

Summary

For the bilingual education of children in mixed-lingual families the principle of *one person – one language* is recommended. This study, which is based on one hundred interviews with mothers from greek-german families, shows that this is not as easy in practise as it may seem. The aim of the study is to find out which factors support the bilingual development of the child and the language education behaviour of the mothers. Based on results of social network analysis, language acquisition theories and research on bilingualism, a partly standardized questionnaire was developed. It contains questions about the family internal characteristics and an analysis of social network. Also, a comparison between Greece and Germany has been made.

The quantitative and qualitative data show that bilingual development and education does not only take place within the family – here the parents' partner-language is important – but is also affected by the social networks. These support the process when they include a high portion of persons with the following characteristics: those who also speak the non-environmental-language (Greek in Germany / German in Greece) and those who live in mixed-lingual families themselves, thus offering possibilities of exchange and consultation based on their own experience. Positive attitudes within the social network towards the non-environmental-language and bilingualism have a positive effect.

Among the alternative ways of elementary-educational models, the bilingual kindergarten has been proven to be the most effective and the most preferred by the majority of the mothers. Here equal support of *both* languages is ensured as well as professional advice for the mother. Generally in society there are a lack of opportunities for professional advice, both in a qualitative and a quantitative way, which is not least due to the fact, that the subject *bilingualism* is missing in the curricula of educators, teachers and medical staff.

Based on this analysis recommendations for bilingual educating parents, research, education politics and pedagogic in general have been developed.