociolinguistic perspective" (2015: 1). For the purpose of this very study and its methodological premises we think that, focusing exclusively on individual and not societal, or socio-economic or geopolitical level, the maximal difference can be spotted between the use of one language in a household (monolingualism) and the use of more than one language (bilingualism and multilingualism), regardless of the fact how many languages exactly are being actually spoken (two, three or more).

multifold valuable knowledge, know-how (savoir-faire), awareness, maturity and practice. This is well illustrated, in a humorous style, by Family D:

> With the first child you are normally a rookie, you are clueless, "green" and simply stressed. About everything, starting from the diapering, burping, bathing, through the effects of vaccines, up to the issues of bonding and intellectual development. It's like in this running joke with the coin. If your first-born swallowed a penny, you panic, you cry, you rush to the hospital and demand x-rays. When the second child swallows a coin, you carefully and patiently wait for it to pass. With the third-born – you deduct it from the pocket money. So the language development is, of course, also an important issue. You just simply don't know how is it going to be because it's a new situation. With the second one, and I guess, every next child, you are simply more relaxed and smarter.

Second, the interviewees meant the strictly linguistic experience. Many parents admitted to having had problems with understanding their babies' language. They needed to learn the language of a child which is in many ways different than the language of adults. Several parents were simply not prepared for the challenge of understanding the words and utterances that were mispronounced from their perspective. "As a non-parent you simply need an interpreter to the baby-talk" [here is meant the way a small child talks, and not what is commonly known as baby-talk in the literature] (Family B). Many words pronounced by a 2-year-old sound really alike and their meaning is very different (Family M cited the example of: "papa and popo" and "beep, baby and pipi"; "Even if all these may sound different to an ear of an outsider – believe me – in the mouth of a 2-year-old they seem so alike!"). Additionally, in multilingual families the difficulty of guessing in which language the child is currently speaking must be added. The little ones tend to confuse languages in many occasions, especially if the settings suddenly change (a new interlocutor, of different linguistic resources, joins the conversation).

The linguistic experience also refers to the increased vocabulary and language knowledge in those cases in which a parent (or both parents) had chosen to speak with the child (and later with other children) a language that is not his or her first (native) language. For many reasons, parents may have opted to speak a language that is not originally their mother tongue (Family B, M, O). In this scenario, with the first child they inevitably needed to learn some new terminology and expressions within the domain of baby-world (including the names of the accessories, activities, sicknesses, nursery rhymes, etc.). With the second child, this lexis is already available.

Moreover, the experience in managing a multilingual home increases as the time passes by. Once the family extends to two or more children, the linguistic roles and patterns in the day-to-day life of a family are mostly well established and everyone knows his or her place, duties and responsibilities (with the first child many questions remained unanswered, many decisions were still to be made, several solutions were still to be worked out).

Third, we can also distinguish an increase in extralinguistic (cultural) knowledge connected to the children's world. In this vein, Family K provides an interesting example:

We learned a lot about the children's world and characters from most beloved cartoons and fairy tales. It took us a while to understand what our son meant when he kept saying "I want <u>chase</u>", "I am <u>rocky</u>", "You are <u>rider</u>", "Where is <u>sky</u>?" (additionally English not being our first language!) [the infant's utterances were in English and in German but the highlighted words remained unchanged]. We simply did not know Chase, Ryder, Marshall, Rubble, Rocky and the rest of the rescue team. Now we know [laugh] all the main characters in the *Paw Patrol* series – rescue dogs in training. He learned those protagonists from the kids at the daycare. When our second-born daughter mentioned some strangely sounding words we started to focus on her favorite cartoons and discovered the heroes from "My little Pony" (Twilight Sparkle, Applejack, Pinkie Pie, Spike, etc.).

Changes in the parents' attitude
The research outcome in this area can be presented as the following findings.

1. The anxiety that accompanied the multilingual upbringing of the first-born has been tamed. Some fear, of course, remains, but the experience and confidence play now a significant role. The first-parent-anxiety was present in many different forms, as concluded from the research. Most importantly, the parents were worried about the child's general mental development and intellectual achievements, and feared the delays in reaching linguistic milestones by their child ("In the questionnaire at the paediatrician's office there were always questions about the number of words known and used by the child at 12-month, 18-month, 24-month check-ups and we were always torn between lying or putting really low numbers"; Family I). Many parents have heard from different (mostly not scientific) sources that multilingualism can produce mental retardation or harm intellectual development. Some research appeared to show that bilingual children achieve smaller vocabularies in life. One mother (Family M) was terrified about the danger of a 'semilingualism', which is a poor mastery in each of the languages spoken, meaning that the linguistic ability in all languages remains at a low level of development. Nobody wants such an effect in the child. However, the experiences of the interviewed group do not confirm any of those statements or fears – the children have the capacity to expand their linguistic repertoire and doing so exacts no cognitive price. Nevertheless, the fear of a long-lasting 'silent phase' (many multilingual children, indeed, remain longer silent than their monolingual peers as they refuse to communicate until they become more familiar with the language) was very common among the interviewees (family A–D, H, I, J, M, O, P). With the second child the anxiety is less although the time of waiting for the first words may actually even be longer than with the first-born. In fact, most parents confirmed the commonly held observation that the second-born is "a little behind" (Family D, M), "slower" (Family J), "delayed" (Family G, I), "shier" (Family A, D), "quieter" (Family F) compared with the first-born as far as the oral communication is concerned (it is not the case, however, if referred to the skill of understanding and also to the other non-verbal behaviours!). But the parents felt more familiar with the situation, they were more confident about the final

(positive) outcome and they have certainly acquired craft and competence in raising multilingual children.

Another common concern regarded the balanced development of the languages involved in child's repertoire. The question of whether the child would be an active (productive) competent speaker of all languages kept being posed. In other words, the parents kept asking themselves if their child would have a complete proficiency and control over all his or her languages (so as to sound native) and would be 'ambilingual' or 'omnilingual' (an individual who possesses the native mastery in two or more languages). Generally, most interviewed parents are very satisfied with their children's linguistic development (both in the first and in the later children) although the ideal of the perfectly balanced polyglot has rarely been reached. Children are like "sponges" (this metaphor was used several times; Family A, C, F, H, J, M, O, R), but a 'truly multilingual native speaker' of all languages (a 'multiple monolingual' or 'a native speaker of several languages in one') does barely exist. However, spotting that this is actually neither a priority nor a necessity, does reassure the parents and "the children are just doing fine" (Family Q). Even the outcome of an unbalanced mastery (where a preferred/dominant language is much stronger than the second language) or only a passive (receptive) competency in the second (or third) language is an asset in the opinion of many parents (Family G, H, I, L). The most important relief for the parents seems to be the observation that after the first, a little problematic period, multilingualism has an additive rather than subtractive effect on children's competence, meaning that the second language adds to, rather than replaces, the first language. They have tested that learning the second language does not necessarily mean losing the first one. In this vein, the anxiety with the later-borns decreases.

2. There is less pressure, less rush and fewer expectations towards the later-borns' multilingual competence in parents' approaches (it does not translate, however, into lack of interest; parents are equally high involved). A typical behaviour of the first-time parents is to attempt by all means to ensure their first-born succeeds maximally, including in languages. Although there is equally as much love, affection and bonding in the family regardless of the birth order, there seems to be more patience, tolerance and simply capacity to accept delays or troubles with some tasks, including the linguistic performances, in the educational process of the later-borns. The later born offspring seems to experience less pressure from the parents with regard to speaking a 'correct language', or mixing their two or more languages compared with the first-borns. Parents resigned from the high expectation of an (inexistent) 'idealized speaker' with a complete knowledge of the whole language and are satisfied with the 'real speaker competence' whose performance may be intriguing, fascinating, funny or sometimes incorrect but authentic and close to "heart" (in fact many parents admitted to love the language mistakes of their toddlers and they often choose not to correct them; Family F, G, M, N, O, Q). Parents, undoubtedly, still care about the language development but there is usually less nervousness about it and they are a little more relaxed.

3. The belief that multilingual competence is a huge asset in the current globalised world grows stronger. Many examples in life (in example travelling abroad with children or making new acquaintances) reassured the parents that monolingualism is simply not sufficient in the 21st century and they see the multilingualism as an excellent investment in children's future. Also, as the interviewed parents of multilingual children start to search information and support in scientific sources and guides, they find many researches suggesting that multilingual individuals may have lifelong advantages, rather than disadvantages, over monolinguals in cognition, in language processing, in management of multiple stimuli. Bilingual or multilingual rearing of infants is believed to bring several tangible benefits. A monolingual mindset is, apparently, less capable of coping with changeable circumstances. Moreover, some studies suggest a protective effect of multilingualism against symptoms of brain disorders, such as Alzheimer's disease. Even if the ultimate evidence may still be missing, these are promising advantages.

4. Several parents admitted that as they look around they notice that multilingual families are not that small of a phenomenon. Rearing children with more than one language can be a choice or an outcome of a life situation – in many cases it was life that has placed parents in these and no other linguistic and cultural circumstances. It apparently helps to see that multilingualism is to be seen as the norm rather than the exception. It is a new (or newly discovered) social fact and this reassures the parents in their endeavour.

5. In a narrow perspective, it has been proved that multilingualism brings advantages to the family life as, for example, it positively contributes to better relations with the grandparents and other relatives (Family E, P, R). Otherwise, the extended family would have been excluded to a certain extent from the life of the children. If the grandchildren speak the language of their grandparents, both parties can benefit more, the whole family is closer together and there is more mutual support between family members.

Old or new strategy?
Most of the families interviewed admitted to be using the same strategy in raising children multilingually (Family A–D, F, I–K, M, P–R). It was tested and it was effective in their eyes. With the arrival of the second-born the linguistic patterns in the household were well-established. The roles were distributed. Decisions about which languages to use in which circumstances (at home versus in the public; in mother-child interactions versus in the whole-family-interactions) and with which people had already been made. There is a latently agreed and accepted pattern of language use model within the family and with 'outsiders' already established by the arrival of second and later children who then fit into a well-established language routine (and basically have "no other choice"; Family Q). Of course, there are obvious changes in the circumstances (including the previously illustrated issues and the later discussed presence of the first-born), so the language trajectories of the siblings rarely remain identical, but – at least – the parents declare to continue their earlier implemented strategy.

Some families, however, opted for or were forced to change their strategies. The need of implementation of a new strategy was verified in the families in which geographical mobility was involved. The first-child was born in a monolingual setting (in the home country) and then the family moved to a different country. In this case, the language history of the siblings is simply different. The extreme case was the family who moved several times and the kids were born in different countries (Family H). Systematically, new languages were being added to the family's repertoire. In spite of these unusual circumstances, the strategy was only updated – the minority language was constantly spoken at home, the new host country language was learned in the child care facilities ('full immersion method') and the previous host country language was kept active through private lessons (only in children who actually learned it). In this regard, each of the four children in the family represents a slightly different linguistic trajectory, with other languages being added to the repertoire throughout their childhood. The case of this very multilingual family does not show parallel linguistic development between siblings.

With the first child, Family E was using the method of 'minority language at home', with their own modification: rare, extended in time, slowly-proceeding exposure to the host country language. After their semi-satisfying experience (the daughter kept refusing to speak the host country language and struggled to understand it, and only after much effort she became quite fluent in it) they decided to change to the OPOL-approach (one person/parent, one language) with the second daughter. The mother used the minority (heritage) language and the father used the host country language (although it is not his mother tongue). In other terms, they opted for shifting from firstly monolingual upbringing pattern, connected with sequential bilingualism (two languages acquired at different ages, traditionally after the age of three), to the primary (or early) simultaneous bilingualism pattern (where the two languages are being learnt naturally, not via teaching, and they are acquired concurrently).

In Family O, the mother, all-time caregiver, decided to resign from her own method consisting of repeating the same utterance in two languages, finding it too long and not really effective (since the child understood already the first part and doesn't pay attention to the second one).

In another family (L), the co-living grandmother was "kindly" asked not to speak a third language with the first grandchild, because the parents were anxious about the outcome and worried that the child could have been over-challenged and confused. With the second child, after the grandparent admitted to had been secretly using her own mother-tongue with the first-born (that turned trilingual), she was allowed to officially proceed with her strategy with the later-born.

Contrary, in a different family (M) the sporadically visiting grandmother was afraid to use her mother tongue to the first grandchild and – although differently wished by her daughter and son-in-law – tried to speak in her poor English (one out of three languages used in the family) because of her fear of overwhelming her grandson. With the arrival of the granddaughter (after seeing no damage in the older quadrilingual grandchild), she did not object any more to using the fourth language.

An interesting fact has been verified in four different families (E, J, L, P) of a very heterogeneous linguistic background. It has been seen that it is advisable to avoid (or at least try to avoid) to use two different dialects (within Chinese or Arabic) or two mutually intelligible languages (like Moldovian and Rumanian), or even the same language but with different regional accents (regional varieties of German, of Italian, etc.) because the mixture of using those slightly different codes can needlessly confuse the child (additionally to other difficulties) and also disturb the parents themselves (a different pronunciation or accent bothered their ears).

The role of the first-born

Older siblings take on different roles depending on many variables, including their age, gender, age difference to younger brothers and/or sisters, own stage of (language) development, current appointment (for example preschool or kindergarten attendance), personality, culture of origin, and finally – parents' encouragement.

Generally, in the present research, a model of a positive effect of the first-born on the language acquisition of the later-borns has emerged, especially if the gap between the siblings was not too big (three years or less). Parents highlighted that the older children are strongly involved in upbringing their younger siblings and because the children are – understandably – at different stages of language development, the later-borns benefit hugely. But there are advantages for both first- and second-borns: the former is happy and proud to be a (linguistic) role model and the latter gets more stimuli. The communication at home now includes simply more parties: next to the parent-child interaction (with, what is very important, less adult speech directed exclusively to the later-borns), the conversations between older and younger siblings need to be taken into consideration. The interviewed parents highlighted that they eagerly encouraged involvement and help of the first-borns to keep them busy and also because it took away some of the burden from them: the older siblings are in fact procuring much more input than any other actor in the household (Family A, B, G, M, Q). They are great motivators and influential language models and even if their utterances may not always be of the 'highest linguistic quality' and 'perfect correctness', their role is of great significance. The infants learn much language through listening and talking to the older siblings because they also admire them and because their almost peers use a much simpler language. They tend to follow (consciously or nor) the lead of the older children, and in a multilingual family they follow a similar pattern when it comes to the language distribution between different family members and environment, also if it involves a complicated configuration (talking with mom in L1, with dad in L2, and with others in L3). They just imitate and copy the linguistic behaviours of the siblings. It is also true to add that they have "no other choice" (Family Q) and cannot discredit the earlier established order. They care to join the conversations as fully accepted partners as soon as possible and concentrate on this objective without questioning the rules.

In some cases, parents admitted to see problematic aspects. The second child is quiet (Family F) and shy (Family A, D). They arrive later so they have to accept the already

established language life of the home even if they do not like it. Older siblings have more power and seem unreachable models. Thus, as already mentioned before, many parents confirm that younger siblings are/were slightly slower in their language development (Family D, G, I, J, M). Although they can be very motivated and interested in participating in the interaction and belonging to the family, they may often be ashamed by the presence of a more competent older brother or sister or simply not quick enough (the question has already been answered as the older siblings tend to respond to all questions, even those addressed to the younger ones). It is sad but the later-borns are often excluded from the more advanced language interactions with the adults. There is also less interaction just with the later-born because the first-born interrupt all the conversations. Parents find it advisable to take some time off just with the younger offspring.

If the second-born arrives, let's say, five or more years later, he or she may be in many ways treated like a first-born (again). In infants' eyes the communication skills of the older siblings are well developed and therefore they tend to see the older sibling as another 'adult speaker'. This also increases the input and the exposure to the language(s) but it will take much more time for the siblings to become partners and equally righted interlocutors in the family conversation.

Parental resources

The process of preparing for parenthood consists of many stages. Some resources decrease while others increase over time and as the family grows bigger. As far as the linguistic aspects are concerned, the parental resources seem to be univocally expanding. The know-how, practice, and experience gathered with the first-born are waiting for the later-borns. The parental investments have paid off. This is well illustrated by Family M:

> It is a big effort to raise a multilingual child… I mean, if you want do it right… It requires time, energy, money…You are worried about the right input and about the equal amount of it in each of the languages involved. The good and somewhat comforting news is that it gets easier with the second child because you already have resources collected and tested linguistic paths to follow. A simple thing: you know how to organize a nice and purposeful play date with regard to the language you want your kids to practice: you know where to meet, what toys and games to bring, how much time to plan for each activity so that the little ones have both fun and language training.

From a strictly material perspective, it should be highlighted that most families were better equipped with the second-born than with the first-born (especially if the age gap wasn't too big), although most things were a little consumed and used-up. This regards such items as children books (in different languages), CDs, DVDs, board games, art and crafts, interactive toys (speaking in many languages). New technology has also made a presence in the nursery field: so many interesting linguistic resources for parents are now available in the internet-based digital format. All these factors seem to facilitate the linguistic development of a child, and especially of the second one (as they are already available and tested).

Parents also stressed that their own intellectual resources and good practices with children increased after the experiences with the first child. As strange as it may seem, some parents didn't (ever) know (or forgot) the nursery rhymes, poems, the lyrics of lullabies and songs for the infants in their native language. With the later-borns they dispose of richer resources.

New Challenges

No matter how much experience the parents were able to gather with the first child, life always brings both positive and negative surprises. Not only is each child simply different (different personality), but also many life circumstances, apart from having an addition to the family, can change (we already mentioned before the need of implementation of an updated strategy if the geographical mobility was involved).

A commonly voiced new challenge was the siblings' competition and rivalry (visible in many domains, not limited to the language competence). Parents would like to dedicate the same amount of attention and time for a one-to-one interaction with the second child, but it becomes difficult or impossible in many cases. The first-born fights for a special care and compliments. Many activities are shared (as shared reading). Both (all) children and also parents need to accept this new setting.

An unpleasant "challenge" is connected to the fact of having diagnosed deficits in (language) development of one of the children (Family G, N). The problems may include different diseases, impairments, mental delays, neurological disorders, abnormal speech defects, speech impediments, difficulties with social communication and interaction with other people associated with the spectrum of autism-related disorders. A family could have encountered such challenges with the first or with the later born child which in each case had put them in a new (unknown) situation. The life with the second child is now either with (Family N) or without (Family G) a treatment and speech therapy, contrary to the previous experiences.

Final multilingual competence in children

There are several reasons rendering the results in this section particularly hard to present and discuss, and easy to undermining. First, it is never appropriate to demand and/or directly ask parents to compare their children and the competences of their children (one can only hope that they decide to vocalize their judgments spontaneously). Second, as already voiced previously, we can only partly rely on parents' assessment of their own children's skills and abilities as parents tend to be partial and biased. Third, it is objectively difficult or even impossible to assess the competence in toddlers who often are in the early stages of language acquisition (babbling stage, holophrastic stage, two-word-utterance stage, or telegraphic stage, all stages before a child can speak fluently which in multilingual children begin even later than in those monolingual). Fourth, even though the interviews were often carried out in presence of children, the older children were mostly absent (being in a day-care or school).

Generally, it can be said that the final linguistic competence is comparable (as much as it can be tested or judged by now) in first-borns and in later-borns if other variables remained constant. If there were significant changes in family's life, such as geographic mobility (Family H), or diseases or disorders diagnosed in children (Family G, N), the results are different. Hence, the differences in language skills are rather connected to the fact that the circumstances did not (could not) remain constant than to the direct actions (or lack of actions) on the parents' side. The language trajectories of the siblings are simply different and the later-born can be in some cases deprived of the possibility to learn a language through the effective method of full immersion. This scenario happened when the family moved to a different country and the contact to the host country language was restricted and difficult to compensate with – for example – private lessons (despite parents' effort).

In a few cases, parents said that the language repertoire of the later-born was significantly limited (often resulting in passive competence only) when compared with the repertoire of their first-born (family D, I, P). The majority language takes over because it is the preferred language of the older child (in many cases the older siblings may be affected by the language experience of attending a day-care, preschool, kindergarten or school). Thus, younger siblings may experience more exposure to the majority/dominant language and show no interest in a minority (heritage) language spoken – in their eyes – by a very restricted circle of speakers. The balance of language experience is shifted and affected by the choices of the first-borns as for the language of play and the language of television (that, by the way, plays a significantly greater role in the life of later-borns than of the first-borns; in fact, parents can only try to sometimes change the language settings which can help increase the input in the waning, rejected or discredited language). If the social life (contacts with friends, acquaintances and strangers) requires the fluency in one language only, the younger children may want to choose the easier way.

CONCLUSIONS

The present paper presents an exploration of the topic of raising multilingual children in regard to their order of birth into the family. The most important differences, facilitating elements and difficulties voiced by parents of multilingual toddlers (and teenagers), including changes in parental approach, implementation of new strategies, position and function of the first-born in the family language life, factor of manifold experience (including a general, linguistic and extralinguistic know-how) and previously accumulated parental resources, and new challenges were illustrated and discussed. All research questions have been satisfactory answered. The working hypothesis has been tested and partly disproved. The endeavour of multilingual raising of the later-borns has indeed different dynamics and characteristics than the same project with the first child: the task appears generally easier to the parents at the second trial due to their earlier collected experiences and resources; there is less anxiety about the final outcome, less stress and less pressure; there are more parties involved in the process of the early language educa-

tion, as the first-born is an important additional language role model; there may appear new unpredicted circumstances and challenges; the process of language development in later-borns is often slightly slower. As far as the final linguistic skills in all siblings are concerned, it can be concluded, interestingly enough, that – with other variables remaining constant – the final multilingual competence in all children is similar. The fact that the language trajectories of the siblings are indeed prevalently different, congruously with Baker's (2014) assumption, does not negatively influence the multilingual overall performance in the later-borns. Despite many ascertained differences in the whole process, the final linguistic outcome is comparable, which is not consistent with the research results by Keller, Troesch and Grob (2015) suggesting that first-born siblings show better second language skills than later-born siblings. In this study, let's recall, the differences in siblings' multilingual proficiency were observed almost exclusively as a consequence of significant changes in family's life or medical circumstances. We should, however, bear in mind that the assessment of language skills was based on parental judgment only. Alternatively, it can be argued that in the present research group parents were exceptionally high involved (and – what is important – equally high in all cases) in the endeavour of raising multilingual offspring.

It is impossible, regrettably but inevitably, to generalize and formulate universal conclusions and recommendations, as the linguistic scenarios and circumstances in the multilingual families varied *a priori* and may also change over time. Nevertheless, the results of the analysed research material offer important insights into family multilingualism controlling for the variable of birth order. The outcome of the analyses contributes to an extensively researched topic of multilingualism and particularly adds knowledge to the insufficiently researched family multilingualism, including the aspects of parents' and siblings' roles. The data analysis can be a reference for future studies carried out by other researchers. We fully acknowledge, however, that longitudinal studies are needed in order to shed more light into the researched issue. Although the research falls short of developing specific recommendations for parents (or parents-to-be) to follow in order to succeed in raising multilingual children, it clearly offers an insight into interesting and informative real-life scenarios and examples of good and bad practices adopted by parents in specific circumstances and family set-ups. The effectiveness of the solutions "that work" depends, undoubtedly, on many internal (family-related) and external (environment-related) factors. Some comfort and practical advice can be offered to parents-to-be, first-time parents or less experienced parents interested in multilingual rearing of children. Among potentially useful tips we can cite are, for example, the suggestion to take some time off with the later-born only (in order to focus exclusively on his/her language performance; it seems obvious and natural but is often forgotten as the family tends to spend much time all together), to implement a new strategy being a multilingual adaptation of commonly known approaches, such as OPOL or MLAT, or context or time and place (if the previously used method was not fulfilling expectations and/or needs) and to try to control the television time with a special regard to the language settings (to use it as an additional input of waning, rejected or discredited language). Finally, it

is likely that many readers of this article are bilingual or multilingual (parents, parents-to-be) themselves. They are all sincerely encouraged to contact the author to share their observations and doubts.

REFERENCES

A r o n i n L. , S i n g l e t o n D. 2008: Multilingualism as a new linguistic dispensation, *International Journal of Multilingualism* 5, 1–16.

A r o n i n L. , S i n g l e t o n D. 2012: *Multilingualism*, Amsterdam–Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

A t k i n s o n A . L . 2016: Does Bilingualism Delay the Development of Dementia?, *Journal of European Psychology Students* 7(1), 43–50.

B a k e r C. 2014: *A parents' and teachers' guide to bilingualism*, Bristol–Buffalo–Toronto: Multilingual Matters.

B a r r o n - H a u w a e r t S. 2011: *Bilingual Siblings: Language Use in Families (Parents' and Teachers' Guide)*, Bristol–Buffalo–Toronto: Multilingual Matters.

B e r g l u n d E. , E r i k s s o n M. , W e s t e r l u n d M. 2005: Communicative skills in relation to gender, birth order, childcare and socioeconomic status in 18-month-old children, *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology* 46, 485–491.

B h a t i a T. K. , R i t c h i e W. C. 2013: Introduction, [in:] Bhatia T.K., Ritchie W.C. (eds), *The handbook of Bilingualism and Multilingualism*, New York: Wiley Blackwell Publishing, xxi–xxiii.

B i a l y s t o k E. 2001: *Bilingualism in development: Language, Literacy, Cognition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

B i a l y s t o k E. , C r a i k F. I . M . , F r e e d m a n M. 2010: Delaying the onset of Alzheimer disease: Bilingualism as a form of cognitive reserve, *Neurology* 75(19), 1726–1729.

B i a l y s t o k E. , C r a i k F. I . M . , R y a n J. 2006: Executive control in a modified anti-saccade task: Effects of aging and bilingualism, *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition* 32, 1341–1354.

B i a l y s t o k E. , L u k G. , C r a i k F. I . M . 2009: Cognitive Control and Lexical Access in Younger and Older Bilinguals, *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory and Cognition* 34(4), 859–873.

B i a l y s t o k E. , L u k G. , C r a i k F. I . M . , G r a d y C. L . 2011: Lifelong Bilingualism Maintains White Matter Integrity in Older Adults, *The Journal of Neuroscience* 31(46), 16808–16813.

B i a l y s t o k E. , S c h w e i z e r T. A . , W a r e J. , F i s c h e r C. E . , C r a i k F. I . M . 2010: Bilingualism as a contributor to cognitive reserve: Evidence from brain atrophy in Alzheimer's disease, *Cortex* 48(8), 991–996.

B i a l y s t o k E. , S u l l i v a n M . D. (e d s) 2017: *Growing Old with Two Languages: Effects of Bilingualism on Cognitive Aging* (*Studies in Bilingualism*), Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing House.

B l a c k l e d g e A . , C r e e s e A. 2010: *Multilingualism: A Critical Perspective*, London: Continuum International.

B o r n s t e i n M . H . , L e a c h D . B . , H a y n e s O . M . 2004: Vocabulary competence in first- and secondborn siblings of the same chronological age, *Journal of Child Language* 31, 855–873.

B r i d g e s K. , H o f f E. 2014: Older sibling influences on the language environment and language development of toddlers in bilingual homes, *Applied Psycholinguistics* 35, 225–241.

Burck Ch. 2007: *Multilingual Living*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ceroz J. 2013: Defining Multilingualism, *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 3, 3–18. Franceschini R. 2013: History of multilingualism, [in:] Chapelle C.A. (ed.), *The encyclopedia of applied linguistics*, New York: Blackwell Publishing, 4–8.

David A., Wei L. 2008: Individual differences in the lexical development of French-English bilingual children, *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 11, 598–618.

Edwards J. 2013: Bilingualism and Multilingualism: Some central conceptions, [in:] Bhatia T.K., Ritchie W.C. (eds), *The handbook of Bilingualism and Multilingualism*, New York: Wiley Blackwell Publishing, 5–25.

Flora C. 2010: Double talk, *Psychology Today* 11/12, 70–80.

Grosjean F., Ping L. (eds) 2013: *The psycholinguistics of bilingualism*, Oxford: Wiley Blackwell Publishing.

Hoff-Ginsberg E. 1998: The relation of birth order and socioeconomic status to children's language experience and language development, *Applied Psycholinguistics* 19, 603–629.

Iacovou M. 2007: Family size, birth order, and educational attainment, *Marriage and Family Review* 42, 35–57.

Jarvis S., Pavlenko A. 2008: *Crosslinguistic influence in language and cognition*, London: Routledge.

Keller K., Troesch L.M., Grob A. 2015: First-born siblings show better second language skills than later born siblings, *Frontiers in Psychology* 6, 705–715.

Leva B. 2011: How language shapes thought, *Scientific America* 304(2), 62–65.

Molinelli P. (ed.) 2017: *Language and Identity in Multilingual Mediterranean Settings. Challenges for Historical Sociolinguistics*, Berlin: Mouton De Gruyter.

Odlin T. 2005: Crosslinguistic Influence And Conceptual Transfer: What Are The Concepts?, *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 25, 3–25.

Oshima-Takane Y., Goodz E., Derevensky J.L. 1996: Birth order effects on early language development: do secondborn children learn from overheard speech? *Child Development* 67, 621–634.

Pavlenko A. 2014: *The Bilingual Mind: And What It Tells Us About Language and Thought*, New York: Cambrigde University Press.

Pine J.M. 1995: Variation in vocabulary development as a function of birth-order, *Child Development* 66, 272–281.

Shin S.J. 2002: Birth order and the language experience of bilingual children, *Tesol Quarterly* 36(1), 103–113.

Spolsky B. 1998: *Sociolinguistics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stavans A., Hoffmann Ch. 2015: *Multilingualism. Key topics in sociolinguistics*, Cambridge: Cambrigde University Press.

Sundet J.M., Eriksen W., Borren I., Tamsb K. 2010: The Flynn effect in sibships: investigating the role of age differences between siblings, *Intelligence* 38, 38–44.

Wei L. 2013: Conceptual and methodological issues in bilingualism and multilingualism research, [in:] Bhatia T.K., Ritchie W.C. (ed.), *The handbook of Bilingualism and Multilingualism*, Oxford: Wiley Blackwell Publishing, 26–51.

Yip V., Matthews S. 2007: *The Bilingual Child: Early Development and Language Contact*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Zambrana I.M., Ystrom E., Pons F. 2012: Impact of gender, maternal education, and birth order on the development of language comprehension: a longitudinal study from 18 to 36 months of age, *Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics* 33, 146–155.

STRESZCZENIE

O aspektach wychowania wielojęzycznych dzieci przez pryzmat kolejności urodzenia (perspektywa rodziców)

S ł o w a   k l u c z o w e : wielojęzyczność, kompetencje lingwistyczne, rodzina, rodzeństwo, kolejność urodzenia.

Uważa się, że liczba osób wielojęzycznych przewyższa liczbę jednojęzycznych w populacji światowej, co czyni badania nad różnymi aspektami wielojęzyczności szczególnie wartościowymi. W niniejszym artykule pragniemy poruszyć temat wychowania wielojęzycznego rodzeństwa w zależności od kolejności urodzenia się dzieci w danej rodzinie. Rodzice, jako podstawowi wychowawcy w ramach socjalizacji pierwotnej, także językowej, odgrywają bez wątpienia decydującą rolę w zaplanowaniu rozwoju wczesnej wielojęzyczności swojego potomstwa i zmienne takie jak wielkość rodziny (dwoje dzieci lub więcej) i kolejność urodzenia wydają się mieć istotne znaczenie. W artykule przedstawiono i omówiono najważniejsze różnice, elementy ułatwiające oraz trudności i wyzwania zgłaszane przez rodziców wielojęzycznych dzieci i młodzieży, w tym zmiany w postawie rodzicielskiej, wdrażanie nowych strategii, czynnik doświadczenia oraz zgromadzonych zasobów, pozycja i funkcja dziecka pierworodnego i inne. Wyniki badań mogą zainteresować zarówno językoznawców jak i rodziców zastanawiających się, jak zbudować wielojęzyczną rodzinę.