

CODESWITCHING AND CODEMIXING OF CZECH-ENGLISH SPEAKING CHILDREN IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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In my paper I am aiming at finding out how bilingualism influences social competencies of children who are brought up in families with two “mother tongues”, children who have one or both parents speaking different language than the major society of the country they are living in.

I have been researching a group of children in the Czech Republic, Prague who speak both English and Czech language, they attend regular Czech schools. They learn English at home and they attend multicultural community to learn English and to deepen their minority culture. I am recording the children speaking together and with their parents at the after school activities and analyse the recordings. I interpret the codeswitching on base of detailed speech line analyses as is described by Petr Auer (1998) which enables me to identify actual motives of the speakers.

My research is in progress but so far I argue that bilingual children with very similar ability in both languages are codeswitching according to the context of conversation which can be almost unconscious although they mainly speak the minority language at the community. The parents – children speech is often codeswitch into Czech (majority) when parents discipline their children and that is sometimes even when the parent is of the minority language. The feeling of identity of the children is usually blurred and seems to be of less importance.