

## Spracherwerb

ALICJA SAKAGUCHI

Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu, Wydział Neofilologii, Instytut Lingwistyki Stosowanej

# EINIGE BEMERKUNGEN ZUR DREISPRACHIGEN ERZIEHUNG (POLNISCH-ESPERANTO-DEUTSCH) MEINER KINDER

### Abstract

Der vorliegende Beitrag beinhaltet einige Bemerkungen über die dreisprachige Entwicklung meiner beiden Kinder. Untersuchungen über die kindliche Sprachentwicklung und Bilingualismus kennen wir hauptsächlich aus den historisch-natürlichen Sprachen. Plansprachen, wie Esperanto, wurden jedoch im Hinblick auf kindlichen Spracherwerb bisher kaum berücksichtigt. So lässt die Einbeziehung des Esperanto in derartige Betrachtungen eine Reihe interessanter Ergebnisse und Denkanstöße erwarten. Interferenzen und andere Eigentümlichkeiten des Polnischen, Deutschen und Esperanto in den früheren Phasen des kindlichen Spracherwerbs werden anhand der von der Autorin gesammelten Beispiele illustriert. Die Beispiele betreffen die Aussprache, Morphologie, Syntax und Semantik.

### Schlüsselwörter

kindliche Sprachentwicklung, Spracherwerb, Bilingualismus, Esperanto

## SOME REMARKS CONCERNING THE TRILINGUAL (POLISH-ESPERANTO-GERMAN) DEVELOPMENT OF MY CHILDREN<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

The article contains some remarks concerning the trilingual development of my two children. Research on children's language development and bilingualism has been known mainly in historic natural languages studies. So far, international auxiliary languages like Esperanto have been hardly considered so far in the research on language acquisition. Including Esperanto in such considerations yields valuable insight and findings. Interference and other peculiarities of Polish, German and Esperanto in the earlier period of language acquisition are illustrated with the aid of examples collected by the author of this article. Examples are related to spelling, vocabulary, morphology, syntax and semantics.

### Keywords

children's language development, language acquisition, bilingualism, Esperanto

## KILKA UWAG DOTYCZĄCYCH TRZYJĘZYCZNEGO ROZWOJU (POLSKI-ESPERANTO-NIEMIECKI) MOICH DZIECI

### Abstrakt

Artykuł zawiera kilka uwag dotyczących trzyjęzycznego rozwoju dwójkę moich dzieci. Badania nad rozwojem językowym dzieci i bilingwizmem znamy głównie z języków historyczno-naturalnych. Języki międzynarodowe skonstruowane, takie jak esperanto, prawie nie były do tej pory brane pod uwagę w badaniach dotyczących akwizycji języka. Uwzględnienie esperanta w tego rodzaju rozważaniach daje ciekawe wglądy i rozpoznania. Interferencje i inne osobliwości językowe we wcześniejszym okresie akwizycji języków zilustrowane zostały przykładami zebranymi przez autorkę artykułu. Przykłady dotyczą pisowni, słownictwa, morfologii, składni oraz semantyki.

### Słowa kluczowe

rozwój językowy dzieci, akwizycja języka, bilingwizm, esperanto

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## INTRODUCTION

Every child can learn any language, but one can acquire even more languages at once. Without a language environment, however, a child develops no language. Language acquisition is promoted only through communication. An exceptionally costly amount of time and energy is necessary for the maintenance and fulfillment of multilingualism. Bi- or multilingualism is the use of two or more different languages by an individual in daily communication. This state can result in doubt over which of the mastered languages can be called a mother tongue or which is operated with the greatest ease or in which one thinks<sup>2</sup>:

The competence of bilingual or multilingual speakers can fluctuate extremely; 'real' bilingualism [...] in which the speakers master the relevant languages in the same 'native language-like' way is rather rare.<sup>3</sup>

Research on children's language development and bilingualism has been known mainly in historic natural languages studies. The cases, however, in which the child acquires a language that is neither the mother tongue of the mother or father, are very rare. Esperanto constitutes an exception to this generalization. International auxiliary languages, such as Esperanto, have hardly been considered regarding the language-development of a child – that is, until now.

In this article I would like to make some remarks on the trilingual development of both of my children. At the time of the first edition of this paper, namely in 2004, Dai (21 years old) and Leo (17 years old) were born in the Federal Republic of Germany and have made it their permanent abode. In the family, they use Polish and Esperanto.<sup>4</sup> The means of communication are Polish with the mother (I am Polish) and Esperanto with the father (he is Japanese). The mother and the father communicate with each other normally with the help of Esperanto. The elder son, Dai, first began with German in kindergarten. In comparison, Leo, who is four years younger, already had background knowledge in German by the time

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Eduard Blocher, "Zweisprachigkeit: Vorteile und Nachteile", in: *Bilinguale und multikulturelle Erziehung*, ed. James Swift (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1982), 17.

<sup>3</sup> Helmut Glück, *Metzler Lexikon Sprache* (Stuttgart, Weimar: J. B. Metzler, 1993), 98.

<sup>4</sup> From the 11th to 12th grade of high school, my older son Dai took part in a Polish class. The high school in Hanau (Germany) which he went to, had been offering this opportunity to students with good proficiency in Polish for over thirteen years. The class was three hours per week at the Elisabethen-High School in Frankfurt am Main. The arrangement of this course was particularly rare in Hessen. He chose English as a first foreign language at school and Polish as a second. Soon after the beginning of the school year, in 2000/2001, the Hessian Ministry of Education announced that Polish could no longer be a second foreign language, instead only French or Spanish could be. Since then, Polish (and Russian) has been no longer allowed to be chosen as a second foreign language at high schools in Hessen. These languages can only be learned as a merely-optimal third foreign language. It is not to be overlooked that today's language-politics of the EU is oriented on restricting the amount of foreign languages that can be taught at school to four, and at most, five.

he went to kindergarten, because both of the brothers used German to communicate with each other and still do to this day.

Dai and Leo speak Polish and Esperanto fluently and almost without an accent, and they have mastered German on a native level. Their skills in reading and writing in Polish and Esperanto, though, are less developed given the circumstance. Also, their vocabulary, particularly in Polish (above all, in the written and the literary field) is limited and differs from that of speakers who have received school education in Polish.

## 1 ESPERANTO AS A FAMILY-LANGUAGE

Esperanto was created in 1887 by a polyglot eye doctor, Ludwig Zamenhof, in Poland. Within its ca. 120-year history, it attained the largest reach amongst all international auxiliary languages invented so far. The number of speakers currently amounts to ca. 500 000 people of varying levels of competence in over a hundred countries in all continents<sup>5</sup>. Esperanto is learned principally as a second language, although it is also learned as a first language by several hundred people. It is the first international auxiliary language that is used as an instrument for natural communication in families.<sup>6</sup>

For Esperanto a differentiation is possible, namely:

- according to the number of people who use the language not primarily (i. e., the people who learned Esperanto as a foreign language – German: *Nichtprimärsprache*, *Fremdsprache*, Polish: *język obcy*, Esperanto: *fremda lingvo*);
- according to the number of people who use the language primarily (i. e., the people who acquired Esperanto as a first (or mother) language – German: *Erst- or Muttersprache*, Polish: *język rodzimy*, Esperanto: *gepatra lingvo*).

The second case concerns, for fifty years of the twentieth century, a few hundred people, for whom Esperanto is already a primary or “mother language”. The address books of 1991<sup>7</sup> and 1994<sup>8</sup> of families with Esperanto as a family-language shows that this case occurs more frequently in parental homes with multiple languages, in which Esperanto is used as the only

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Alicja Sakaguchi, “Die Dichotomie ‘künstlich’ vs. ‘natürlich’ und das historische Phänomen einer funktionierenden Plansprache”, *Language Problems & Language Planning* 20/1 (1996): 18–38.

<sup>6</sup> The first marriage of Esperantists is said to be 105 years ago, precisely speaking, in 1899. It is between Valdemar Langlet (Sweden) and Signe Blomberg (Finland). Cf. Jefim Zajdman, “La unua geedziĝo inter diversnaciaj esperantistoj okazis antaŭ 105 jaroj”. *Familia Esperanto, Neregula cirkulaĵo de Rondo Familia*. ([Roterdamo]: Rondo Familia de UEA, n-ro 11, 1/2004, 6. Cf. also “Denaskaj Esperanto-parolantoj”, [https://eo.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denaskaj\\_Esperanto-parolantoj](https://eo.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denaskaj_Esperanto-parolantoj).

<sup>7</sup> *Cirkulaĵo por esperantlingvaj paroj kaj familioj* (Zagarolo, Italuo/Italy, 1991), 3–27.

<sup>8</sup> *Cirkulaĵo por esperantlingvaj paroj kaj familioj* (Zagarolo, Italuo/Italy, 1994), 2–13.

family-language or as one of several family-languages<sup>9</sup>. Out of 236 entries contained in the address list of 1994, 140 addresses reference families with children. They live in Europe, North and South America, and Australia. In all, 269 children are registered, 13 of whom have used Esperanto from the beginning of language acquisition. In ca. 87 % of the families, Esperanto is used in the daily communication between the couples, and in ca. 50 %, it is used as a practical language between parents and children. In spite of a series of surveys in a period of almost 40 years, we still lack sufficient information on the number of children with Esperanto as a primary language. In addition, there is a lack of information on the degree of their language competence. With the help of relevant calculations<sup>10</sup>, it is suggested that two to three hundred children and young people use Esperanto as a mother tongue. Esperanto is, however, acquired by no one as the sole (mother) language; what arises in the case of the native speakers of Esperanto is bilingual, trilingual, etc. children. A leaflet, "Familia Esperanto", provides information on various national and international meetings of families, in which Esperanto is used as an everyday communication tool.

The use of Esperanto as a family- and parental-language raises a series of questions, such as: (a) the norm and/or the model function of the parents, (b) the child- and family-vocabulary and the child-language, (c) the creation of names for items, everyday objects, and family affairs.<sup>11</sup> At the same time, what is also interesting is the question of the exploitation of the possibility of word-formation by children in comparison with the adults and also, particularly, the behavior of the native-language users as "language-game" players. The dictionary of everyday things "Hejma vortaro" of Lindstedt ([1999] 2000<sup>12</sup>) contains a collection of a few hundred names (including a series of onomatopoeic expressions), which are used in daily life. Their meanings are described with the help of Esperanto and their equivalents in different national languages are attached. Here are some examples of such expressions [translation note: The author uses German words, phrases, and sentences as concrete examples. In such places, the English translation of the German has been placed in parentheses]: *lulkanto* 'das Wiegenlied (lullaby)', *salivtuko* 'das Lätzchen (bib)', *cicumo* 'der Schnuller (pacifier)', *vindo(tuko)* 'die Windel

<sup>9</sup> Cf. also Anna Brennan, "Teaching a trilingual child to read", *The Bilingual Family Newsletter* (Clevedon), 4 (1978) 3: 2–4; George Saunders, *Bilingual children: from birth to teens* (Clevedon, Phil.: Multilingual Matters, 1988), 39; Balázs Wacha, "Pri dulingvaj infanoj", in: *Kontribuo al lingvaj teorio kaj praktiko. IV. Kolekto de prelegoj de Nitra 1986-06-13*, ed. Stanislav Košecký (Poprad: Slovaka Esperanto-Asocio, 1986).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. the calculations of Bernard Golden, "Esplorado pri familia uzado de Esperanto", *Cirkulaĵo por esperantlingvaj paroj kaj familioj* 28 (1996), 6; cf. also George Saunders, "La dulingvismo kaj Esperanto", *The Bilingual Family Newsletter* 4 (1987) 3: 2.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Detlev Blanke, "Vom Entwurf zur Sprache", *Interface. Tijdschrift voor Toegepaste Linguistiek* 15.1 (2000): 68.

<sup>12</sup> Jouko Lindstedt (ed.), *Hejma vortaro. Vortareto de hejmaoj en Esperanto* (Rotterdam: UEA, 1999), Represo de la unua eldono 2000.

(diaper)', *puruma* 'sauber (clean) (therefore: a child, who is potty-trained)', *vometi* 'spucken (spit)', *pispoto* 'das Töpfchen (potty)', *pisi* 'Pipi machen (make wee-wee)', *kaki* 'ein Häufchen machen (make doo-doo)', *rampi* 'krabbeln (crawl)', (*re*)*ordigi litojn* 'Bette machen (make the bed)', *T-ĉemizo* 'T-Shirt (T-shirt)', *hotdogo* 'Hotdog (hotdog)', *aj!* 'au! [es tut weh (it hurts)]').

## 2 ESPERANTO: ARTIFICIAL OR NATURAL?

In many fundamental works of linguistics, it is alleged that only a *historic natural* language can be a human's native language. Noam Chomsky's view of language acquisition is based on the assumption that language is a finite system of rules that generates an infinite set of sentences (expressions). This conception of language can cover more than just ethnic languages, although one can question whether Chomsky had international auxiliary languages in mind. In any case the interesting thing here is to note that a series of *a posteriori* international auxiliary languages, such as Esperanto, Ido, and Occidental-Interlingue or Interlingua, completely fulfills the criteria of a "natural language" as defined by Chomsky<sup>13</sup>. Esperantists are proof that if a certain level of competence is achieved, Esperanto can be used just as spontaneously as in the case of any other language. With good reason it could be asserted that the rule-system of Esperanto, with its creative aspect, corresponds to the concept of so-called "universal grammar" as described by Chomsky.

## 3 SOME REMARKS ON LANGUAGE ACQUISITION OF TRILINGUAL CHILDREN

In this article, I will not pay attention to the theoretical questions of language acquisition and I will merely give some examples from the language development of my two children. I took the following examples from written notes that I made, with irregular gaps in time, over the past seventeen years. This article finally has made an occasion for me to take out my notes from my desk drawer and to think about the theme of "language-acquisition in the intercultural framework". Here is one example of a remark by Leo, which he wrote at the age of thirteen (he masters the Polish orthography only inadequately):

(1) *Hello Nikolaus!*

Ja chzaubym na boze narodzienie: okulary wodne, biurko, nowe biegi na rower. Dzienkuim  
Leo

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<sup>13</sup> John Christopher Wells, *Linguistische Aspekte der Plansprache Esperanto* (Saarbrücken: CED, 1987); Esperanto: *Lingvistikaj aspektoj de Esperanto* (Rotterdam: UEA, 1978), 6.

'Hallo Nikolaus, zu Weihnachten hätte ich gerne eine Wasserbrille, einen Schreibtisch, neue Gänge für das Fahrrad. Danke Leo (Hello Santa Claus, for Christmas I would like swimming goggles, a writing desk, new gears for the bicycle. Thanks Leo)'

Another example (Leo wrote this announcement at the age of ten):

(2) *Dai*,

ich bin bei Patrick. Kluce song pot wizerazkon, Leo

'*Dai*, ich bin bei Patrick. Die Schlüssel sind unter der Fußmatte, Leo (*Dai*, I am with Patrick. The keys are under the doormat, Leo)'

Polish and Esperanto are a kind of secret language for *Dai* and *Leo*. They serve to encode information from non-initiates (i. e. the German-speakers). The following examples illustrate different kinds of norm-deviation:

For Polish:

- a) Use of the regular patterns of inflection on suppletive verb stems and other irregular inflected words, e. g., \**idziełem*<sup>14</sup> for *szedłem* 'ich ging (I went)', \**pójdzieła*<sup>15</sup> for *poszła* 'ist gegangen (has gone)', \**dużejsze*<sup>16</sup> for *większe* 'größer (bigger)', \**najdobре*<sup>17</sup> for *najlepsze* 'am besten (the best)', *najprawṣy* ('the rightst-est') and *najlewszy* ('the left-est').<sup>18</sup>
- b) Use of analytic instead of morphological forms, e. g., *Dai* \**będzie wziął*<sup>19</sup> instead of *Dai weźmie* 'Dai wird nehmen (Dai will take)'; *ja* \**chcę by mieć łopatkę*<sup>20</sup> instead of *ja chcialbym mieć łopatkę* 'ich hätte gerne eine Schippe (I would like a shovel)'; \**dla ja* [literally: for I]<sup>21</sup> instead of *dla mnie* 'für mich (for me)'; *chcę, żebyś ty* \**nakarmić ja*<sup>22</sup> instead of *chcę, żebyś*

<sup>14</sup> *Ja do kościoła \*idziełem.* 'Ich bin in die Kirche gegangen. (I have gone to church.)' (Leo 1990).

<sup>15</sup> *Mama \*pójdzieła.* 'Mama ist gegangen. (Mom is gone.)' (Dai 1986).

<sup>16</sup> *Frankfurt jest jeszcze \*dużejsze miasto niż Aschaffenburg.* 'Frankfurt ist eine noch größere Stadt als Aschaffenburg. (Frankfurt is an even bigger city than Aschaffenburg.)' (Dai 1988).

<sup>17</sup> *Te japońskie ciasteczka były \*najdobre.* 'Diese japanischen Plätzchen waren am besten. (These Japanese cookies were best.)' (Dai 1987).

<sup>18</sup> *Najlewszy pas, najprawṣy pas* (Leo 2003) ('The right-est lane, the left-est lane').

<sup>19</sup> *Dai \*będzie wziął (karton z sokiem).* 'Dai wird (einen Tetrapack mit Saft) nehmen. (Dai will take (a Tetrapack of juice.))' (Dai 1987).

<sup>20</sup> *Ja \*chcę by mieć czerwoną łopatkę.* 'Ich hätte gerne eine rote Schippe. (I would like a red shovel.)'

<sup>21</sup> *Ten wafelek jest dla mamusi, a to dla \*ja.* 'Diese Waffel ist für die Mama, und das für mich. (This waffle is for mom, and that for me.).'

<sup>22</sup> *Chcę, żebyś ty \*nakarmić ja.* 'Ich will, dass du mich fütterst [wörtlich: dass du fütterst ich]. (I want you to feed me [literally: you feed I]).' (Dai 1987).

*ty mnie nakarmiła* ‘ich will, dass du mich [wörtlich: ich] fütterst (I want you to feed me [literally: I])’.

- c) Nominal creations on the basis of common verbal stems, e. g., *\*kradniki<sup>23</sup>* (from *kraść* ‘stehlen (steal)’ + masc. Suff. *-nik* ‘Agens; Instrument; Patiens’) for *złodzieje* ‘Diebe (thieves)’; *\*obcinarka<sup>24</sup>* (from *obcinać* ‘schneiden (cut)’ + fem. Suff. *-arka* ‘Instrument (Machine)’) instead of *nożyce ogrodowe* ‘Gartenschere (garden shears)’. These are (nascent) childhood neologisms. They are mainly caused by the fact that children do not know many words yet or that many words are simply not readily available.
- d) Verbal creations on the basis of common verbal stems, e. g., *ja sobie \*zahaczykowałem nóżkę<sup>25</sup>* (from *zahaczyć* ‘(sich) anhacken, hängen bleiben (being stuck)’) instead of *ja sobie zahaczyłem (zaczepilem) nóżkę* ‘mein Fuß ist hängen geblieben (My foot is stuck)’.
- e) Formation of nouns with common suffixes, e. g., *\*linniczek<sup>26</sup>* instead of *linijka* (masc. Suff. *-ek* ‘Resultat; Diminutiv’) – ‘Lineal (ruler)’.
- f) Formation on the basis of word stems of German and Esperanto, e. g., *\*igiełek* (from German *Igel* + Polish masc. Suff. *-ek* ‘Resultat; Diminutiv’) for *jeż*; *\*vencik<sup>27</sup>* (from Esperanto *vento*) for *wiaterek* ‘kleiner Wind (little wind)’; *\*szelik<sup>28</sup>* (from Esperanto *šelo*) for *skórka* ‘Schale (peel)’; *\*bakuje<sup>29</sup>* (from German *backen*) for *piecze* ‘bäckt (bake)’; *\*kondukuje<sup>30</sup>* (from Esperanto *konduki*) for *prowadzi* ‘fährt etw. (drive something)’, *\*tranczuje<sup>31</sup>* (from Esperanto *tranći*) for *kroi* ‘schneidet (cuts)’. These are also (nascent) childhood neologisms.
- g) Creation of forms under the influence of the semantic patterns of German, e. g., *tutaj \*wącha landrynkami<sup>32</sup>* instead of *tutaj pachnie landrynkami* ‘hier riecht es nach Fruchtbomben (it smells like fruit candies here)’ (meaning: going through the car wash, it smells like fruit candies in the car) and *tutaj \*wącha jak w Japonii* instead of *tutaj pachnie jak w Japonii* ‘hier riecht wie in Japan (it smells like Japan here)’. Cf. German *etw. riechen/es riecht*, although there are two different verbal stems in Polish: *wąchać/pachnieć, pachnie-*.

<sup>23</sup> *Wczoraj w nocy były u XY \*kradniki*. ‘Gestern Nacht waren bei XY Diebe. (Yesterday night there were thieves by X.)’ (Leo um 1993). Cf. Polish *książkokradły, koniokradły*.

<sup>24</sup> *\*Obcinarka* ‘Gartenschere (garden shears)’ (Dai 1987).

<sup>25</sup> *Ja sobie \*zahaczykowałem nóżkę*. ‘Mein Fuß ist hängen geblieben. (My foot is being stuck.)’ (Dai 1987).

<sup>26</sup> *\*Linniczek* ‘Lineal (ruler)’ (Dai 1987).

<sup>27</sup> *\*Vencik* ‘kleiner Wind (little wind)’ (Leo 1990).

<sup>28</sup> *Nektarynka z \*szelikiem*. ‘Nektarine mit Schale. (Nectarine with shell.)’ (Dai 1988).

<sup>29</sup> *Babcia \*bakuje naleśniki*. ‘Die Oma backt Pfannkuchen. (Grandma bakes pancakes.)’ (Dai 1986).

<sup>30</sup> *Mama \*kondukuje auto*. ‘Mama fährt das Auto. (Mama drives the car.)’ (Dai 1986).

<sup>31</sup> *Dai \*tranczuje*. ‘Dai schneidet. (Dai cuts.)’ (Dai 1986).

<sup>32</sup> *Tutaj wącha ... ‘hier riecht es (nach) ... (here it smells (like) ...)*’ (Leo 2003, 2004).

- h) Arbitrary change of a conjugation pattern: the ending obviously felt as phonetically clearer, that is, first pers. sg. present tense *-am* instead of that which is in accordance with the norm, that is, *-ę*, e. g., *ja się kompam*<sup>33</sup> instead of *ja się kąpię* ‘ich bade mich (I bathe myself)’, *ja \*widam*<sup>34</sup> instead of *ja widzę* ‘ich sehe (I see)’.
- i) Use of a plural verb form instead of a singular form, e. g., *Ile wagonów \*sq?* Instead of *Ile wagonów jest?* ‘Wieviele Wagons sind es (How many wagons are there)?’; *Ile to \*sq marek?* instead of *Ile to jest marek* ‘Wieviele Mark sind es? (How many marks are there)?’; *tam parę \*problemy sq*<sup>35</sup> instead of *tam parę problemów jest* ‘dort gibt es ein Paar Probleme (there are a few problems there)’; *wczoraj \*byli dwa panowie* instead of *wczoraj było dwóch panów* ‘gestern waren zwei Herren da (There were two men there yesterday)’. In fact, congruence problems with subject and predicate are also well attested among native speakers of Polish and German.<sup>36</sup>
- j) Creation of abnormal, but not grammatically incorrect verb derivatives, such as *\*upijony*<sup>37</sup> instead of *upity* ‘betrunken, besoffen (drunk, boozed)’.
- k) Amusing utterances, based on the ambiguity of the word *Doktor*: 1. ‘akad. Grad (academic grade)’, 2. ‘umgangsspr. Arzt (in colloquial language doctor)’, therefore: *Mama jest doktorem i pracuje na uniwersytecie. Dai-mama leczy książeczki*. ‘Die Mama ist ein Doktor und arbeitet an der Universität. Dai-Mama macht Büchlein gesund (Mama is a doctor and works at the university. Dai's mother makes little books healthy)’.

The use of Polish interrogatives brought (and still brings) both of the children particular difficulties (generalization of the paradigm, *kto* ‘wer (who)’). The following examples should make this clear.

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<sup>33</sup> *Ja się \*kompam*. ‘Ich bade mich. (I'm bathing.)’ (Leo 2002).

<sup>34</sup> *Ja \*widam jak mama gotuje*. ‘Ich sehe, wie die Mama kocht. (I see how a mother cooks.)’.

<sup>35</sup> *Tam parę \*problemy sq* ‘dort gibt es ein Paar Probleme (there are some problems.)’ (Dai 2004).

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Christoph Jaeger, *Probleme der syntaktischen Kongruenz: Theorie und Normvergleich im Deutschen* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1992).

<sup>37</sup> *Pan jest \*upijony*. ‘Der Herr ist betrunken. (The man is drunk.)’ (Leo 1999 and 2002).

Table I. Use of the interrogatives in Polish. Deviations from the norm are marked with one asterisk (\*)

Polish	German, English	observed on:
Z czego?	Woraus? (From what?)	
Z kogo* jest zupa owocowa?	'Aus wem* ist die Obstsuppe? (From whom* is the fruit soup?)'	31.01.87
Z kogo* jest zrobiony dżemik?	'Aus wem* ist die Marmelade? (From whom* is the marmalade?)'	20.02.87
Z kogo* to jest [kompot]?	'Aus wem* ist das [Kompott]? (From whom* is the [compote]?)'	11.03.87
Z kogo* jest jogurt?	'Aus wem* ist das Joghurt? (From whom* is the yogurt?)'	13.03.87
Z czego [!] jest zrobiona galaretką?	'Woraus ist das Gelee gemacht? (From what is the jelly made?)'	09.05.87
Z kogo*, z czego jest to mięsko?	'Aus wem*, wovon ist dieses Fleisch? (From whom*, from what is this meat?)'	13.05.87
Z kogo* pan nalał soczek do pudełczka?	'Aus wem* hat der Herr den Saft in die Tetrapackung eingeschüttet? (From whom* has the man poured the juice (in the Tetra Pack)?)'	12.03.87
Do czego? Po co?	Wofür? Wozu? (For what? To which?)	
Dla kogo* to są kółka?	'Für wen* sind diese Räder? (For whom* are these wheels?)'	10.03.87
Dla kogo to jest?	'Für wen* ist das? (For whom* is this?)'	13.03.87
Co to? Platforma. Do kogo*?	'Was ist das? Ein Lastauto ohne Dach. Zu wem*? (What is this? A Truck without a roof. To whom*?)'	09.05.87
Na czym?	Worauf? (On which?)	
Na kogo* pan jedzie? Na wielbłądzie.	'Auf wem* reitet der Herr? Auf einem Kamel. (On whom* does the man ride? On a camel.)'	10.03.87
Do której? (fem.)	Zu welcher? (fem.) (To which?)	
Do kogo* toalety mam iść?	'Zu wem* Toilette soll ich gehen? (To whom* toilet should I go?)'	13.03.87
Dokąd?	Wohin? (To where?)	
Do kogo* pojedziemy po śniadanku?	'Zu wem* werden wir nach dem Frühstück fahren? (To whom* will we drive for the breakfast?)'	10.03.87
Od kogo?	Von wem? (From whom?)	
Od kogo[!] manusia dostała atrament?	'Von wem hat die Mama die Tinte bekommen? (From whom has the mom got the ink?)'	10.03.87
Skąd?	Woher? (From where?)	
Z kogo* masz ten ręcznik?	'Aus wem* hast du dieses Handtuch? (From whom* do you have this towel?)'	31.03.87
Od kogo* jest burza? (= Skąd przyszła burza?)	'Von wem* ist das Gewitter? (From whom* is the thunderstorm?)' (= Woher ist das Gewitter gekommen? Where has the thunderstorm come from?)'	10.04.87

Polish	German, English	observed on:
Gdzie?	Wo? (Where?)	
W kogo* Dai ma kółko do plywania?	'In wem* hat Dai das Schwimmrad? (In whom* does Dai have the swim ring)'	13.03.87
W kogo* żołnierze mieszkają?	'In wem* wohnen die Soldaten? (In whom* do the soldiers live?)'	16.03.87
W co?	Wie? Was? (How? What?)	
W kogo* się manusia dzisiaj ubierze?	'In wem* zieht sich die Mama heute an? (In whom* does mother put on today?)' (= Was zieht sich die Mama heute an? (What does mother put on today?))'	20.03.87
Czyja? (fem.)	Wessen? (Whose?)	
Kogo* to jest gumeczka?	'Wessen Radiergummi ist das? (Whose eraser is this?)'	04.02.87
Z kim?	Mit wem? (With whom?)	
Z kogo* pan rozmawia?	'Mit wem spricht der Herr? (With whom the man speaks?)'	10.03.87

For German:

- Formation of verbs under the influence of Esperanto-word stems, e. g., *forjetten*<sup>38</sup> (from Esperanto *forĝeti*) for 'wegwerfen (throw away)'.

For Esperanto:

- Confusion of prepositions *kun*, German '(zusammen) mit ((together) with)', Polish: *z* + Instrumental; whereas *per*, German: 'mit (Hilfe) (with (help))', Polish: mere Instrumental, e. g. *patro veturas* \**kun aŭto* (the father drives with the car) (instead of *patro veturas per aŭto* 'der Vater fährt mit dem Auto (the father drives a car)'; *mi skribas* \**kun krajono* (instead of *mi skribas per krajono*) 'ich schreibe mit dem Bleistift (I write with a pencil)'. Cf. Polish: *ojciec jedzie autem* (Instrumental case is marked morphologically in Polish), *piszę ołówkiem*. It is also worth noting that the Esperanto prepositions *kun* and *per* have the same function as the Latin words *cum* and *per*.

Finally, some further examples from the syntactic field:

Leo confirms that he has left his sandwich at home, by asking: *Dzisiaj pauzę zapomniałem, czy? 'Heute habe ich mein Pausenbrot vergessen, nicht wahr [wörtlich: ob] (Today I have forgotten my lunchbox, right [literally: whether])?* The influence of Esperanto on Polish can be observed here. Esperanto (as e. g. Latin) is syntactically very flexible because of its extremely free word order. While the parts of sentences cannot be switched in many languages without changing the meaning of the sentences, one can change relatively freely the order of the

<sup>38</sup> *Willst du das \*forjetten? 'Willst du das wegwerfen? (Do you want to throw it away?)'* (Leo 1992).

parts in a sentence in Esperanto. Thus it is possible to put the interrogative particle *ĉu* ‘ob (whether)’ even at the end of a sentence, as in: *Hodiaŭ mi forgesis mian matenmanĝon, ĉu?* (“Today I have forgotten my lunchbox, right”).

Inversely, there are some examples of the effect of a syntactic pattern of Polish (and German) on Esperanto: *Ĉi tie laboriĝas bone*<sup>39</sup> (*labor-* basic morpheme for ‘arbeiten (work)’ and *-iĝ* Suffix marks a change of state, in this case: duration, long constant action) – ‘Es arbeitet sich hier gut (It works well here)’. Personal verbs can appear even in impersonal constructions in Polish.<sup>40</sup> In the function of impersonal forms of personal verbs, forms of third pers. singular with the reflexive pronouns *się* ‘sich (itself, yourself)’ are used, therefore: *Tutaj dobrze się pracuje.* (Esperanto: *Ĉi tie laboriĝas bone*) – such a construction seldom appears in Esperanto, but it is grammatically correct.

Concerning Esperanto, what follows can be further observed in terms of use of language by children: ... *aero pli multan lokon okupas*<sup>41</sup> ‘... die Luft nimmt mehr Platz ein (the air takes more space)’ and not: ... *aero pli multe da loko okupas*.

Indeterminate adjectives of quantity can be formed in Esperanto: 1) using the ending of the derived adverb *-e* and the preposition *da* before giving the quantity (*multe da loko* ‘lots of space’) or 2) with the help of the quantity adjective alone (*multan lokon*, accusative inflectional ending *-n*). The second form is morphologically simpler, but the first is used more frequently by the Esperanto-speakers.

#### 4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

These few examples illustrate that the child passes through various phases of the language acquisition process in the case of learning a native language. These are characterized by peculiar language usage which differs from the grammatical system of an adult. Such childish language uses are subject to various modifications until they are approached by the language competency of an adult native speaker<sup>42</sup>. In the case of Esperanto, it is usually a competent (foreign language) speaker. The phases of the language acquisition process mainly include semantics, vocabulary, morphology and syntax. The types of mistakes presented here, of course, do not only concern multilingual children, but also occur in children who are monolingual.

<sup>39</sup> *Ĉi tie laboriĝas bone.* ‘Es arbeitet sich hier gut. (It works well here.)’ (Leo 2002).

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Roman Laskowski, *Polnische Grammatik* (Warszawa: Wiedza Powszechna, 1979), 114–115.

<sup>41</sup> ... *aero pli multan lokon okupas.* ‘... die Luft nimmt mehr Platz an. (... the air takes more space.)’ (Leo 2004).

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Hanna Komorowska. *Nauczanie gramatyki języka obcego a interferencja.* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwa szkolne i pedagogiczne, 1980), 83.

These remarks illustrate that in simultaneous acquisition of two or more languages, interferences by these languages, application of rules of one to another appear. Interferences are usually of a temporary nature. Fundamentally, every child can acquire every (human) language, whether a natural language or an international auxiliary language, like Esperanto. What is crucial is only that the child has sufficiently intensive contact with a particular language.<sup>43</sup>

Compared to natural languages used as foreign languages, Esperanto enables in total, on the basis of its smaller potential source for error, an easier production of flawless utterances and texts even in the case of speakers who first learn this international auxiliary language after puberty. As is well known, this applies rarely in the later acquisition of natural languages.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, to some extent, today, it can be said that in the acquisition of a first mother language, the learning of the grammatical system of Esperanto is completed even earlier than that of another natural (mother) language that may be acquired simultaneously. One can probably expect an explanation of this phenomenon in the context of the concept of a theory of universal morphological naturalness.<sup>45</sup> It is clear that the examples presented here can only be taken as expressions of an individual performance, in this case, of my children.

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<sup>43</sup> Karolina Sawicka. „Im wcześniejszej dziecko pozna drugi język, tym sprawniejszy będzie w przyszłości jego mózg. [Je früher das Kind die zweite Sprache lernt, umso leistungsfähiger wird künftig sein Gehirn.] *Przekrój* (Kraków) 28/3081, 2004.

<sup>44</sup> E. g. Ulrich Ammon. *Die internationale Stellung der deutschen Sprache*. (Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter Verlag, 1991); Jörg Keller, Helen Leuninger. *Grammatische Strukturen – Kognitive Prozesse. Ein Arbeitsbuch*. (Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 1993).

<sup>45</sup> E. g. Willi Mayerthaler. *Morphologische Natürlichkeit*. (Wiesbaden: Athenaion, 1981); Wolfgang Ulrich Wurzel. *Flexionsmorphologie und Natürlichkeit. Ein Beitrag zur morphologischen Theoriebildung*. (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1984); Wolfgang Ulrich Wurzel. „The structuralist heritage in natural morphology“, in: Hans-Heinrich Lieb (ed.), *Prospects for a new structuralism*. (= Amsterdam Studies in the Theory and History of Linguistic Science 96) (Amsterdam, Philadelphia: Benjamins, 1992), 225–241.

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Alicja SAKAGUCHI, Prof. Dr. phil., born in 1954 in Szczecin, Poland, has studied Hungarian and Esperanto Language and Literature (Interlinguistics) in Budapest, Hungary, and German Studies in Paderborn and Bielefeld. Doctorate degree 1981, habilitation (a post-doctoral qualification) 1999. Lecturer at the University of Paderborn and at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe-University Frankfurt am Main from 1986 to 1996. Since 2003 Professor at the Faculty of Modern Languages of the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland. Main areas: General and Applied Linguistics, Esperanto Studies and Interlinguistics, mystic and mystical theology, religious language, phenomenology.  
Kontakt: a.sakaguchi@gmx.de

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