

## **BILTALK. Talk and Interaction Questions for Parents in Bilingual Settings.**

Unpublished online questionnaire developed by Annick De Houwer in the framework of the projects TODDLE TALK (English-German) and Maluchy na językach (Polish-German) to assess young bilingual children's development and linguistic environments. The materials were originally developed in English, German, and Polish. The survey platform was SurveyMonkey, which included the possibility of skip logic (used in this questionnaire).

BILTALK asks both mothers and fathers on a detailed level about language interaction with their three-year-olds. BILTALK also queries children's language proficiency. There are also questions about using both languages in a conversation and sentence, and several "scenarios" that tap various aspects of bilingual language use.

BILTALK is originally meant to be used in conjunction with the questionnaire PEBEGOS-3 (also to be found <https://www.habilnet.org/science/#resources> ), but it can also be used by itself. The questionnaire was developed for children in the fourth year of life. The questionnaire is designed to be filled in by BOTH parents, separately from each other (see two separate parts below).

You are free to use and adapt this questionnaire to fulfill your own research needs. However, if you do so, please write an email to Dr. De Houwer at [annick.dehouwer@habilnet.org](mailto:annick.dehouwer@habilnet.org) to tell her about it.

The questions here are asked of parents in bilingual families and in monolingual families where children are visiting a preschool in another language. The ones below are in English for parents of children growing up with English and German.

If you are interested in the Polish or German versions, please write an email to Dr. De Houwer at [annick.dehouwer@habilnet.org](mailto:annick.dehouwer@habilnet.org).

*citation:*

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## Talking with your child

***This is the part where we need both mother and father!***

In questionnaire we ask about how either parent talks to your child (and how your child speaks to either of them). It should be filled in by both mother and father separately. We hope that's possible!

Some of the statements might appear repetitive to you, but please bear with us, and answer all of them! Thank you.

*Mother talking with child (The "I/me" here is mother)*

### Part 1

When I talk to my child in German, (s)he often expresses misunderstanding of a word or phrase

Completely agree

More or less agree

Not quite agree

Entirely disagree

Doesn't apply, I don't speak any German to my child

I read books to my child at least twice a week

Completely agree

More or less agree

Not quite agree

Entirely disagree

I've heard my child use German and English words in a single sentence.

Never

Often

Occasionally

I always speak just English to my child

Completely agree

More or less agree

Not quite agree

Entirely disagree

As far as I can be a judge of it, my child speaks much better English than German

Completely agree

More or less agree

Not quite agree

Entirely disagree

When I talk to my child in English, (s)he often expresses misunderstanding of a word or phrase

Completely agree

More or less agree

Not quite agree

Entirely disagree

Doesn't apply, I don't speak any English to my child

My child always speaks just German with me

Completely agree

More or less agree

Not quite agree

Entirely disagree

I've heard my child say English sentences like: "we have some of those, don't we?" or "I'm just going to say bye bye, mom" or "I've broken my feet because it hurts" (please don't pay attention to the actual words, but to the overall structure)

Hardly

Very often, and more complicated ones, too

No

Once in a while

Regularly

In conversations with me, my child often uses both German and English

Completely agree

More or less agree

Not quite agree

Entirely disagree

I always speak just German to my child

Completely agree

More or less agree

Not quite agree

Entirely disagree

My child always speaks just English with me

Completely agree

More or less agree

Not quite agree  
Entirely disagree

As far as I can be a judge of it, my child speaks much better German than English

Completely agree  
More or less agree  
Not quite agree  
Entirely disagree

When I talk to my child I often use both German and English in the same conversation

Completely agree  
More or less agree  
Not quite agree  
Entirely disagree

My child asks for a word in the other language when (s)he doesn't know it yet

Yes, frequently asks for a translation  
I haven't noticed  
Only sometimes asks for a translation

I've heard my child say German sentences like: "erst muss ich mich mal richtig hinlegen" or "komm, wir wollen dies gerade spielen" or "Mutti, ich hätte im Spiel Fieber, weil meine Stirne sind ganz heiss" (please don't pay attention to the actual words, but to the overall structure)

Hardly  
Very often, and more complicated ones, too  
No  
Once in a while  
Regularly  
Don't know, I don't understand German

My child sometimes does not speak the same language that I speak to her/him  
No/Yes

*If Yes:*

When my child talks to me in English, I respond in German

Completely agree  
More or less agree  
Not quite agree  
Entirely disagree

I wish my child would always respond in the language I usually speak to him/her

- Completely agree
- More or less agree
- Not quite agree
- Entirely disagree

When my child talks to me in German, I also speak German

- Completely agree
- More or less agree
- Not quite agree
- Entirely disagree

It upsets me that my child doesn't always speak the same language that I usually speak to her/him

- Completely agree
- More or less agree
- Not quite agree
- Entirely disagree

When my child talks to me in English, I also speak English

- Completely agree
- More or less agree
- Not quite agree
- Entirely disagree

When my child talks to me in German, I respond in English

- Completely agree
- More or less agree
- Not quite agree
- Entirely disagree

## Part 2

We now present you with 7 little scenarios that parents like yourself have reported to us. We'd like to know to what extent they apply to your three-year-old. We use Tiana and Tim, our virtual ToddleTalk kids, as aides.

### *Scenario 1*

Tim was reading a book with his mum, who speaks German to him. He said: 'Look, pig!'. His mum then said: 'Ja, das ist ein Schwein'. Tim refused to accept this, insisting the pink animal was a pig, not a 'Schwein'.

Does your child ever refuse to accept alternative words from the other language?

- Yes, often refuses
- Sometimes refuses
- I haven't noticed

### *Scenario 2*

Tiana hears English from her British mom and German from her German dad. Her mother also understands and speaks some German, but tends to make mistakes, or mispronounces words. One day her mom takes her to the zoo. When they reach the lion's cage, Tiana's mom says: 'Schau, die Lauwe brullt'. Tiana corrects her, saying: 'No mommy, you should say 'Löwe brüllt'.

Does your child ever correct your language use in the language you don't usually speak with her/him, or make remarks (e.g., repeat the mistake in a chiding voice)?

- I haven't noticed
- Yes, often corrects or remarks
- Occasionally corrects or makes remarks
- My child doesn't seem to pay any attention to mistakes we might make

### *Scenario 3*

When Tim goes to a playground in the UK with his German-speaking mum, he wants her to speak English to him, saying: 'Mama, we can't speak German here'. However, when they are visiting Germany to see his German grandparents, who hardly understand English, he insists on his mum also sticking to German. Once his mom told him off in English and he commented: 'Nein Mama, du musst deutsch schimpfen, die Oma kann kein Englisch'.

Does your child express strong feelings about when and where her/his two languages should be spoken?

Yes, my child is very concerned about others around her/him being able to understand what we are saying

My child only insists on using one particular language in some situations - I wouldn't say it's a general thing

Haven't noticed my child having any sort of preference that depends on the situation - my child doesn't seem to care much about what language we use when

My child only accepts me speaking one language to her/him, regardless of the environment

#### *Scenario 4*

Tiana is visiting her British grandparents in the UK with her British mom. After an exciting day at the playground, she wants to phone her dad back home in Germany to tell him that she made a lot of sand pies. Tiana normally speaks German with her dad. Tiana's British grandmother is surprised about how easy it seemed for Tiana to tell her dad everything she did in German, even though she had just been speaking English all day.

Does your child switch languages easily?

Yes, my child can easily switch languages depending on who (s)he talks to  
I couldn't tell you, I just haven't paid much attention to this

My child sometimes switches but sometimes just keeps using the same language (s)he was using with another person

#### *Scenario 5*

Tim loves looking at picture books. He mostly picks English books for his German-speaking mom to read to him, though. His mom feels quite hesitant about reading in English - she wants to stick to German. She decides to translate the story into German instead of reading it out in English. Tim starts to cry and says: 'Nein, Mama, Englisch bitte!'

Do you experience situations like this, where your child insists you use a particular language, doesn't accept you speaking the other one, and gets upset if you don't comply?

Yes, this happens quite frequently

Just sometimes

I haven't noticed

### *Scenario 6*

Tiana is taking a walk with her English-speaking mom. When they pass by a little pond, she points to a duck and proudly says: 'Mommy says duck, Daddy says Ente'. They stop at a playground where Tiana points to a slide saying 'Mommy says slide, Daddy says Rutsche'.

Does your child use both the English and the German word for the same thing in a single sentence or conversation, and indicate who says what (never mind that it's not always correct!)?

Yes, frequently

Only sometimes

My child used to do this a lot earlier but now hardly ever

I haven't noticed

### *Scenario 7*

Tiana's family lives in Germany. Her English-speaking mom and her German-speaking dad both work full time. Tiana spends most of the day at a daycare center where only German is spoken. When her mom picks her up, she just speaks German to her, even though her mom tries to make Tiana speak English. Only gradually, once they're home, does Tiana switch back to English.

Have you experienced situations like this?

Yes, this happens quite frequently

Just sometimes

I haven't noticed any

### *Father talking with child (The "I/me" here is father)*

#### **Part 1**

When I talk to my child in German, (s)he often expresses misunderstanding of a word or phrase

Completely agree

More or less agree

Not quite agree

Entirely disagree

Doesn't apply, I don't speak any German to my child

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More or less agree

Not quite agree



Entirely disagree

I've heard my child use German and English words in a single sentence.

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Occasionally

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As far as I can be a judge of it, my child speaks much better English than German

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When I talk to my child in English, (s)he often expresses misunderstanding of a word or phrase

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Very often, and more complicated ones, too

No

Once in a while  
Regularly

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More or less agree  
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Entirely disagree

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More or less agree  
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*If Yes:*

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Tim loves looking at picture books. He mostly picks English books for his German-speaking dad to read to him, though. His dad feels quite hesitant about reading in English - he wants to stick to German. He decides to translate the story into German instead of reading it out in English. Tim starts to cry and says: 'Nein, Daddy, Englisch bitte!'.

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Just sometimes

I haven't noticed

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I haven't noticed any